















"The moon like a rick on  
fire  
was rising over the dale"

THE COMPLETE WORKS  
OF  
ALFRED  
LORD TENNYSON  
POET LAUREATE

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE. FAMILY EDITION. FULLY ILLUSTRATED WITH  
NEW ENGRAVINGS AFTER DESIGNS BY

CHARLES HOWARD JOHNSON



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## TO THE QUEEN.

*Revered, beloved—O you that hold  
A nobler office upon earth  
Than arms, or power of brain, or  
birth  
Could give the warrior kings of old,*

*Victoria,—since your Royal grace  
To one of less desert allows  
This laurel greener from the brows  
Of him that utter'd nothing base ;*

*And should your greatness, and the  
care  
That yokes with empire, yield you  
time  
To make demand of modern rhyme  
If aught of ancient worth be there ;*

*Then—while a sweeter music wakes,  
And thro' wild March the throistle  
calls,  
Where all about your palace-walls  
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes—*

*Take, Madam, this poor book of song ;  
For tho' the faults were thick as dust  
In vacant chambers, I could trust  
Your kindness. May you rule us long,*

*And leave us rulers of your blood  
As noble till the latest day !  
May children of our children say,  
' She wrought her people lasting good ;*

*' Her court was pure ; her life serene ;  
God gave her peace ; her land re-  
posed ;  
A thousand claims to reverence  
closed  
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen ;*

*' And statesmen at her council met  
Who knew the seasons when to take  
Occasion by the hand, and make  
The bounds of freedom wider yet*

*' By shaping some august decree,  
Which kept her throne unshaken still,  
Broad-based upon her people's will,  
And compass'd by the inviolate sea.'*

March, 1851.



## JUVENILIA.

### CLARIBEL.

#### A MELODY.

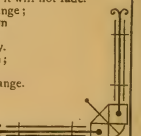
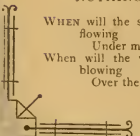
##### I.

WHERE Claribel low-lieth  
The breezes pause and die,  
Letting the rose-leaves fall :  
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,  
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,  
With an ancient melody  
Of an inward agony,  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

##### II.

At eve the beetle boometh  
Athwart the thicket lone :  
At noon the wild bee hummeth  
About the moss'd headstone :  
At midnight the moon cometh,  
And looketh down alone.  
Her song the lintwhite swelleth,  
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,  
The callow throistle lispeth,  
The slumbrous wave outwelleth,  
The babbling runnel crispeth,  
The hollow grot replieth  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

### NOTHING WILL DIE.



WHEN will the stream be aweary of  
flowing  
Under my eye ?  
When will the wind be aweary of  
blowing  
Over the sky ?

When will the clouds be aweary of  
fleeting ?  
When will the heart be aweary of  
beating ?  
And nature die ?  
Never, oh ! never, nothing will die ;  
The stream flows,  
The wind blows,  
The cloud fleets,  
The heart beats,  
Nothing will die.

Nothing will die ;  
All things will change  
Thro' eternity.  
'Tis the world's winter ;  
Autumn and summer  
Are gone long ago ;  
Earth is dry to the centre,  
But spring, a new comer,  
A spring rich and strange,  
Shall make the winds blow  
Round and round,  
Thro' and thro',  
Here and there,  
Till the air  
And the ground  
Shall be fill'd with life anew.

The world was never made ;  
It will change, but it will not fade.  
So let the wind range ;  
For even and morn  
Ever will be  
Thro' eternity.  
Nothing was born ;  
Nothing will die ;  
All things will change.





"THE SOLEMN OAK-TREE SIGHETH."—Page 2.



ALL THINGS WILL DIE.

CLEARLY the blue river chimes in its flowing

Under my eye;  
Warmly and broadly the south winds  
are blowing;

Over the sky.  
One after another the white clouds are  
fleeting;

Every heart this May morning in joy-  
ance is beating

Full merrily;  
Yet all things must die.  
The stream will cease to flow;  
The wind will cease to blow;  
The clouds will cease to fleet;  
The heart will cease to beat;

For all things must die.  
All things must die.

Spring will come never more.

Oh! vanity!  
Death waits at the door.  
See! our friends are all forsaking  
The wine and the merrymaking.  
We are call'd—we must go.

Laid low, very low,  
In the dark we must lie.  
The merry glee is still;  
The voice of the bird  
Shall no more be heard,  
Nor the wind on the hill.

Oh! noise!  
Hark! death is calling  
While I speak to ye,  
The jaw is falling,  
The red cheek paling,  
The strong limbs failing;  
Ice with the warm blood mixing;  
The eyeballs fixing.  
Nine times goes the passing bell:  
Ye merry souls, farewell.

The old earth  
Had a birth.  
As all men know,  
Long ago.  
And the old earth must die.  
So let the warm winds range,  
And the blue wave beat the shore:  
For even and morn  
Ye will never see  
Thro' eternity.

All things were born.  
Ye will come never more,  
For all things must die.

LEONINE ELEGIACS.

LOW-FLOWING breezes are roaming  
the broad valley dimm'd in the  
gloaming:

Thro' the black-stemm'd pines only  
the far river shines.

Creeping thro' blossomy rushes and  
bowers of rose-blowing bushes,  
Down by the poplar tall rivulets  
babble and fall.

Barketh the shepherd-dog cheerly;  
the grasshopper carolleteth clearly;  
Deeply the wood-dove coos; shrilly  
the owlet halloos;

Winds creep; dews fall chilly: in her  
first sleep earth breathes stilly:  
Over the pools in the burn water-gnats  
murmur and mourn.

Sadly the far kine loweth: the glim-  
mering water outfloweth:  
Twin peaks shadow'd with pine slope  
to the dark hyaline.

Low-throned Hesper is staved between  
the two peaks; but the Naiad  
Throbbing in mild unrest holds him  
beneath in her breast.

The ancient poetess singeth, that Hes-  
perus all things bringeth,  
Smoothing the wearied mind: bring  
me my love, Rosalind.

Thou comest morning or even; she  
cometh not morning or even.  
False-eyed Hesper, unkind, where is  
my sweet Rosalind?

SUPPOSED CONFESSIONS

OF A SECOND-RATE SENSITIVE MIND.

O GOD! my God I have mercy now.  
I faint, I fall. Men say that Thou  
Didst die for me, for such as *me*,  
Patient of ill, and death, and scorn,  
And that my sin was as a thorn

Among the thorns that girt Thy brow,  
Wounding Thy soul.—That even now,  
In this extremest misery  
Of ignorance, I should require  
A sign! and if a bolt of fire  
Would rive the stumbrous summer  
noon

While I do pray to Thee alone,  
Think my belief would stronger grow!  
Is not my human pride brought low?  
The boastings of my spirit still?  
The joy I had in my freewill  
All cold, and dead, and corpse-like  
grown?

And what is left to me, but Thou,  
And faith in Thee? Men pass me by;  
Christians with happy countenances—  
And children all seem full of Thee!  
And women smile with saint-like  
glances

Like Thine own mother's when she  
bow'd  
Above Thee, on that happy morn  
When angels spake to men aloud,  
And Thou and peace to earth were  
born.

Goodwill to me as well as all—  
I one of them: my brothers they:  
Brothers in Christ—a world of peace  
And confidence, day after day;  
And trust and hope till things should  
cease,  
And then one Heaven receive us all.

How sweet to have a common faith!  
To hold a common scorn of death!  
And at a burial to hear  
The creaking cords which wound and  
eat  
Into my human heart, whene'er  
Earth goes to earth, with grief, not  
fear,  
With hopeful grief, were passing  
sweet!

Thrice happy state again to be  
The trustful infant on the knee!  
Who lets his rosy fingers play  
About his mother's neck, and knows  
Nothing beyond his mother's eyes.  
They comfort him by night and day;  
They light his little life away;  
He hath no thought of coming woes;

He hath no care of his own death;  
Scarce outward signs of pain or  
grief,  
Because the Spirit of his parents  
And perfect rest so bless'd  
And loveth so his mother's heart,  
Her temple and her place of birth,  
Where she would have him dwell,  
Life of the fountain-head, beneath  
Its salient springs, on the heart,  
Hating to wander on the earth,  
Or breathe into the vulgar air,  
Whose chillness would make visible  
Her subtil, warm, and golden breath,  
Which mixing with the sinner's blood,  
Fulfils him with her life.  
Oh! sure it is a special grace  
Of God, to find him thus about  
To arm in proof, and gird about  
With triple-mailed coats, and clear  
Delight, the infant, and young year.

Would that my glorious fancy were  
As thine, my mother, with brows  
Propt on thy knees, thy hands upheld  
In thine, I listen'd to thy vows,  
For me outpour'd in earnest prayer—  
For me unworthy!—and beheld  
Thy mild deep eyes, unseas'd, that knew  
The beauty and power of faith,  
And the clear spirit soaring thro'.  
Oh! wherefore did we grow awry  
From roots whose end so deep? why  
dare

Paths in the death? Could not I  
Bow myself to whom thou hast knelt,  
To the earth—until the ice would melt  
Here, and I feel as thou hast felt?  
What Devil had the heart to scathe  
Flowers thou hadst rear'd—to brush  
the dew

From thine own lip, when thy grave  
Was deep, my mother, in the clay?  
Myself? Is it then? Myself? Had I  
So little love for thee? But why  
Prevail'd not thy pure prayers? Why  
pray

To one who heeds not, who can save  
But will not? Great in faith, and strong  
Against the grief of circumstance  
Wert thou, and was unheard. What if  
Thou pleas'dst still, and seest me drive  
Thy little bark, a full-sail'd skiff,  
Unplotted in the echoing dance

Of reboant whirlwinds, stooping low  
Unto the death, not sunk! I know  
At matins and at evensong,  
That thou, if thou wert yet alive,  
In deep and daily prayers would'st  
strive

To reconcile me with thy God.  
Albeit, my hope is gray, and cold  
At heart, thou wouldest murmur still—  
'Bring this lamb back into Thy fold,  
My Lord, if so it be Thy will.'  
Would'st tell me I must brook the rod  
And chastisement of human pride;  
That pride, the sin of devils, stood  
Betwixt me and the light of God!  
That hitherto I had defied  
And had rejected God—that grace  
Would drop from his o'er-brimming  
love,

As manna on my wilderness,  
If I would pray—that God would  
move

And strike the hard, hard rock, and then,

Sweet in their utmost bitterness,  
Would issue tears of penitence  
Which would keep green hope's life.

Alas!

I think that pride hath now no place  
Nor sojourn in me. I am void,  
Dark, formless, utterly destroyed.

Why not believe then? Why not yet  
Anchor thy frailty there, where man  
Hath moor'd and rested? Ask the  
sea

At midnight, when the crisp slope  
waves

After a tempest, rib and fret  
The broad-imbased beach, why he  
Slumbers not like a mountain tarn?  
Wherefore his ridges are not curls  
And ripples of an inland mere?  
Wherefore he moaneth thus, nor can  
Draw down into his vexed pools  
All that blue heaven which hues and  
paves

The other? I am too forlorn,  
Too shaken: my own weakness fools  
My judgment, and my spirit whirls,  
Moved from beneath with doubt and  
fear.

'Yet,' said I, in my morn of youth,  
The unsunn'd freshness of my  
strength,

When I went forth in quest of truth,  
'It is man's privilege to doubt,  
If so be that from doubt at length,  
Truth may stand forth unmoved of  
change,

An image with profulgent brows,  
And perfect limbs, as from the storm  
Of running fires and fluid range  
Of lawless airs, at last stood out  
This excellence and solid form  
Of constant beauty. For the Ox  
Feeds in the herb, and sleeps, or fills  
The horned valleys all about,  
And hollows of the fringed hills  
In summer heats, with placid lows  
Unfearing, till his own blood flows  
About his hoof. And in the flocks  
The lamb rejoiceth in the year,  
And raceth freely with his fere,  
And answers to his mother's calls  
From the flower'd furrow. In a time,  
Of which he wots not, run short pains  
Thro' his warm heart: and then, from  
whence

He knows not, on his light there falls  
A shadow; and his native slope,  
Where he was wont to leap and climb,  
Floats from his sick and filmed eyes,  
And something in the darkness draws  
His forehead earthward, and he dies.  
Shall man live thus, in joy and hope  
As a young lamb, who cannot dream,  
Living, but that he shall live on?  
Shall we not look into the laws  
Of life and death, and things that  
seem,

And things that be, and analyse  
Our double nature, and compare  
All creeds till we have found the one,  
If one there be?' Ay me! I fear  
All may not doubt, but everywhere  
Some must clasp Idols. Yet, my God,  
Whom call I Idol? Let Thy dove  
Shadow me over, and my sins  
Be unremember'd, and Thy love  
Enlighten me. Oh teach me yet  
Somewhat before the heavy clod  
Weights on me, and the busy fret  
Of that sharp-headed worm begins  
In the gross blackness underneath.

O weary life! O weary death!  
O spirit and heart made desolate!  
O damned vacillating state!

### THE KRAKEN.

BELOW the thunders of the upper  
deep;  
Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,  
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded  
sleep  
The Kraken sleepeth: faintest sun-  
lights flee  
About his shadowy sides: above him  
swell  
Huge sponges of millennial growth and  
height;  
And far away into the sickly light,  
From many a wondrous grot and secret  
cell  
Unnumber'd and enormous polypi  
Winnow with giant arms the slumber-  
ing green.  
There hath he lain for ages and will lie  
Battening upon huge seaworms in his  
sleep,  
Until the latter fire shall heat the  
deep;  
Then once by man and angels to be  
seen,  
In roaring he shall rise and on the  
surface die.

### SONG.

THE winds, as at their hour of birth,  
Leaning upon the ridged sea,  
Breathed low around the rolling earth  
With mellow preludes, 'We are  
free.'

The streams through many a lilled  
row  
Down-carolling to the crisped sea,  
Low-tinkled with a bell-like flow  
Atween the blossoms, 'We are free.'

### LILIAN.

#### I.

AIRY, fairy Lilian,  
Flitting, fairy Lilian,  
When I ask her if she love me,  
Claps her tiny hands above me,  
Laughing all she can;  
She'll not tell me if she love me,  
Cruel little Lilian.

#### II.

When my passion seeks  
Pleasance in love-sighs,  
She, looking thro' and thro' me  
Thoroughly to undo me,  
Smiling, never speaks:  
So innocent-arch, so cunning-simple,  
From beneath her gathered wimple  
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,  
Till the lightning laughters dimple  
The baby-roses in her cheeks;  
Then away she flies.

#### III.

Prythee weep, May Lilian!  
Gaiety without eclipse  
Wearieth me, May Lilian:  
Thro' my very heart it thrilleth  
When from crimson-threaded lips  
Silver-treble laughter trilleth:  
Prythee weep, May Lilian.

#### IV.

Praying all I can,  
If prayers will not hush thee,  
Airy Lilian,  
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,  
Fairy Lilian

### ISABEL.

#### I.

EYES not down-dropt nor over-bright,  
but fed  
With the clear-pointed flame of  
chastity,  
Clear, without heat, undying, tended  
by

Pure vestal thoughts in the translucent fane  
 Of her still spirit; locks not wide-dispread,  
 Madonna-wise on either side her head;  
 Sweet lips whereon perpetually did reign  
 The summer calm of golden charity,  
 Were fixed shadows of thy fixed mood,  
 Revered Isabel, the crown and head,  
 The stately flower of female fortitude,  
 Of perfect wifehood and pure lowlihead.

## II.

The intuitive decision of a bright  
 And thorough-edged intellect to part  
 Error from crime; a prudence to withhold;  
 The laws of marriage character'd in gold  
 Upon the blanched tablets of her heart;  
 A love still burning upward, giving light  
 To read those laws; an accent very low  
 In blandishment, but a most silver flow  
 Of subtle-paced counsel in distress,  
 Right to the heart and brain, tho' undescried,  
 Winning its way with extreme gentleness  
 Thro' all the outworks of suspicious pride;  
 A courage to endure and to obey;  
 A hate of gossip parlance, and of sway,  
 Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid life,  
 The queen of marriage, a most perfect wife.

## III.

The mellow'd reflex of a winter moon;  
 A clear stream flowing with a muddy one,  
 Till in its onward current it absorbs  
 With swifter movement and in purer light

The vexed eddies of its wayward brother:  
 A leaning and upbearing parasite,  
 Clothing the stem, which else had fallen quite  
 With cluster'd flower-bells and ambrosial orbs  
 Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on each other—  
 Shadow forth thee:—the world hath not another  
 (Tho' all her fairest forms are types of thee,  
 And thou of God in thy great charity)  
 Of such a finish'd chasten'd purity.

## MARIANA.

'Mariana in the moated grange.'  
*Measure for Measure.*

WITH blackest moss the flower-plots  
 Were thickly crusted, one and all:  
 The rusted nails fell from the knots  
 That held the pear to the gable-wall.  
 The broken sheds look'd sad and strange:  
 Unlifted was the clinking latch;  
 Weeded and worn the ancient thatch  
 Upon the lonely moated grange.  
 She only said, 'My life is dreary,  
 He cometh not,' she said;  
 She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,  
 I would that I were dead!'  
 Her tears fell with the dews at even;  
 Her tears fell ere the dews were dried;  
 She could not look on the sweet heaven,  
 Either at morn or eventide.  
 After the flitting of the bats,  
 When thickest dark did trance the sky,  
 She drew her casement-curtain by,  
 And glanced athwart the glooming flats.  
 She only said, 'The night is dreary,  
 He cometh not,' she said;  
 She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,  
 I would that I were dead!'

Upon the middle of the night,  
Waking she heard the night-fowl  
crow :

The cock sung out an hour ere light :  
From the dark fen the oxen's low  
Came to her : without hope of change,  
In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,  
Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed  
morn

About the lonely moated grange.  
She only said, ' The day is dreary,  
He cometh not,' she said ;  
She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !'

About a stone-cast from the wall  
A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,  
And o'er it many, round and small,  
The cluster'd marsh-mosses crept.  
Hard by a poplar shook alway,  
All silver-green with gnarled bark :  
For leagues no other tree did mark  
The level waste, the rounding gray.  
She only said, ' My life is dreary,  
He cometh not,' she said ;  
She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !'

And ever when the moon was low,  
And the shrill winds were up and  
away,  
In the white curtain, to and fro,  
She saw the gusty shadow sway.  
But when the moon was very low,  
And wild winds bound within their  
cell,  
The shadow of the poplar fell  
Upon her bed, across her brow.  
She only said, ' The night is  
dreary,  
He cometh not,' she said ;  
She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !'

All day within the dreamy house,  
The doors upon their hinges  
creak'd ;  
The blue fly sung in the pane ; the  
mouse  
Behind the mouldering wainscot  
shriek'd,  
Or from the crevice peer'd about.

Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,  
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,  
Old voices called her from without.  
She only said, ' My life is dreary,  
He cometh not,' she said ;  
She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !'

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,  
The slow clock ticking, and the  
sound

Which to the wooing wind aloof  
The poplar made, did all confound  
Her sense ; but most she loathed the  
hour

When the thick-moted sunbeam lay  
Athwart the chambers, and the day  
Was sloping toward his western  
bower.

Then, said she, ' I am very dreary,  
He will not come,' she said ;  
She wept, ' I am aweary, aweary,  
Oh God, that I were dead !'

## TO —.

## I.

CLEAR-HEADED friend, whose joyful  
scorn,  
Edged with sharp laughter, cuts  
atwain  
The knots that tangle human  
creeds.  
The wounding cords that bind and  
strain  
The heart until it bleeds,  
Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn  
Roof not a glance so keen as  
thine :  
If aught of prophecy be mine,  
Thou wilt not live in vain.

## II.

Low-cowering shall the Sophist sit ;  
Falsehood shall bare her plaited  
brow ;  
Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not  
now  
With shrilling shafts of subtle wit.  
Nor martyr flames, nor trenchant  
swords



Can do away that ancient lie ;  
A gentler death shall Falsehood die,  
Shot thro' and thr'o with cunning  
words.

III.

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,  
Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost  
need,

Thy kingly intellect shall feed,  
Until she be an athlete bold,  
And weary with a finger's touch  
Those writhed limbs of lightning  
speed ;

Like that strange angel which of old,  
Until the breaking of the light,  
Wrestled with wandering Israel,  
Past Yabbok brook the livelong  
night,  
And heaven's mazed signs stood still  
In the dim tract of Penuel.

MADELINE.

I.

THOU art not, steep'd in golden lan-  
guors,  
No tranced summer calm is thine,  
Ever varying Madeline.  
Thro' light and shadow thou dost  
range,  
Sudden glances, sweet and strange,  
Delicious spites and darling angers,  
And airy forms of fitting change.

II.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,  
Thou art perfect in love-lore.  
Revealings deep and clear are thine  
Of wealthy smiles: but who may  
know

Whether smile or frown be fleeter ?  
Whether smile or frown be sweeter,  
Who may know ?

Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow  
Light-glooming over eyes divine,  
Like little clouds sun-fringed, are  
thine,  
Ever varying Madeline.

Thy smile and frown are not aloof  
From one another.  
Each to each is dearest brother ;  
Hues of the silken sheeny woof  
Momently shot into each other.  
All the mystery is thine ;  
Smiling, frowning, evermore,  
Thou art perfect in love-lore,  
Ever varying Madeline.

III.

A subtle, sudden flame,  
By veering passion fann'd,  
About thee breaks and dances ;  
When I would kiss thy hand,  
The flush of anger'd shame  
O'erflows thy calmer glances,  
And o'er black brows drops down  
A sudden-curved frown :  
But when I turn away,  
Thou, willing me to stay,  
Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest ;  
But, looking fixedly the while,  
All my bounding heart entanglest  
In a golden-netted smile ;  
Then in madness and in bliss,  
If my lips should dare to kiss  
Thy taper fingers amorously,  
Again thou blushest angerly ;  
And o'er black brows drops down  
A sudden-curved frown.

SONG—THE OWL.

I.

WHEN cats run home and light is  
come,  
And dew is cold upon the ground,  
And the far-off stream is dumb,  
And the whirring sail goes round,  
And the whirring sail goes round ;  
Alone and warming his five wits,  
The white owl in the belfry sits.

II.

When merry milkmaids click the  
latch,  
And rarely smells the new-mown  
hay,  
And the cock hath sung beneath the  
thatch

Twice or thrice his roundelay,  
Twice or thrice his roundelay;  
Alone and warming his five wits,  
The white owl in the belfry sits.

## SECOND SONG.

TO THE SAME.

## I.

THY tuwhits are lull'd, I wot,  
Thy tuwhoos of yesternight,  
Which upon the dark afloat,  
So took echo with delight,  
So took echo with delight,  
That her voice untuneful grown,  
Wears all day a fainter tone.

## II.

I would mock thy chant anew ;  
But I cannot mimick it ;  
Not a whit of thy tuwhoo,  
Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
With a lengthen'd loud halloo,  
Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tu-  
whoo-o-o.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE  
ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn  
blew free  
In the silken sail of infancy,  
The tide of time flow'd back with me,  
The forward-flowing tide of time ;  
And many a sheeny summer-morn,  
Adown the Tigris I was borne,  
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,  
High-walled gardens green and old ;  
True Mussulman was I and sworn,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'  
The low and blomed foliage, drove  
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and  
clove  
The citron-shadows in the blue :  
By garden porches on the brim,

The costly doors flung open wide,  
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,  
And broider'd sofas on each side :  
In sooth it was a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans  
guard  
The outlet, did I turn away  
The boat-head down a broad canal  
From the main river sluiced, where all  
The sloping of the moon-lit sward  
Was damask-work, and deep inlay  
Of braided blooms unmown, which  
crept  
Adown to where the water slept.  
A goodly place, a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won  
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on  
My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,  
Until another night in night  
I enter'd, from the clearer light,  
Impower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,  
Imprisoning sweets, which, as they  
clomb  
Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the  
dome  
Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward ; and the clear canal  
Is rounded to as clear a lake.  
From the green rivage many a fall  
Of diamond rilletts musical,  
Thro' little crystal arches low  
Down from the central fountain's flow  
Fall'n silver-chiming, seemed to shake  
The sparkling flints beneath the prow.  
A goodly place, a goodly time,

For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.  
Above thro' many a bowery turn  
A walk with vary-color'd shells  
Wander'd engrain'd. On either side  
All round about the fragrant marge  
From fluted vase, and brazen urn  
In order, eastern flowers large,

Some dropping low their crimson  
bells  
Half-closed, and others studded wide  
With disks and tiars, fed the time  
With odor in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove  
In closest coverture upsprung,  
The living airs of middle night  
Died round the bulbul as he sung ;  
Not he : but something which possess'd  
The darkness of the world, delight,  
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,  
Ceasing not, mingled, unpress'd,  
Apart from place, withholding time,  
But flattering the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots  
Slumber'd : the solemn palms were  
ranged  
Above, unwoo'd of summer wind :  
A sudden splendor from behind  
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-  
green,  
And, flowing rapidly between  
Their interspaces, counterchanged  
The level lake with diamond-plots  
Of dark and bright. A lovely time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,  
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,  
Grew darker from that under-flame :  
So, leaping lightly from the boat,  
With silver anchor left afloat,  
In marvel whence that glory came  
Upon me, as in sleep I sank  
In cool soft turf upon the bank,  
Entranced with that place and time,  
So worthy of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was  
drawn—  
A realm of pleasance, many a mound,  
And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn  
Full of the city's stilly sound,  
And deep myrrh-thickets blowing  
round

The stately cedar, tamarisks,  
Thick rosaries of scented thorn,  
Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks  
Graven with emblems of the time,  
In honor of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

With dazed vision unawares  
From the long alley's latticed shade  
Emerged, I came upon the great  
Pavilion of the Caliphath.  
Right to the carven cedarn doors,  
Flung inward over spangled floors,  
Broad-based flights of marble stairs  
Ran up with golden balustrade,  
After the fashion of the time,  
And humor of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

The fourscore windows all alight  
As with the quintessence of flame,  
A million tapers flaring bright  
From twisted silvers look'd to shame  
The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd  
Upon the mooned domes aloof  
In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd  
Hundreds of crescents on the roof  
Of night new-risen, that marvellous  
time  
To celebrate the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly  
Gazed on the Persian girl alone,  
Serene with argent-lidded eyes  
Amorous, and lashes like to rays  
Of darkness, and a brow of pearl  
Tressed with redolent ebony,  
In many a dark delicious curl,  
Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone ;  
The sweetest lady of the time,  
Well worthy of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,  
Pure silver, underpropt a rich  
Throne of the massive ore, from  
which  
Down-droop'd, in many a floating  
fold,  
Engarlanded and diaper'd  
With inwrought flowers, a cloth of  
gold.

Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd  
 With merriment of kingly pride,  
 Sole star of all that place and time,  
 I saw him—in his golden prime,  
 THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID.

## ODE TO MEMORY.

ADDRESSED TO —.

I.

THOU who stealest fire,  
 From the fountains of the past,  
 To glorify the present; oh, haste,  
 Visit my low desire!  
 Strengthen me, enlighten me!  
 I faint in this obscurity,  
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

II.

Come not as thou camest of late,  
 Flinging the gloom of yesternight  
 On the white day; but robed in soft-  
 en'd light  
 Of orient state.  
 Whilome thou camest with the morn-  
 ing mist,  
 Even as a maid, whose stately brow  
 The dew-impearled winds of dawn  
 have kiss'd,  
 When, she, as thou,  
 Stays on her floating locks the lovely  
 freight  
 Of overflowing blooms, and earliest  
 shoots  
 Of orient green, giving safe pledge of  
 fruits,  
 Which in wintertide shall star  
 The black earth with brilliance rare.

III.

Whilome thou camest with the morn-  
 ing mist,  
 And with the evening cloud,  
 Showering thy gleaned wealth into  
 my open breast  
 (Those peerless flowers which in the  
 rudest wind  
 Never grow sere,

When rooted in the garden of the  
 mind,  
 Because they are the earliest of the  
 year).

Nor was the night thy shroud.  
 In sweet dreams softer than unbroken  
 rest  
 Thou leddest by the hand thine infant  
 Hope.  
 The eddying of her garments caught  
 from thee  
 The light of thy great presence; and  
 the cope

Of the half-attain'd futurity,  
 Tho' deep not fathomless,  
 Was cloven with the million stars  
 which tremble  
 O'er the deep mind of dauntless in-  
 fancy.  
 Small thought was there of life's dis-  
 tress;

For sure she deem'd no mist of earth  
 could dull  
 Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen  
 and beautiful:  
 Sure she was nigher to heaven's  
 spheres,  
 Listening the lordly music flowing  
 from

The illimitable years.  
 O strengthen me, enlighten me!  
 I faint in this obscurity,  
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,  
 Thou of the many tongues, the myriad  
 eyes!  
 Thou comest not with shows of flaunt-  
 ing vines

Unto mine inner eye,  
 Divinest Memory!  
 Thou wert not nursed by the water-  
 fall  
 Which ever sounds and shines  
 A pillar of white light upon the  
 wall  
 Of purple cliffs, aloof descried:  
 Come from the woods that belt the  
 gray hill-side,  
 The seven elms, the poplars four  
 That stand beside my father's door,



"I WOULD THAT I WERE DEAD!" —Page 7.





"THE DARK DESERTED HOUSE."—Page 17.





And chiefly from the brook that loves  
 To pur! o'er matted cress and ribbed  
 sand,  
 Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,  
 Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,  
 In every elbow and turn,  
 The filter'd tribute of the rough wood-  
 land,  
 O! hither lead thy feet!  
 Pour round mine ears the livelong  
 bleat  
 Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wat-  
 tled folds,  
 Upon the ridged wolds,  
 When the first matin-song hath wak-  
 en'd loud  
 Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,  
 What time the amber morn  
 Forth gushes from beneath a low-  
 hung cloud.

## v.

Large dowries doth the raptured eye  
 To the young spirit present  
 When first she is wed;  
 And like a bride of old  
 In triumph led,  
 With music and sweet showers  
 Of festal flowers,  
 Unto the dwelling she must sway.  
 Well hast thou done, great artist  
 Memory,  
 In setting round thy first experiment  
 With royal frame-work of  
 wrought gold;  
 Needs must thou dearly love thy first  
 essay,  
 And foremost in thy various gallery  
 Place it, where sweetest sunlight  
 falls  
 Upon the storied walls;  
 For the discovery  
 And newness of thine art so pleased  
 thee,  
 That all which thou hast drawn of  
 fairest  
 Or boldest since, but lightly weighs  
 With thee unto the love thou bearest  
 The first-born of thy genius. Artist-  
 like,  
 Ever retiring thou dost gaze  
 On the prime labor of thine early days:

No matter what the sketch might be:  
 Whether the high field on the bushless  
 Pike,  
 Or even a sand-built ridge  
 Of heaped hills that mound the sea,  
 Overblown with murmurs harsh,  
 Or even a lowly cottage whence we see  
 Stretch'd wide and wild the waste  
 enormous marsh,  
 Where from the frequent bridge,  
 Like emblems of infinity,  
 The trenched waters run from sky to  
 sky;  
 Or a garden hower'd close  
 With plaited alleys of the trailing  
 rose,  
 Long alleys falling down to twilight  
 grots,  
 Or opening upon level plots  
 Of crowned lilies, standing near  
 Purple-spiked lavender:  
 Whither in after life retired  
 From brawling storms,  
 From weary wind,  
 With youthful fancy re-inspired,  
 We may hold converse with all  
 forms  
 Of the many-sided mind,  
 And those whom passion hath not  
 blinded,  
 Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.  
 My friend, with you to live alone,  
 Were how much better than to own  
 A crown, a sceptre, and a throne!  
 O strengthen me, enlighten me!  
 I faint in this obscurity,  
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

## SONG.

## 1.

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours  
 Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers:  
 To himself he talks;  
 For at eventide, listening earnestly,  
 At his work you may hear him sob  
 and sigh  
 In the walks;

Earthward he boweth the heavy stalks  
Of the mouldering flowers:  
Heavily hangs the broad sun-flower  
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly;  
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

## II.

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,  
As a sick man's room when he taketh repose  
An hour before death;  
My very heart faints and my whole soul grieves  
At the moist, rich smell of the rotting leaves,  
And the breath  
Of the fading edges of box beneath,  
And the year's last rose.  
Heavily hangs the broad sun-flower  
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly;  
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

## A CHARACTER.

With a half-glance upon the sky  
At night he said, 'The wanderings  
Of this most intricate Universe  
Teach me the nothingness of things  
Yet could not all creation pierce  
Beyond the bottom of his eye.

He spake of beauty: that the dull  
Saw no divinity in grass,  
Life in dead stones, or spirit in air;  
Then looking as 'twere in a glass,  
He smooth'd his chin and sleek'd his hair,  
And said the earth was beautiful.

He spake of virtue: not the gods  
More purely, when they wish to charm  
Pallas and Juno sitting by:

And with a sweeping of the arm,  
And a lack-lustre dead-blue eye,  
Devolved his rounded periods.

Most delicately hour by hour  
He canvass'd human mysteries,  
And trod on silk, as if the winds  
Blew his own praises in his eyes,  
And stood aloof from other minds  
In impotence of fancied power.

With lips depress'd as he were meek,  
Himself unto himself he sold:  
Upon himself himself did feed:  
Quiet, dispassionate and cold,  
And other than his form of creed,  
With chisell'd features clear and sleek.

## THE POET.

THE poet in a golden clime was born,  
With golden stars above;  
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,  
The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good and ill,  
He saw thro' his own soul.  
The marvel of the everlasting will,  
An open scroll,

Before him lay: with echoing feet he threaded  
The secretest walks of fame:  
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were headed  
And wing'd with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver tongue,  
And of so fierce a flight,  
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,  
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which bore  
Them earthward till they lit;  
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field flower,  
The fruitful wit

Cleaving, took root, and springing  
 forth anew  
 Where'er they fell, behold,  
 Like to the mother plant in semblance,  
 grew  
 A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to  
 fling  
 The winged shafts of truth,  
 To throng with stately blooms the  
 breathing spring  
 Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs  
 with beams,  
 Tho' one did fling the fire.  
 Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many  
 dreams  
 Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth,  
 the world  
 Like one great garden show'd,  
 And thro' the wreaths of floating dark  
 upcur'd,  
 Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august  
 sunrise  
 Her beautiful bold brow,  
 When rites and forms before his burn-  
 ing eyes  
 Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden  
 robes  
 Sunn'd by those orient skies;  
 But round about the circles of the  
 globes  
 Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced  
 in flame  
 WISDOM, a name to shake  
 All evil-dreams of power—a sacred  
 name.

And when she spake,  
 Her words did gather thunder as they  
 ran,  
 And as the lightning to the thun-  
 der

Which follows it, riving the spirit of  
 man,  
 Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words.  
 No sword  
 Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,  
 But one poor poet's scroll, and with  
 his word  
 She shook the world.

THE POET'S MIND.

I.

VEX not thou the poet's mind  
 With thy shallow wit:  
 Vex not thou the poet's mind;  
 For thou canst not fathom it.  
 Clear and bright it should be ever,  
 Flowing like a crystal river;  
 Bright as light, and clear as wind.

II.

Dark-brow'd sophist, come not near;  
 All the place is holy ground;  
 Hollow smile and frozen sneer  
 Come not here.  
 Holy water will I pour  
 Into every spicy flower  
 Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it  
 around.  
 The flowers would faint at your cruel  
 cheer.  
 In your eye there is death,  
 There is frost in your breath  
 Which would blight the plants.  
 Where you stand you cannot hear  
 From the groves within  
 The wild-bird's din.  
 In the heart of the garden the merry  
 bird chants.  
 It would fall to the ground if you came  
 in.  
 In the middle leaps a fountain  
 Like sheet lightning,  
 Ever brightening  
 With a low melodious thunder;  
 All day and all night it is ever drawn  
 From the brain of the purple moun-  
 tain

Which stands in the distance yonder :  
 It springs on a level of bowery lawn,  
 And the mountain draws it from  
 Heaven above.  
 And it sings a song of undying love :  
 And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and  
 full,  
 You never would hear it ; your ears  
 are so dull ;  
 So keep where you are : you are foul  
 with sin ;  
 It would shrink to the earth if you  
 came in.

#### THE SEA-FAIRIES.

Slow sail'd the weary mariners and  
 saw,  
 Betwixt the green brink and the run-  
 ning foam,  
 Sweet faces, rounded arms, and  
 bosoms prest  
 To little harps of gold ; and while  
 they mused  
 Whispering to each other half in fear,  
 Shrill music reach'd them on the mid-  
 dle sea.

Whither away, whither away, whither  
 away ? fly no more.  
 Whither away from the high green  
 field, and the happy blossoming  
 shore ?  
 Day and night to the billow the foun-  
 tain calls :  
 Down shower the gambolling water-  
 falls  
 From wandering over the lea :  
 Out of the live-green heart of the dells  
 They freshen the silvery-crimson  
 shells,  
 And thick with white bells the clover-  
 hill swells  
 High over the full-toned sea ;  
 O hither, come hither and furl your  
 sails,  
 Come hither to me and to me :  
 Hither, come hither and frolic and  
 play ;

Here it is only the mew that wails ;  
 We will sing to you all the day :  
 Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,  
 For here are the blissful downs and  
 dales,  
 And merrily, merrily carol the gales,  
 And the spangle dances in bight and  
 bay,  
 And the rainbow forms and flies on  
 the land  
 Over the islands free ;  
 And the rainbow lives in the curve of  
 the sand :  
 Hither, come hither and see ;  
 And the rainbow hangs on the poising  
 wave,  
 And sweet is the color of cove and  
 cave,  
 And sweet shall your welcome be :  
 O hither, come hither, and be our  
 lords,  
 For merry brides are we :  
 We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak  
 sweet words :  
 O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten  
 With pleasure and love and jubilee :  
 O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten  
 When the sharp clear twang of the  
 golden chords  
 Runs up the ridged sea.  
 Who can light on as happy a shore  
 All the world o'er, all the world o'er ?  
 Whither away ? listen and stay : mari-  
 ner, mariner, fly no more.

#### THE DESERTED HOUSE.

i.

LIFE and Thought have gone away  
 Side by side,  
 Leaving door and windows wide :  
 Careless tenants they !

ii.

All within is dark as night :  
 In the windows is no light ;  
 And no murmur at the door,  
 So frequent on its hinge before.

III.

Close the door, the shutters close,  
Or thro' the windows we shall see  
The nakedness and vacancy  
Of the dark deserted house.

IV.

Come away : no more of mirth  
Is here or merry-making sound.  
The house was builded of the earth,  
And shall fall again to ground.

V.

Come away : for Life and Thought  
Here no longer dwell ;  
But in a city glorious—  
A great and distant city—have bought  
A mansion incorruptible.  
Would they could have stayed with  
us !

THE DYING SWAN.

I.

THE plain was grassy, wild and bare,  
Wide, wild, and open to the air,  
Which had built up everywhere  
An under-roof of doleful gray.  
With an inner voice the river ran,  
Adown it floated a dying swan,  
And loudly did lament.  
It was the middle of the day.  
Ever the weary wind went on,  
And took the reed-tops as it went.

II.

Some blue peaks in the distance rose,  
And white against the cold-white sky,  
Shone out their crowning snows.  
One willow over the river wept,  
And shook the wave as the wind did  
sigh ;  
Above in the wind was the swallow,  
Chasing itself at its own wild  
will,  
And far thro' the marish green  
and still

The tangled water-courses slept,  
Shot over with purple, and green, and  
yellow.

III.

The wild swan's death-hymn took the  
soul  
Of that waste place with joy  
Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear  
The warble was low, and full and  
clear ;  
And floating about the under-sky,  
Prevailing in weakness, the coronach  
stole  
Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear ;  
But anon her awful jubilant voice,  
With a music strange and manifold,  
Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold ;  
As when a mighty people rejoice  
With shawms, and with cymbals, and  
harps of gold,  
And the tumult of their acclaim is  
roll'd  
Thro' the open gates of the city afar.  
To the shepherd who watcheth the  
evening star.  
And the creeping mosses and clamber-  
ing weeds,  
And the willow-branches hoar and  
dank,  
And the wavy swell of the souging  
reefs,  
And the wave-worn horns of the  
echoing bank,  
And the silvery marish-flowers that  
throng  
The desolate creeks and pools among,  
Were flooded over with eddying song.

A DIRGE.

I.

Now is done thy long day's work :  
Fold thy palms across thy breast,  
Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest.  
Let them rave.  
Shadows of the silver birk  
Sweep the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

## II.

Thee nor carketh care nor slander ;  
Nothing but the small cold worm  
Fretteth thine enshrouded form.

Let them rave.

Light and shadow ever wander  
O'er the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

## III.

Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed ;  
Chanteth not the brooding bee  
Sweeter tones than calumny ?

Let them rave.

Thou wilt never raise thine head  
From the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

## IV.

Crocodiles wept tears for thee ;  
The woodbine and eglaree  
Drip sweeter dews than traitor's tear.

Let them rave.

Rain makes music in the tree  
O'er the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

## V.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,  
Bramble roses, faint and pale,  
And long purples of the dale.

Let them rave.

These in every shower creep  
Thro' the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

## VI.

The gold-eyed kingcups fine,  
The frail bluebell peereth over  
Rare broidry of the purple clover.

Let them rave.

Kings have no such couch as thine,  
As the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

## VII.

Wild words wander here and there :  
God's great gift of speech abused  
Makes thy niemory confused :

But let them rave.

The balm-cricket carols clear  
In the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

## LOVE AND DEATH.

WHAT time the mighty moon was  
gathering light  
Love paced the thymy plots of Para-  
dise,  
And all about him roll'd his lustrous  
eyes ;  
When, turning round a cassia, full in  
view,  
Death, walking all alone beneath a  
yew,  
And talking to himself, first met his  
sight :  
' You must begone,' said Death,  
' these walks are mine.'  
Love wept and spread his sheeny vans  
for flight ;  
Yet ere he parted said, ' This hour is  
thine :  
Thou art the shadow of life, and as  
the tree  
Stands in the sun and shadows all be-  
neath,  
So in the light of great eternity  
Life eminent creates the shade of  
death ;  
The shadow passeth when the tree  
shall fall,  
But I shall reign for ever over all.'

## THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.

MY heart is wasted with my woe,  
Oriana.  
There is no rest for me below,  
Oriana.  
When the long dun wolds are ribb'd  
with snow,  
And loud the Norland whirlwinds  
blow,  
Oriana,  
Alone I wander to and fro,  
Oriana.

*The Ballad of Oriana.*

19

Ere the light on dark was growing,  
Oriana,  
At midnight the cock was crowing,  
Oriana :  
Winds were blowing, waters flowing,  
We heard the steeds to battle going,  
Oriana ;  
Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,  
Oriana.

In the yew-wood black as night,  
Oriana,  
Ere I rode into the fight,  
Oriana,  
While blissful tears blinded my sight  
By star-shine and by moonlight,  
Oriana,  
I to thee my troth did plight,  
Oriana.

She stood upon the castle wall,  
Oriana :  
She watch'd my crest among them all,  
Oriana :  
She saw me fight, she heard me call,  
When forth there stept a foeman tall,  
Oriana,  
Atween me and the castle wall,  
Oriana.

The bitter arrow went aside,  
Oriana :  
The false, false arrow went aside,  
Oriana :  
The damned arrow glanced aside,  
And pierced thy heart, my love, my  
bride,  
Oriana !  
Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,  
Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space,  
Oriana.  
Loud, loud rung out the bugle's brays,  
Oriana.  
Oh ! deathful stabs were dealt apace,  
The battle deepen'd in its place,  
Oriana ;  
But I was down upon my face,  
Oriana.

They should have stabb'd me where I  
lay,  
Oriana !

How could I rise and come away,  
Oriana ?  
How could I look upon the day ?  
They should have stabb'd me where I  
lay,  
Oriana  
They should have trod me into clay,  
Oriana.

O breaking heart that will not break,  
Oriana !  
O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,  
Oriana !  
Thousmolest, but thou dost not speak,  
And then the tears run down my  
cheek,  
Oriana :  
What wastest thou ? whom dost thou  
seek,  
Oriana ?

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,  
Oriana.  
Thou comest atween me and the skies,  
Oriana.  
I feel the tears of blood arise  
Up from my heart unto my eyes,  
Oriana.  
Within thy heart my arrow lies,  
Oriana.

O cursed hand ! O cursed blow !  
Oriana !  
O happy thou that liest low,  
Oriana !  
All night the silence seems to flow  
Beside me in my utter woe,  
Oriana.  
A weary, weary way I go,  
Oriana.

When Norland winds pipe down the  
sea,  
Oriana,  
I walk, I dare not think of thee,  
Oriana.  
Thou liest beneath the greenwood  
tree,  
I dare not die and come to thee,  
Oriana.  
I hear the roaring of the sea,  
Oriana.

## CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbor villages  
Playing mad pranks along the healthy  
leas;

Two strangers meeting at a festival;  
Two lovers whispering by an orchard  
wall;

Two lives bound fast in one with  
golden ease;

Two graves grass-green beside a gray  
church-tower,  
Wash'd with still rains and daisy blos-  
somed;

Two children in one hamlet born and  
bred;

So runs the round of life from hour to  
hour.

## THE MERMAN.

## I.

WHO would be  
A merman bold,  
Sitting alone,  
Singing alone  
Under the sea,  
With a crown of gold,  
On a throne?

## II.

I would be a merman bold,  
I would sit and sing the whole of the  
day;

I would fill the sea-halls with a voice  
of power;

But at night I would roam abroad and  
play

With the mermaids in and out of the  
rocks,

Dressing their hair with the white sea-  
flower;

And holding them back by their flow-  
ing locks

I would kiss them often under the sea,  
And kiss them again till they kiss'd  
me

Laughingly, laughingly;  
And then we would wander away,  
away

To the pale-green sea-groves straight  
and high,  
Chasing each other merrily.

## III.

There would be neither moon nor star;  
But the wave would make music above  
us afar—

Low thunder and light in the magic  
night—

Neither moon nor star.

We would call aloud in the dreamy  
dells,

Call to each other and whoop and cry  
All night, merrily, merrily;

They would pelt me with starry span-  
gles and shells,

Laughing and clapping their hands  
between,

All night, merrily, merrily;

But I would throw to them back in  
mine

Turkis and agate and almondine;  
Then leaping out upon them unseen

I would kiss them often under the sea,  
And kiss them again till they kiss'd

me

Laughingly, laughingly.

Oh! what a happy life were mine  
Under the hollow-hung ocean green!

Soft are the moss-beds under the sea;  
We would live merrily, merrily.

## THE MERMAID.

## I.

WHO would be  
A mermaid fair,  
Singing alone,  
Combing her hair  
Under the sea,  
In a golden curl  
With a comb of pearl,  
On a throne?

## II.

I would be a mermaid fair;  
I would sing to myself the whole of  
the day;



With a comb of pearl I would comb  
my hair ;  
And still as I comb'd I would sing  
and say,  
' Who is it loves me ? who loves not  
me ?'  
I would comb my hair till my ringlets  
would fall  
    Low adown, low adown,  
From under my starry sea-bud crown  
    Low adown and around,  
And I should look like a fountain of  
gold  
    Springing alone  
    With a shrill inner sound,  
    Over the throne  
    In the midst of the hall ;  
Till that great sea-snake under the sea  
From his coiled sleeps in the central  
deeps  
Would slowly trail himself sevenfold  
Round the hall where I sate, and look  
in at the gate  
With his large calm eyes for the love  
of me.  
And all the mermen under the sea  
Would feel their immortality  
Die in their hearts for the love of me.

## III.

But at night I would wander away,  
away,  
    I would fling on each side my low-  
    flowing locks,  
And lightly vault from the throne and  
play  
    With the mermen in and out of the  
    rocks ;  
We would run to and fro, and hide  
and seek,  
    On the broad sea-wolds in the crim-  
    son shells,  
    Whose silvery spikes are nighest  
    the sea.  
But if any came near I would call, and  
shriek,  
And adown the steep like a wave I  
would leap  
    From the diamond-ledges that jut  
    from the dells ;  
For I would not be kiss'd by all who  
would list,

Of the bold merry mermen under the  
sea ;  
They would sue me, and woo me, and  
flatter me,  
In the purple twilights under the sea ;  
But the king of them all would carry  
me,  
Woo me, and win me, and marry me,  
In the branching jaspers under the sea ;  
Then all the dry pied things that be  
In the hueless mosses under the sea  
Would curl round my silver feet  
silently,  
All looking up for the love of me.  
And if I should carol aloud, from aloft  
All things that are forked, and horned,  
and soft  
Would lean out from the hollow sphere  
of the sea,  
All looking down for the love of me.

## ADELINE.

## I.

MYSTERY of mysteries,  
    Faintly smiling Adeline,  
    Scarce of earth nor all divine,  
Nor unhappy, nor at rest,  
    But beyond expression fair  
    With thy floating flaxen hair ;  
Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes  
    Take the heart from out my  
    breast.  
Wherefore those dim looks of thine,  
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

## II.

Whence that aery bloom of thine,  
    Like a lily which the sun  
    Looks thro' in his sad decline,  
    And a rose-bush leans upon,  
Thou that faintly smilest still,  
    As a Naiad in a well,  
    Looking at the set of day,  
Or a phantom two hours old  
    Of a maiden past away,  
Ere the placid lips be cold ?  
Wherefore those faint smiles of  
thine,  
    Spiritual Adeline ?

## III.

What hope or fear or joy is thine?  
 Who talketh with thee, Adeline?  
 For sure thou art not all alone.  
 Do beating hearts of salient  
 springs  
 Keep measure with thine own?  
 Hast thou heard the butterflies  
 What they say betwixt their  
 wings?  
 Or in stillest evenings  
 With what voice the violet woos  
 To his heart the silver dews?  
 Or when little airs arise,  
 How the merry bluebell rings  
 To the mosses underneath?  
 Hast thou look'd upon the  
 breath  
 Of the lilies at sunrise?  
 Wherefore that faint smile of thine,  
 Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?

## IV.

Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,  
 Some spirit of a crimson rose  
 In love with thee forgets to close  
 His curtains, wasting odorous sighs  
 All night long on darkness blind.  
 What aileth thee? whom waitest thou  
 With thy soften'd, shadow'd brow,  
 And those dew-lit eyes of thine,  
 Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

## V.

Lovest thou the doleful wind  
 When thou gazest at the skies?  
 Doth the low-tongued Orient  
 Wander from the side of the  
 morn,  
 Dripping with Sabæan spice  
 On thy pillow, lowly bent  
 With melodious airs lovelorn,  
 Breathing Light against thy face,  
 While his locks a-drooping twined  
 Round thy neck in subtle ring  
 Make a carcanet of rays.  
 And ye talk together still,  
 In the language wherewith Spring  
 Letters cowslips on the hill?  
 Hence that look and smile of thine,  
 Spiritual Adeline.

## MARGARET.

## I.

O SWEET pale Margaret,  
 O rare pale Margaret,  
 What lit your eyes with tearful power,  
 Like moonlight on a falling shower?  
 Who lent you, love, your mortal  
 dower  
 Of pensive thought and aspect  
 pale,  
 Your melancholy sweet and frail  
 As perfume of the cuckoo-flower?  
 From the westward-winding flood,  
 From the evening-lighted wood,  
 From all things outward you have  
 won  
 A tearful grace, as tho' you stood  
 Between the rainbow and the sun.  
 The very smile before you speak,  
 That dimples your transparent  
 cheek,  
 Encircles all the heart, and feedeth  
 The senses with a still delight  
 Of dainty sorrow without sound,  
 Like the tender amber round,  
 Which the moon about her spread-  
 eth,  
 Moving thro' a fleecy night.

## II.

You love, remaining peacefully,  
 To hear the murmur of the strife,  
 But enter not the toil of life.  
 Your spirit is the calmed sea,  
 Laid by the tumult of the fight.  
 You are the evening star, always  
 Remaining betwixt dark and  
 bright:  
 Lull'd echoes of laborious day  
 Come to you, gleams of mellow  
 light  
 Float by you on the verge of night.

## III.

What can it matter, Margaret,  
 What songs below the waning  
 stars  
 The lion-heart, Plantagenet,  
 Sang looking thro' his prison  
 bars?

Exquisite Margaret, who can  
tell  
The last wild thought of Chatelet,  
Just ere the falling axe did part  
The burning brain from the true  
heart,  
Even in her sight he loved so  
well ?

## IV.

A fairy shield your Genius made  
And gave you on your natal day.  
Your sorrow, only sorrow's shade,  
Keeps real sorrow far away.  
You move not in such solitudes,  
You are not less divine,  
But more human in your moods,  
Than your twin-sister, Adeline.  
Your hair is darker, and your eyes  
Touch'd with a somewhat darker  
hue,  
And less aërially blue,  
But ever trembling thro' the dew  
Of dainty-woeful sympathies.

## V.

O sweet pale Margaret,  
O rare pale Margaret,  
Come down, come down, and hear me  
speak :  
Tie up the ringlets on your cheek :  
The sun is just about to set,  
The arching limes are tall and shady,  
And faint, rainy lights are seen,  
Moving in the leavy beech.  
Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,  
Where all day long you sit  
between  
Joy and woe, and whisper each.  
Or only look across the lawn,  
Look out below your bower-eaves,  
Look down, and let your blue eyes  
dawn  
Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves.

## ROSALIND.

## I.

My Rosalind, my Rosalind,  
My frolic falcon, with bright eyes,

Whose free delight, from any height  
of rapid flight,  
Stoops at all game that wing the skies.  
My Rosalind, my Rosalind,  
My bright-eyed, wild-eyed falcon,  
whither,  
Careless both of wind and weather,  
Whither fly ye, what game spy ye,  
Up or down the streaming wind ?

## II.

The quick lark's closest-caroll'd  
strains,  
The shadow rushing up the sea.  
The lightning flash atween the rains,  
The sunlight driving down the lea,  
The leaping stream, the very wind,  
That will not stay, upon his way,  
To stoop the cowlslip to the plains,  
Is not so clear and bold and free  
As you, my falcon Rosalind.  
You care not for another's pains,  
Because you are the soul of joy,  
Bright metal all without alloy.  
Life shoots and glances thro' your  
veins,  
And flashes off a thousand ways,  
Thro' lips and eyes in subtle rays.  
Your hawk-eyes are keen and bright,  
Keen with triumph, watching still  
To pierce me thro' with pointed light ;  
But oftentimes they flash and glitter  
Like sunshine on a dancing rill,  
And your words are seeming-bitter,  
Sharp and few, but seeming-bitter  
From excess of swift delight.

## III.

Come down, come home, my Rosalind,  
My gay young hawk, my Rosalind :  
Too long you keep the upper skies ;  
Too long you roam and wheel at will ;  
But we must hood your random eyes,  
That care not whom they kill,  
And your cheek, whose brilliant hue  
Is so sparkling-fresh to view,  
Some red heath-flower in the dew,  
Touch'd with sunrise. We must bind  
And keep you fast, my Rosalind,  
Fast, fast, my wild-eyed Rosalind,  
And clip your wings, and make you  
love :

When we have lured you from above,  
 And that delight of frolic flight, by  
     day or night,  
 From North to South,  
 We'll bind you fast in silken cords,  
 And kiss away the bitter words  
 From off your rosy mouth.

## ELEÄNORE.

## I.

THY dark eyes open'd not,  
 Nor first reveal'd themselves to  
     English air,  
     For there is nothing here,  
 Which, from the outward to the  
 inward brought,  
 Moulded thy baby thought.  
 Far off from human neighborhood,  
 Thou wert born, on a summer  
 morn,  
 A mile beneath the cedar-wood.  
 Thy bounteous forehead was not  
 fann'd  
     With breezes from our oaken  
 glades,  
 But thou wert nursed in some delicious  
 land  
     Of lavish lights, and floating  
 shades:  
 And flattering thy childish thought  
     The oriental fairy brought,  
     At the moment of thy birth,  
 From old well-heads of haunted rills,  
 And the hearts of purple hills,  
 And shadow'd coves on a sunny  
 shore,  
     The choicest wealth of all the  
 earth,  
     Jewel or shell, or starry ore,  
 To deck thy cradle, Eleänore.

## II.

Or the yellow-banded bees,  
 Thro' half-open lattices  
 Coming in the scented breeze.  
     Fed thee, a child, lying alone,  
     With whitest honey in fairy gar-  
 dens cull'd—  
 A glorious child, dreaming alone,

In silk-soft folds, upon yielding  
 down,  
 With the hum of swarming bees  
 Into dreamful slumber lull'd.

## III.

Who may minister to thee?  
 Summer herself should minister  
     To thee, with fruitage golden-  
 rinded  
     On golden salvers, or it may be,  
 Youngest Autumn, in a bower  
 Grape-thicken'd from the light, and  
 blinded  
     With many a deep-hued bell-like  
 flower  
 Of fragrant trailers, when the air  
     Sleepeth over all the heaven,  
 And the crag that fronts the  
 Even,  
     All along the shadowing shore,  
 Crimsons over an inland mere,  
 Eleänore!

## IV.

How may full-sail'd verse express,  
 How may measured words adore  
     The full-flowing harmony  
 Of thy swan-like stateliness,  
 Eleänore?  
     The luxuriant symmetry  
 Of thy floating gracefulness,  
 Eleänore?  
     Every turn and glance of thine,  
 Every lineament divine,  
 Eleänore,  
     And the steady sunset glow,  
 That stays upon thee? For  
 in thee  
     Is nothing sudden, nothing sin-  
 gle;  
 Like two streams of incense free  
     From one censer in one shrine,  
 Thought and motion mingle,  
 Mingle ever. Motions flow  
 To one another, even as tho'  
 They were modulated so  
     To an unheard melody,  
 Which lives about thee, and a sweep  
 Of richest pauses, evermore  
 Drawn from each other mellow-deep;  
 Who may express thee, Eleänore?

v.

I stand before thee, Eleänore ;  
 I see thy beauty gradually unfold,  
 Daily and hourly, more and more.  
 I muse, as in a trance, the while  
 Slowly, as from a cloud of gold,  
 Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile,  
 I muse, as in a trance, whene'er  
 The languors of thy love-deep  
 eyes  
 Float on to me. I would I were  
 So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,  
 To stand apart, and to adore,  
 Gazing on thee for evermore,  
 Serene, imperial Eleänore !

vi.

Sometimes, with most intensity  
 Gazing, I seem to see  
 Thought folded over thought, smiling  
 asleep,  
 Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep  
 In thy large eyes, that, overpower'd  
 quite,  
 I cannot veil, or droop my sight,  
 But am as nothing in its light :  
 As tho' a star, in inmost heaven set,  
 Ev'n while we gaze on it,  
 Should slowly round his orb, and  
 slowly grow  
 To a full face, there like a sun re-  
 main  
 Fix'd—then as slowly fade again,  
 And draw itself to what it was  
 before ;  
 So full, so deep, so slow,  
 Thought seems to come and go  
 In thy large eyes, imperial Eleä-  
 nore.

vii.

As thunder-clouds that, hung on high,  
 Roof'd the world with doubt and  
 fear,  
 Floating thro' an evening atmosphere,  
 Grow golden all about the sky ;  
 In thee all passion becomes passion-  
 less,  
 Touch'd by thy spirit's mellowness,  
 Losing his fire and active might  
 In a silent meditation,

Falling into a still delight,  
 And luxury of contemplation :  
 As waves that up a quiet cove  
 Rolling slide, and lying still  
 Shadow forth the banks at  
 will :  
 Or sometimes they swell and move,  
 Pressing up against the land,  
 With motions of the outer sea :  
 And the self-same influence  
 Controlleth all the soul and sense  
 Of Passion gazing upon thee.  
 His bow-string slacken'd, languid  
 Love,  
 Leaning his cheek upon his hand,  
 Droops both his wings, regarding  
 thee,  
 And so would languish evermore,  
 Serene, imperial Eleänore.

viii.

But when I see thee roam, with tresses  
 unconfined,  
 While the amorous, odorous wind  
 Breathes low between the sunset and  
 the moon ;  
 Or, in a shadowy saloon,  
 On silken cushions half reclined ;  
 I watch thy grace ; and in its  
 place  
 My heart a charmed slumber  
 keeps,  
 While I muse upon thy face ;  
 And a languid fire creeps  
 Thro' my veins to all my frame,  
 Dissolvingly and slowly : soon  
 From thy rose-red lips MY name  
 Floweth : and then, as in a swoon,  
 With dinning sound my ears are  
 rife,  
 My tremulous tongue faltereth,  
 I lose my color, I lose my breath,  
 I drink the cup of a costly death,  
 Brimm'd with delirious draughts of  
 warmest life.  
 I die with my delight, before  
 I hear what I would hear from  
 thee ;  
 Yet tell my name again to me  
 I *would* be dying evermore,  
 So dying ever, Eleänore.

## I.

My life is full of weary days,  
 But good things have not kept aloof,  
 Nor wander'd into other ways:  
 I have not lack'd thy mild reproof,  
 Nor golden largess of thy praise.

And now shake hands across the  
 brink  
 Of that deep grave to which I go:  
 Shake hands once more: I cannot  
 sink  
 So far—far down, but I shall know  
 Thy voice, and answer from below.

## II.

When in the darkness over me  
 The four-handed mole shall scrape,  
 Plant thou no dusky cypress-tree,  
 Nor wreath thy cap with doleful  
 crape,  
 But pledge me in the flowing grape.

And when the sappy field and wood  
 Grow green beneath the showery  
 gray,  
 And rugged barks begin to bud,  
 And thro' damp holts new-flush'd  
 with may,  
 Ring sudden scritchings of the jay,

Then let wise Nature work her will,  
 And on my clay her darnel grow;  
 Come only, when the days are still,  
 And at my headstone whisper low,  
 And tell me if the woodbines blow.

## EARLY SONNETS.

## I.

TO ———.

As when with downcast eyes we muse  
 and brood,  
 And ebb into a former life, or seem  
 To lapse far back in some confused  
 dream  
 To states of mystical similitude;  
 If one but speaks or hems or stirs his  
 chair,

Ever the wonder waxeth more and  
 more,  
 So that we say, 'All this hath been  
 before,  
 All this hath been, I know not when  
 or where.'  
 So, friend, when first I look'd upon  
 your face,  
 Our thought gave answer each to  
 each, so true—  
 Opposed mirrors each reflecting  
 each—  
 That tho' I knew not in what time or  
 place,  
 Methought that I had often met with  
 you,  
 And either lived in either's heart and  
 speech.

## TO J. M. K.

My hope and heart is with thee—thou  
 wilt be  
 A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest  
 To scare church-harpies from the mas-  
 ter's feast;  
 Our dusted velvets have much need of  
 thee:  
 Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old  
 saws,  
 Distill'd from some worm-canker'd  
 homily;  
 But spurr'd at heart with fiercest  
 energy  
 To embattail and to wall about thy  
 cause  
 With iron-worded proof, hating to  
 hark  
 The humming of the drowsy pulpit-  
 drone  
 Half God's good sabbath, while the  
 worn-out clerk  
 Brow-beats his desk below. Thou  
 from a throne  
 Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the  
 dark  
 Arrows of lightnings. I will stand  
 and mark.

## III.

MINE be the strength of spirit, full  
 and free,



"MY LIFE IS FULL OF WEARY DAYS"—Page 26.





Like some broad river rushing down  
 alone,  
 With the selfsame impulse wherewith  
 he was thrown:  
 From his loud fount upon the echoing  
 lea:—  
 Which with increasing might doth  
 forward flee  
 By town, and tower, and hill, and  
 cape, and isle,  
 And in the middle of the green salt  
 sea  
 Keeps his blue waters fresh for many  
 a mile.  
 Mine be the power which ever to its  
 sway  
 Will win the wise at once, and by  
 degrees  
 May into uncongenial spirits flow;  
 Ev'n as the warm gulf-stream of  
 Florida  
 Floats far away into the Northern seas  
 The lavish growths of southern  
 Mexico.

## iv.

## ALEXANDER.

WARRIOR of God, whose strong right  
 arm debased  
 The throne of Persia, when her Satrap  
 bled  
 At Issus by the Syrian gates, or fled  
 Beyond the Memmian naphtha-pits,  
 disgraced  
 For ever—thee (thy pathway sand-  
 erased)  
 Gliding with equal crowns two ser-  
 pents led  
 Joyful to that palm-planted fountain-  
 fed  
 Ammonian Oasis in the waste.  
 There in a silent shade of laurel  
 brown  
 Apart the Chamian Oracle divine  
 Shelter'd his unapproached mysteries:  
 High things were spoken there,  
 unhand'd down;  
 Only they saw thee from the secret  
 shrine  
 Returning with hot cheek and kindled  
 eyes.

## v.

## BUONAPARTE.

HE thought to quell the stubborn  
 hearts of oak,  
 Madman!—to chain with chains, and  
 bind with bands  
 That island queen who sways the  
 floods and lands  
 From Ind to Ind, but in fair daylight  
 woke,  
 When from her wooden walls,—lit by  
 sure hands,—  
 With thunders, and with lightnings,  
 and with smoke,—  
 Peal after peal, the British battle  
 broke,  
 Lulling the brine against the Coptic  
 sands.  
 We taught him lowlier moods, when  
 Elsinore  
 Heard the war moan along the dis-  
 tant sea,  
 Rocking with shatter'd spars, with  
 sudden fires  
 Flamed over: at Trafalgar yet once  
 more  
 We taught him: late he learned  
 humility  
 Perforce, like those whom Gideon  
 school'd with briers.

## vi.

## POLAND.

How long, O God, shall men be rid-  
 den down,  
 And trampled under by the last and  
 least  
 Of men? The heart of Poland hath  
 not ceased  
 To quiver, tho' her sacred blood doth  
 drown  
 The fields, and out of every smoulder-  
 ing town  
 Cries to Thee, lest brute Power be  
 increased,  
 Till that o'ergrown Barbarian in the  
 East  
 Transgress his ample bound to some  
 new crown:—  
 Cries to Thee, 'Lord, how long shall  
 these things be?

How long this icy-hearted Muscovite  
Oppress the region? Us, O Just and  
Good,  
Forgive, who smiled when she was  
torn in three;  
Us, who stand now, when we should  
aid the right—  
A matter to be wept with tears of  
blood!

## VII.

CARESS'D or chidden by the slender  
hand,  
And singing airy trifles this or that,  
Light Hope at Beauty's call would  
perch and stand,  
And run thro' every change of sharp  
and flat;  
And Fancy came and at her pillow sat,  
When Sleep had bound her in his rosy  
band,  
And chased away the still-recurring  
gnat,  
And woke her with a lay from fairy  
land.  
But now they live with Beauty less  
and less,  
For Hope is other Hope and wanders  
far,  
Nor cares to lisp in love's delicious  
creeds;  
And Fancy watches in the wilderness,  
Poor Fancy sadder than a single star,  
That sets at twilight in a land of reeds.

## VIII.

THE form, the form alone is eloquent!  
A nobler yearning never broke her  
rest  
Than but to dance and sing, be gayly  
drest,  
And win all eyes with all accomplish-  
ment:  
Yet in the whirling dances as we went,  
My fancy made me for a moment blest  
To find my heart so near the beau-  
teous breast  
That once had power to rob it of con-  
tent.  
A moment came the tenderness of tears,  
The phantom of a wish that once  
could move,

A ghost of passion that no smiles re-  
store—  
For ah! the slight coquette, she can-  
not love,  
And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand  
years,  
She still would take the praise, and  
care no more.

## IX.

WAN Sculptor, weepst thou to take  
the cast  
Of those dead lineaments that near  
thee lie?  
O sorrowest thou, pale Painter, for the  
past,  
In painting some dead friend from  
memory?  
Weep on: beyond his object Love can  
last:  
His object lives: more cause to weep  
have I:  
My tears, no tears of love, are flowing  
fast,  
No tears of love, but tears that Love  
can die.  
I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,  
Nor care to sit beside her where she  
sits—  
Ah pity—hint it not in human tones,  
But breathe it into earth and close it  
up  
With secret death forever, in the pits  
Which some green Christmas crams  
with weary bones.

## X.

IF I were loved, as I desire to be,  
What is there in the great sphere of  
the earth,  
And range of evil between death and  
birth,  
That I should fear,—if I were loved  
by thee?  
All the inner, all the outer world of  
pain  
Clear Love would pierce and cleave,  
if thou wert mine,  
As I have heard that, somewhere in  
the main,  
Fresh-water springs come up through  
bitter brine.



"THITHER FLOCK'D AT NOON."—Page 29.



'Twere joy, not fear, claspt hand-in-hand with thee,  
To wait for death—mute—care'less of all ills,  
Apart upon a mountain, tho' the surge  
Of some new deluge from a thousand hills  
Flung leagues of roaring foam into the gorge  
Below us, as far on as eye could see.

XL

THE BRIDESMAID.

O BRIDESMAID, ere the happy knot was tied,  
Thine eyes so wept that they could hardly see;  
Thy sister srailed and said, 'No tears for me!

A happy bridesmaid makes a happy bride.'  
And then, the couple standing side by side,  
Love lighted down between them full of glee,  
And over his left shoulder laugh'd at thee,  
'O happy bridesmaid, make a happy bride.'  
And all at once a pleasant truth I learn'd,  
For while the tender service made thee weep,  
I loved thee for the tear thou couldst not hide,  
And prest thy nand, and knew the press return'd,  
And thought, 'My life is sick of single sleep:  
O happy bridesmaid, make a happy bride!'

THE PRINCESS;

A MEDLEY.

PROLOGUE.

SIR Walter Vivian all a summer's day  
Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun  
Up to the people: thither flock'd at noon  
His tenants, wife and child, and thither half  
The neighboring borough with their Institute  
Of which he was the patron. I was there  
From college, visiting the son,—the son  
A Walter too,—with others of our set,  
Five others: we were seven at Vivian-place.  
And me that morning Walter show'd the house,  
Greek, set with busts: from vases in the hall

Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier than their names,  
Grew side by side; and on the pavement lay  
Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the park,  
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of Time;  
And on the tables every clime and age  
Jumbled together; celts and calumets,  
Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava, fans  
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,  
Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,  
The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-clubs  
From the isles of palm: and higher on the walls,  
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and deer,  
His own forefathers' arms and armor hung.

And 'this' he said 'was Hugh's at  
 Agincourt;  
 And that was old Sir Ralph's at As-  
 calon :  
 A good knight he I we keep a chronicle  
 With all about him'—which he  
 brought, and I  
 Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt  
 with knights,  
 Half-legend, half-historic, counts and  
 kings  
 Who laid about them at their wills  
 and died ;  
 And mixt with these, a lady, one that  
 arm'd  
 Her own fair head, and sallying thro'  
 the gate,  
 Had beat her foes with slaughter  
 from her walls.

'O miracle of women,' said the book,  
 'O noble heart who, being strait-be-  
 sieged  
 By this wild king to force her to his  
 wish,  
 Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a  
 soldier's death,  
 But now when all was lost or seem'd  
 as lost—  
 Her stature more than mortal in the  
 burst  
 Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on  
 fire—  
 Brake with a blast of trumpets from  
 the gate,  
 And, falling on them like a thunder-  
 bolt,  
 She trampled some beneath her  
 horses' heels,  
 And some were whelm'd with missiles  
 of the wall,  
 And some were push'd with lances  
 from the rock,  
 And part were drown'd within the  
 whirling brook :  
 O miracle of noble womanhood !'

So sang the gallant glorious  
 chronicle ;  
 And, I all rapt in this, 'Come out,' he  
 said,  
 'To the Abbey: there is Aunt Eliza-  
 beth

And sister Lilia with the rest.' We  
 went  
 (I kept the book and had my finger  
 in it)  
 Down thro' the park: strange was the  
 sight to me ;  
 For all the sloping pasture murmur'd,  
 sown  
 With happy faces and with holiday.  
 There moved the multitude, a thou-  
 sand heads:  
 The patient leaders of their Institute  
 Taught them with facts. One rear'd  
 a font of stone  
 And drew, from butts of water on the  
 slope,  
 The fountain of the moment, playing,  
 now  
 A twisted snake, and now a rain of  
 pearls,  
 Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded  
 ball  
 Danced like a wisp; and somewhat  
 lower down  
 A man with knobs and wires and  
 vials fired  
 A cannon: Echo answer'd in her  
 sleep  
 From hollow fields: and here were  
 telescopes  
 For azure views; and there a group  
 of girls  
 In circle waited, whom the electric  
 shock  
 Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter:  
 round the lake  
 A little clock-work steamer paddling  
 plied  
 And shook the lilies: perch'd about  
 the knolls  
 A dozen angry models jetted steam:  
 A petty railway ran: a fire-balloon  
 Rose gem-like up before the dusky  
 groves  
 And dropt a fairy parachute and past:  
 And there thro' twenty posts of tele-  
 graph  
 They flash'd a saucy message to and  
 fro  
 Between the mimic stations; so that  
 sport  
 Went hand in hand with Science;  
 elsewhere

Pure sport: a herd of boys with  
clamor bowl'd  
And stump'd the wicket; babies roll'd  
about  
Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men  
and maids  
Arranged a country dance, and flew  
thro' light  
And shadow, while the twangling  
violin  
Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and  
overhead  
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty  
lime  
Made noise with bees and breeze  
from end to end.

Strange was the sight and smack-  
ing of the time;  
And long we gazed, but satiated at  
length  
Came to the ruins. High-arch'd and  
ivy-claspt,  
Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire,  
Thro' one wide chasm of time and  
frost they gave  
The park, the crowd, the house; but  
all within  
The sword was trim as any garden  
lawn:  
And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,  
And Lilia with the rest, and lady  
friends  
From neighbor seats: and there was  
Ralph himself,  
A broken statue propt against the  
wall, &  
As gay as any. Lilia, wild with sport,  
Half child half woman as she was, had  
wound  
A scarf of orange round the stony  
helm,  
And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,  
That made the old warrior from his  
ivied nook  
Glow like a sunbeam: near his tomb  
a feast  
Shone, silver-set; about it lay the  
guests,  
And there we join'd them: then the  
maiden Aunt  
Took this fair day for text, and from  
it preach'd

An universal culture for the crowd,  
And all things great; but we, un-  
worthier, told  
Of college: he had climb'd across the  
spikes,  
And he had squeezed himself betwixt  
the bars,  
And he had breathed the Proctor's  
dogs; and one  
Discuss'd his tutor, rough to common  
men,  
But honeying at the whisper of a lord;  
And one the Master, as a rogue in  
grain  
Veneer'd with sanctimonious theory.

But while they talk'd, above their  
heads I saw  
The feudal warrior lady-clad; which  
brought  
My book to mind: and opening this I  
read  
Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that  
rang  
With tilt and tourney; then the tale  
of her  
That drove her foes with slaughter  
from her walls,  
And much I praised her nobleness,  
and 'Where,'  
Ask'd Walter, patting Lilia's head  
(she lay  
Beside him) 'lives there such a woman  
now?'

Quick answer'd Lilia 'There are  
thousands now  
Such women, but convention beats  
them down:  
It is but bringing up; no more than  
that:  
You men have done it: how I hate  
you all!  
Ah were I something great! I wish I  
were  
Some mighty poetess, I would shame  
you then,  
That love to keep us children! O I  
wish  
That I were some great princess, I  
would build  
Far off from men a college like a  
man's,

And I would teach them all that men  
are taught;  
We are twice as quick!' And here  
she shook aside  
The hand that play'd the patron with  
her curls.

And one said smiling 'Pretty were  
the sight  
If our old halls could change their sex,  
and flaunt  
With prudes for proctors, dowagers  
for deans,  
And sweet girl-graduates in their  
golden hair.  
I think they should not wear our rusty  
gowns  
But move as rich as Emperor-moths,  
or Ralph  
Who shines so in the corner; yet I fear  
If there were many Lilias in the brood,  
However deep you might embower the  
nest,  
Some boy would spy it.'

At this upon the sward  
She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot:  
'That's your light way; but I would  
make it death  
For any male thing but to peep at us.'

Petulant she spoke, and at herself  
she laugh'd;  
A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,  
And sweet as English air could make  
her, she:  
But Walter hail'd a score of names  
upon her,  
And 'petty Ogress,' and 'ungrateful  
Puss,'  
And swore he long'd at college, only  
long'd,  
All else was well, for she-society.  
They boated and they cricketed; they  
talk'd  
At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics;  
They lost their weeks; they vex't the  
souls of deans;  
They rode; they betted; made a hun-  
dred friends,  
And caught the blossom of the flying  
terms,  
But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-  
place,

The little hearth-flower, Lilia. Thus  
he spoke,  
Part banter, part affection.

'Truc,' she said,  
'We doubt not that. O yes, you  
miss'd us much.  
I'll stake my ruby ring upon it you  
did.'

She held it out: and as a parrot  
turns  
Up thro' gilt wires a crafty loving eye,  
And takes a lady's finger with all care,  
And bites it for true heart and not for  
harm,  
So he with Lilia's. Daintily she  
shriek'd  
And wrung it. 'Doubt my word  
again!' he said.

'Come, listen! here is proof that you  
were miss'd:

We seven stay'd at Christmas up to  
read;  
And there we took one tutor as to  
read:

The hard-grained Muses of the cube  
and square

Were out of season: never man, I  
think,

So moulder'd in a sinecure as he:  
For while our cloisters echo'd frosty  
feet,

And our long walks were stript as  
bare as brooms,

We did but talk you over, pledge you  
all

In wassail; often, like as many girls—  
Sick for the hollies and the yews of  
home—

As many little trifling Lilias—play'd  
Charades and riddles as at Christmas  
here,

And *what's my thought* and *when* and  
*where* and *how*,

And often told a tale from mouth to  
mouth

As here at Christmas.'

She remember'd that:  
A pleasant game, she thought: she  
liked it more

Than magic music, forfeits, all the rest.  
But these—what kind of tales did men  
tell men,



She wonder'd, by themselves?

A half-disdain  
Perch'd on the pouted blossom of her  
lips:

And Walter nodded at me; 'He began,  
The rest would follow, each in turn;  
and so

We forged a sevenfold story. Kind?  
what kind?

Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas sole-  
cisms,  
Seven-headed monsters only made to  
kill

Time by the fire in winter.'  
'Kill him now,

The tyrant! kill him in the summer  
too,'

Said Lilia; 'Why not now?' the  
maiden Aunt.

'Why not a summer's as a winter's  
tale?

A tale for summer as befits the time,  
And something it should be to suit  
the place,

Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,  
Grave, solemn!'

Walter warp'd his mouth at this  
To something so mock-solenn, that I  
laugh'd

And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling  
mirth

An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,  
Hid in the ruins; till the maiden  
Aunt

(A little sense of wrong had touch'd  
her face

With color) turn'd to me with 'As  
you will;

Heroic if you will, or what you will,  
Or be yourself your hero if you will.'

'Take Lilia, then, for heroine'  
clamor'd he,

'And make her some great Princess,  
six feet high,  
Grand, epic, homicidal; and be you

The Prince to win her!'

'Then follow me, the Prince,'  
I answer'd, 'each be hero in his turn!  
Seven and yet one, like shadows in a  
dream.—

Heroic seems our Princess as  
required—

But something made to suit with Time  
and place,

And Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,  
A talk of college and of ladies' rights,  
A feudal knight in silken masquerade,  
And, yonder, shrieks and strange  
experiments

For which the good Sir Ralph had  
burnt them all—

This *were* a medley! we should have  
him back

Who told the "Winter's tale" to do  
it for us.

No matter: we will say whatever  
comes.

And let the ladies sing us, if they will,  
From time to time, some ballad or a  
song

To give us breathing-space.'

So I began,  
And the rest follow'd: and the women  
sang

Between the rougher voices of the  
men,

Like linnets in the pauses of the wind:  
And here I give the story and the  
songs.

I.

A prince I was, blue-eyed, and fair in  
face,

Of temper amorous, as the first of  
May,

With lengths of yellow ringlet, like a  
girl.

For on my cradle shone the Northern  
star.

There lived an ancient legend in  
our house.

Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grand-  
sire burnt

Because he cast no shadow, had fore-  
told,

Dying, that none of all our blood  
should know

The shadow from the substance, and  
that one

Should come to fight with shadows  
and to fall.

For so, my mother said, the story ran  
And, truly, waking dreams were, more  
or less,

An old and strange affection of the  
house.

Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven  
knows what:

On a sudden in the midst of men and  
day,

And while I walk'd and talk'd as here-  
tofore,

I seem'd to move among a world of  
ghosts,

And feel myself the shadow of a dream.  
Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-

head cane,  
And paw'd his beard, and mutter'd  
'catalepsy.'

My mother pitying made a thousand  
prayers;

My mother was as mild as any saint,  
Half-canonized by all that look'd on  
her,

So gracious was her tact and tender-  
ness:

But my good father thought a king a  
king;

He cared not for the affection of the  
house;

He held his sceptre like a pedant's  
wand

To lash offence, and with long arms  
and hands

Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders  
from the mass

For judgment.

Now it chanced that I had  
been,

When life was yet in bud and blade,  
betroth'd

To one, a neighboring Princess: she  
to me

Was proxy-wedded with a bootless  
calf

At eight years old; and still from  
time to time

Came murmurs of her beauty from  
the South,

And of her brethren, youths of puis-  
sance;

And still I wore her picture by my  
heart,

And one dark tress; and all around  
them both

Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees  
about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I  
should wed,

My father sent ambassadors with furs  
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her: these  
brought back

A present, a great labor of the loom;  
And therewithal an answer vague  
as wind:

Besides, they saw the king; he took  
the gifts;

He said there was a compact; that  
was true:

But then she had a will; was he to  
blame?

And maiden fancies; loved to live  
alone

Among her women; certain, would  
not wed.

That morning in the presence room  
I stood

With Cyril and with Florian, my two  
friends:

The first a gentleman of broken means  
(His father's fault) but given to starts  
and bursts

Of revel; and the last, my other heart,  
And almost my half-self, for still he  
moved

Together, twinn'd as horse's ear and  
eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my  
father's face

Grow long and troubled like a rising  
moon,

Inflamed with wrath: he started on  
his feet,

Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down,  
and rent

The wonder of the loom thro' warp  
and woof

From skirt to skirt; and at the last  
he sware

That he would send a hundred thou-  
sand men,

And bring her in a whirlwind: then  
he chew'd

The thrice-turn'd cud of wrath, and  
cook'd his spleen,

Communing with his captains of the  
war.

At last I spoke : ' My father, let me go.  
It cannot be but some gross error lies  
In this report, this answer of a king,  
Whom all men rate as kind and hospitable :

Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,

Whate'er my grief to find her less than fame,

May rue the bargain made.' And Florian said :

' I have a sister at the foreign court, .  
Who moves about the Princess ; she, you know,

Who wedded with a nobleman from thence :

He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,  
The lady of three castles in that land :

Thro' her this matter might be sifted clean.'

And Cyril whisper'd : ' Take me with you too.'

Than laughing ' what, if these weird seizures come

Upon you in those lands, and no one near

To point you out the shadow from the truth !

Take me : I'll serve you better in a strait ;

I grate on rusty hinges here : ' but ' No !'

Roar'd the rough king, ' you shall not ; we ourself

Will crush her pretty maiden fancies dead

In iron gauntlets : break the council up.'

But when the council broke, I rose and past

Thro' the wild woods that hung about the town ;

Found a still place, and pluck'd her likeness out ;

Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it lying bathed

In the green gleam of dewy-tassell'd trees :

What were those fancies ? wherefore break her troth ?

Proud look'd the lips : but while I meditated

A wind arose and rush'd upon the South,

And shook the songs, the whispers, and the shrieks

Of the wild woods together ; and a Voice

Went with it, ' Follow, follow, thou shalt win.'

Then, ere the silver sickle of that month

Became her golden shield, I stoie from court

With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived,

Cat-footed thro' the town and half in dread

To hear my father's clamor at our backs

With Ho ! from some bay-window shake the night ;

But all was quiet : from the bastion'd walls

Like threaded spiders, one by one, we dropt,

And flying reach'd the frontier : then we crost

To a livelier land ; and so by tilth and grange,

And vines, and blowing bosks of wilderness,

We gain'd the mother-city thick with towers,

And in the imperial palace found the king.

His name was Gama ; crack'd and small his voice,

But bland the smile that like a wrinkling wind

On glassy water drove his cheek in lines ;

A little dry old man, without a star,

Not like a king : three days he feasted us,

And on the fourth I spake of why we came,

And my betroth'd. ' You do us, Prince,' he said,

Airing a snowy hand and signet gem, ' All honor. We remember love ourselves

In our sweet youth : there did a compact pass

Long summers back, a kind of ceremony—

I think the year in which our olives fail'd.

I would you had her, Prince, with all my heart,

With my full heart: but there were widows here,

Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady Blanche;

They fed her theories, in and out of place

Maintaining that with equal husbandry

The woman were an equal to the man. They harp'd on this; with this our

banquets rang;

Our dances broke and buzz'd in knots of talk;

Nothing but this; my very ears were hot

To hear them: knowledge, so my daughter held,

Was all in all: they had but been, she thought,

As children; they must lose the child, assume

The woman: then, Sir, awful odes she wrote,

Too awful, sure, for what they treated of,

But all she is and does is awful; odes About this losing of the child; and rhymes

And dismal lyrics, prophesying change Beyond all reason: these the women

sang;

And they that know such things—I sought but peace;

No critic I—would call them masterpieces:

They master'd *me*. At last she begg'd a boon,

A certain summer-palace which I have

Hard by your father's frontier: I said no,

Yet being an easy man, gave it: and there,

All wild to found an University

For maidens, on the spur she fled; and more

We know not,—only this: they see no men,

Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the twins

Her brethren, tho' they love her, look upon her

As on a kind of paragon; and I (Pardon me saying it) were much loth

to breed

Dispute betwixt myself and mine: but since

(And I confess with right) you think me bound

In some sort, I can give you letters to her;

And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your chance

Almost at naked nothing.'

Thus the king;

And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to slur

With garrulous ease and oily courtesies

Our formal compact, yet, not less (all frets

But chafing me on fire to find my bride)

Went forth again with both my friends. We rode

Many a long league back to the North. At last

From hills, that look'd across a land of hope,

We dropt with evening on a rustic town

Set in a gleaming river's crescent-curve,

Close at the boundary of the liberties;

There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd mine host

To council, plied him with his richest wines,

And show'd the late-writ letters of the king

He with a long low sibilation, stared

As blank as death in marble; then exclaim'd

Averring it was clear against all rules

For any man to go: but as his brain

Began to mellow, 'If the king,' he said,

'Had given us letters, was he bound to speak?

The king would bear him out ; and at  
the last—

The summer of the vine in all his  
veins—

'No doubt that we might make it  
worth his while.

She once had past that way ; he heard  
her speak ;

She scared him ; life ! he never saw  
the like ;

She look'd as grand as doomsday and  
as grave :

And he, he revrenced his liege-lady  
there ;

He always made a point to post with  
mares ;

His daughter and his housemaid were  
the boys :

The land, he understood, for miles  
about

Was till'd by women ; all the swine  
were sows,

And all the dogs '—

But while he jested thus,  
A thought flash'd thro' me which I

clothed in act,  
Remembering how we three presented

Maid  
Or Nymph, or Goddess, at high tide

of feast,  
In masque or pageant at my father's

court.  
We sent mine host to purchase female

gear ;  
He brought it, and himself, a sight to

shake  
The midriff of despair with laughter,

help  
To lace us up, till, each, in maiden

plumes  
We rustled : him we gave a costly

bribe  
To guerdon silence, mounted our good

steeds,  
And boldly ventured on the liberties.

We follow'd up the river as we rode.  
And rode till midnight when the

college lights  
Began to glitter firefly-like in copse

And linden alley : then we past an arch,  
Whereon a woman-statue rose with

wings

From four wing'd horses dark against  
the stars ;

And some inscription ran along the  
front,

But deep in shadow : further on we  
gain'd

A little street half garden and half  
house ;

But scarce could hear each other speak  
for noise

Of clocks and chimes, like silver  
hammers falling

On silver anvils, and the splash and  
stir

Of fountains spouted up and shower-  
ing down

In meshes of the jasmine and the rose :  
And all about us peal'd the nightin-  
gale,

Rapt in her song, and careless of the  
snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a  
sign,

By two sphere lamps blazon'd like  
Heaven and Earth

With constellation and with continent,  
Above an entry : riding in, we call'd ;

A plump-arrin'd Ostleress and a stable  
wench

Came running at the call, and help'd  
us down.

Then stept a buxom hostess forth, and  
sail'd,

Full-blown, before us into rooms  
which gave

Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost  
In laurel : her we ask'd of that and

this,  
And who were tutors. 'Lady Blanche'

she said,  
'And Lady Psyche.' 'Which was

prettiest,  
Best-natured ?' 'Lady Psyche.' 'Hers

are we.'

One voice, we cried ; and I sat down  
and wrote.

In such a hand as when a field of corn  
Bows all its ears before the roaring

East ;

'Three ladies of the Northern empire  
pray

Your Highness would enroll them with  
your own,  
As Lady Psyche's pupils.'

This I seal'd:  
The seal was Cupid bent above a  
scroll,  
And o'er his head Uranian Venus  
hung,  
And raised the blinding bandage from  
his eyes:  
I gave the letter to be sent with dawn;  
And then to bed, where half in doze I  
seem'd  
To float about a glimmering night,  
and watch  
A full sea glazed with muffled moon-  
light, swell  
On some dark shore just seen that it  
was rich.

## ii.

As thro' the land at eve we went,  
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
We fell out, my wife and I,  
O we fell out I know not why,  
And kiss'd again with tears,  
And blessings on the falling out  
That all the more endears,  
When we fall out with those we love  
And kiss again with tears!  
For when we came where lies the child  
We lost in other years,  
There above the little grave,  
O there above the little grave,  
We kiss'd again with tears.

At break of day the College Portress  
came:  
She brought us Academic silks, in hue  
The lilac, with a silken hood to each,  
And zoned with gold; and now when  
these were on,  
And we as rich as moths from dust  
cocoons,  
She, curtsying her obeisance, let us  
know  
The Princess Ida waited: out we  
paced,  
I first, and following thro' the porch  
that sang  
All round with laurel, issued in a  
court

Compact of lucid marbles, boss'd with  
lengths  
Of classic frieze, with ample awnings  
gay  
Betwixt the pillars, and with great  
urns of flowers.  
The Muses and the Graces, group'd  
in threes,  
Enring'd a billowing fountain in the  
midst;  
And here and there on lattice edges lay  
Or book or lute; but hastily we past,  
And up a flight of stairs into the hall.

There at a board by tome and paper  
sat,  
With two tame leopards couch'd  
beside her throne  
All beauty compass'd in a female form,  
The Princess; liker to the inhabitant  
Of some clear planet close upon the  
Sun,  
Than our man's earth; such eyes were  
in her head,  
And so much grace and power, breath-  
ing down  
From over her arch'd brows, with  
every turn  
Lived thro' her to the tips of her long  
hands,  
And to her feet. She rose her height,  
and said:

'We give you welcome: not without  
redound  
Of use and glory to yourselves ye  
come,  
The first fruits of the stranger: after-  
time,  
And that full voice which circles  
round the grave,  
Will rank you nobly, mingled up with  
me.  
What! are the ladies of your land so  
tall?'  
'We of the court' said Cyril. 'From  
the court'  
She answer'd, 'then ye know the  
Prince?' and he:  
'The climax of his age! as tho' there  
were  
One rose in all the world, your High-  
ness that,

He worships your ideal : ' she replied :  
' We scarcely thought in our own hall  
to hear

This barren verbiage, current among  
men,  
Light coin, the tinsel clink of compli-  
ment.

Your flight from out your bookless  
wilds would seem

As arguing love of knowledge and of  
power ;

Your language proves you still the  
child. Indeed,

We dream not of him : when we set  
our hand

To this great work, we purposed with  
ourselves

Never to wed. You likewise will do  
well,

Ladies, in entering here, to cast and  
fling

The tricks, which make us toys of  
men, that so,

Some future time, if so indeed you will,  
You may with those self-styled our  
lords ally

Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale  
with scale.'

At those high words, we conscious  
of ourselves,

Perused the matting ; then an officer  
Rose up, and read the statues, such as  
these :

Not for three years to correspond with  
home ;

Not for three years to cross the liber-  
ties ;

Not for three years to speak with any  
men ;

And many more, which hastily sub-  
scribed,

We enter'd on the boards : and ' Now,'  
she cried,

' Ye are green wood, see ye warp not.  
Look, our hall !

Our statues !—not of those that men  
desire,

Steek Odaliskes, or oracles of mode,  
Nor stunted squaws of West or East ;

but she  
That taught the Sabine how to rule,  
and she

The foundress of the Babylonian wall,  
The Carian Artemisia strong in war,  
The Rhodope, that built the pyramid,  
Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene  
That fought Aurelian, and the Roman  
brows

Of Agrippina. Dwell with these, and  
lose

Convention, since to look on noble  
forms

Makes noble thro' the sensuous  
organism

That which is higher. O lift your  
natures up :

Embrace our aims : work out your  
freedom. Girls,

Knowledge is now no more a fountain  
seal'd :

Drink deep, until the habits of the  
slave,

The sins of emptiness, gossip and  
spite

And slander, die. Better not be at all  
Than not be noble. Leave us :

you may go :

To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue  
The fresh arrivals of the week before ;

For they press in from all the prov-  
inces,

And fill the hive.'

She spoke, and bowing waved  
Dismissal : back again we crost the  
court

To Lady Psyche's : as we enter'd in,  
There sat along the forms, like morn-  
ing doves

That sun their milky bosoms on the  
thatch,

A patient range of pupils ; she herself  
Erect behind a desk of satin-wood

A quick brunette, well-moulded, falcon  
eyed,

And on the hither side, or so she  
look'd,

Of twenty summers. At her left, a  
child,

In shining draperies, headed like a  
star,

Her maiden babe, a double April old,  
Aglaiia slept. We sat : the Lady  
glanced :

Then Florian, but no livelier than the  
dame

That whisper'd 'Asses' ears,' among  
the sedge,  
'My sister,' 'Comely, too, by all that's  
fair,'  
Said Cyril. 'O hush, hush!' and she  
began.

'This world was once a fluid haze  
of light.  
Till toward the centre set the starry  
tides,  
And eddied into suns, that wheeling  
cast  
The planets: then the monster, then  
the man;  
Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in  
skins,  
Raw from the prime, and crushing  
down his mate;  
As yet we find in barbarous isles, and  
here  
Among the lowest.'

Thereupon she took  
A bird's-eye-view of all the ungracious  
past;  
Glanced at the legendary Amazon  
As emblematic of a nobler age;  
Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke  
of those  
That lay at wine with Lar and  
Lucumo;  
Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Ro-  
man lines  
Of empire, and the woman's state in  
each,  
How far from just; till warming with  
her theme  
She fulminated out her scorn of laws  
Salique  
And little-footed China, touch'd on  
Mahomet  
With much contempt, and came to  
chivalry:  
When some respect, however slight,  
was paid  
To woman, superstition all awry:  
However then commenced the dawn:  
a beam  
Had slanted forward, falling in a land  
Of promise; fruit would follow.  
Deep, indeed,  
Their debt of thanks to her who first  
had dared

To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,  
Disyoke their necks from custom, and  
assert

None lordlier than themselves but that  
which made  
Woman and man. She had founded;  
they must build  
Here might they learn whatever men  
were taught:  
Let them not fear: some said their  
heads were less:  
Some men's were small; not they the  
least of men;  
For often fineness compensated size:  
Besides the brain was like the hand,  
and grew  
With using; thence the man's, if more  
was more;  
He took advantage of his strength to  
be  
First in the field: some ages had been  
lost;  
But woman ripen'd earlier, and her  
life  
Was longer; and albeit their glorious  
names  
Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since  
in truth  
The highest is the measure of the  
man,  
And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay,  
Nor those horn-handed breakers of  
the glebe,  
But Homer, Plato, Verulam; even so  
With woman: and in arts of govern-  
ment  
Elizabeth and others; arts of war  
The peasant Joan and others: arts of  
grace  
Sappho and others vied with any man:  
And, last not least, she who had left  
her place,  
And bow'd her state to them, that they  
might grow  
To use and power on this Oasis, lapt  
In the arms of leisure, sacred from the  
blight  
Of ancient influence and scorn.

At last  
She rose upon a wind of prophecy  
Dilating on the future; 'everywhere  
Two heads in council, two beside the  
hearth,



Two in the tangled business of the world,  
Two in the liberal offices of life,  
Two plummetts dropt for one to sound the abyss  
Of science, and the secrets of the mind:  
Musician, painter, sculptor, critic, more:  
And everywhere the broad and bounteous Earth  
Should bear a double growth of those rare souls,  
Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood of the world.'

She ended here, and beckon'd us: the rest  
Parted; and, glowing full-faced welcome, she  
Began to address us, and was moving on  
In gratulation, till as when a boat  
Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flaps, all her voice  
Faltering and fluttering in her throat, she cried  
'My brother!' 'Well, my sister.' 'O,' she said,  
'What do you here? and in this dress? and these?  
Why who are these? a wolf within the fold!  
A pack of wolves! the Lord be gracious to me!  
A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all!' 'No plot, no plot,' he answer'd.  
'Wretched boy,  
How saw you not the inscription on the gate,  
LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF DEATH?'  
'And if I had,' he answer'd, 'who could think  
The softer Adams of your Academe  
O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were such  
As chanted on the blanching bones of men?'  
'But you will find it otherwise,' she said.  
'You jest: ill jesting with edge-tools!  
my vow

Binds me to speak, and O that iron will  
That axelike edge unturnable, our Head,  
The Princess.' 'Well then, Psyche, take my life,  
And nail me like a weasel on a grange  
For warning: bury me beside the gate,  
And cut this epitaph above my bones:  
*Here lies a brother by a sister slain,  
All for the common good of woman-kind.*  
'Let me die too,' said Cyril, 'having seen  
And heard the Lady Psyche.'

I struck in:  
'Albeit so mask'd, Madam, I love the truth;  
Receive it; and in me behold the Prince  
Your countryman, affianced years ago  
To the Lady Ida: here, for here she was,  
And thus (what other way was left) I came.'  
'O Sir, O Prince, I have no country; none;  
If any, this; but none. Whate'er I was  
Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.  
Affianced, Sir? love-whispers may not breathe  
Within this vestal limit, and how should I,  
Who am not mine, say, live: the thunder-bolt  
Hangs silent; but prepare: I speak; it falls.'  
'Yet pause,' I said: 'for that inscription there,  
I think no more of deadly lurks therein,  
Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,  
To scare the fowl from fruit: if more there be,  
If more and acted on, what follows? war;  
Your own work marr'd: for this your Academe,  
Whichever side be Victor, in the halloo  
Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass

With all fair theories only made to  
 A stormless summer.' 'Let the  
 Princess judge  
 Of that,' she said: 'farewell, Sir—and  
 to you.  
 I shudder at the sequel, but I go.'

'Are you that Lady Psyche,' I re-  
 join'd,  
 'The fifth in line from that old  
 Florian,  
 Yet hangs his portrait in my father's  
 hall  
 (The gaunt old Baron with his beetle  
 brow  
 Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)  
 As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he  
 fell

And all else fled? we point to it, and  
 we say,  
 The loyal warmth of Florian is not  
 cold,  
 But branches current yet in kindred  
 veins.'

'Are you that Psyche,' Florian added:  
 'she

With whom I sang about the morning  
 hills,  
 Flung ball, flew kite, and raced the  
 purple fly,  
 And snared the squirrel of the glen?  
 are you

That Psyche, wont to bind my throbbing  
 brow,

To smoothe my pillow, mix the foaming  
 draught

Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and  
 read

My sickness down to happy dreams?  
 are you

That brother-sister Psyche, both in  
 one?

You were that Psyche, but what are  
 you now?'

'You are that Psyche,' Cyril said,  
 'for whom

I would be that for ever which I  
 seem,

Woman, if I might sit beside your  
 feet,

And glean your scatter'd sapience.'  
 Then once more,

'Are you that Lady Psyche,' I be-  
 gan,

'That on her bridal morn before she  
 past

From all her old companions, when  
 the king

Kiss'd her pale cheek, declared that  
 ancient ties

Would still be dear beyond the south-  
 ern hills;

That were there any of our people  
 there

In want or peril, there was one to  
 hear

And help them? look! for such are  
 these and I.'

'Are you that Psyche,' Florian ask'd,  
 'to whom,

In gentler days, your arrow-wounded  
 fawn

Came flying while you sat beside the  
 well?

The creature laid his muzzle on your  
 lap,

And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it,  
 and the blood

Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you  
 wept.

That was fawn's blood, not brother's,  
 yet you wept.

O by the bright head of my little  
 niece,

You were that Psyche, and what are  
 you now?'

'You are that Psyche,' Cyril said  
 again,

'The mother of the sweetest little  
 maid,

That ever crow'd for kisses.'

She answer'd, 'peace! and why should  
 I not play

The Spartan Mother with emotion,  
 be

The Lucius Junius Brutus of my  
 kind?

Him you call great: he for the com-  
 mon weal,

The fading politics of mortal Rome,  
 As I might slay this child if good  
 need were,

Slew both his sons: and I, shall I, on  
 whom

The secular emancipation turns  
Of half this world, be swerved from  
right to save  
A prince, a brother? a little will I  
yield.  
Best so, perchance, for us, and well  
for you.  
O hard, when love and duty clash! I  
fear  
My conscience will not count me  
fleckless; yet—  
Hear my conditions: promise (other-  
wise  
You perish) as you came, to slip away  
To-day, to-morrow, soon: it shall be  
said,  
These women were too barbarous,  
would not learn;  
They fled, who might have shamed  
us: promise, all.'

What could we else, we promised  
each; and she,  
Like some wild creature newly-caged,  
commenced  
A to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused  
By Florian; holding out her lily arms  
Took both his hands, and smiling  
faintly, said:  
'I knew you at the first: tho' you  
have grown  
You scarce have alter'd: I am sad  
and glad  
To see you, Florian. I give thee to  
death  
My brother! it was duty spoke, not I.  
My needful seeming harshness, par-  
don it.  
Our mother, is she well?'  
With that she kiss'd  
His forehead, then, a moment after,  
clung  
About him, and betwixt them blos-  
som'd up  
From out a common vein of memory  
Sweet household talk, and phrases of  
the hearth,  
And far allusion, till the gracious  
dews  
Began to glisten and to fall: and  
while  
They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came  
a voice,

'I brought a message here from Lady  
Blanche.  
Back started she, and turning round  
we saw  
The Lady Blanche's daughter where  
she stood,  
Melissa, with her hand upon the lock,  
A rosy blonde, and in a college gown,  
That clad her like an April daffodily  
(Her mother's color) with her lips  
apart,  
And all her thoughts as fair within  
her eyes,  
As bottom agates seen to wave and  
float  
In crystal currents of clear morning  
seas.

So stood that same fair creature at  
the door.  
Then Lady Psyche, 'Ah—Melissa—  
you!  
You heard us?' and Melissa, 'O par-  
don me  
I heard, I could not help it, did not  
wish:  
But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me  
not,  
Nor think I bear that heart within my  
breast,  
To give three gallant gentlemen to  
death.'  
'I trust you,' said the other, 'for we  
two  
Were always friends, none closer,  
elm and vine:  
But yet your mother's jealous temper-  
ament—  
Let not your prudence, dearest,  
drowse, or prove  
The Danaid of a leaky vase, for fear  
This whole foundation ruin, and I  
lose  
My honor, these their lives.' 'Ah,  
fear me not,'  
Replied Melissa; 'no—I would not  
tell,  
No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness,  
No, not to answer, Madam, all those  
hard things  
That Sheba came to ask of Solomon.'  
'Be it so,' the other, 'that we still  
may lead

The new light up, and culminate in  
 peace,  
 For Solomon may come to Sheba  
 yet.  
 Said Cyril, 'Madam, he the wisest  
 man  
 Feasted the woman wisest then, in  
 halls  
 Of Lebanonian cedar: nor should you  
 (Tho' Madam *you* should answer, *we*  
 would ask)  
 Less welcome find among us, if you  
 came  
 Among us, debtors for our lives to  
 you,  
 Myself for something more.' He  
 said not what,  
 But 'Thanks,' she answer'd 'Go:  
 we have been too long  
 Together: keep your hoods about  
 the face;  
 They do so that affect abstraction  
 here.  
 Speak little; mix not with the rest;  
 and hold  
 Your promise: all, I trust, may yet  
 be well.'

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the  
 child,  
 And held her round the knees against  
 his waist,  
 And blew the swoll'n check of a  
 trumpeter,  
 While Psyche watch'd them, smiling,  
 and the child  
 Push'd her flat hand against his face  
 and laugh'd;  
 And thus our conference closed.  
 And then we stroll'd  
 For half the day thro' stately thea-  
 tres  
 Bench'd crescent wise. In each we  
 sat, we heard  
 The grave Professor. On the lecture  
 slate  
 The circle rounded under female hands  
 With flawless demonstration: fol-  
 low'd then  
 A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,  
 With scraps of thundrous Epic lilted  
 out  
 By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies

And quoted odes, and jewels five-  
 words-long  
 That on the stretch'd forefinger of all  
 Time  
 Sparkle for ever: then we dipt in all  
 That treats of whatsoever is, the state,  
 The total chronicles of man, the  
 mind,  
 The morals, something of the frame,  
 the rock,  
 The star, the bird, the fish, the shell,  
 the flower,  
 Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,  
 And whatsoever can be taught and  
 known;  
 Till like three horses that have broken  
 tence,  
 And glutted all night long breast-deep  
 in corn,  
 We issued gorged with knowledge,  
 and I spoke:  
 'Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as  
 we.'  
 'They hunt old trails' said Cyril  
 'very well;  
 But when did woman ever yet invent?'  
 'Ungracious!' answer'd Florian;  
 'have you learnt  
 No more from Psyche's lecture, you  
 that talk'd  
 The trash that made me sick, and al-  
 most sad?'  
 'O trash' he said, 'but with a kernel  
 in it.  
 Should I not call her wise, who made  
 me wise?  
 And learnt? I learnt more from her  
 in a flash,  
 Than if my brainpan were an empty  
 hull,  
 And every Muse tumbled a science in.  
 A thousand hearts lie fallow in these  
 halls,  
 And round these halls a thousand  
 baby loves  
 Fly twanging headless arrows at the  
 hearts,  
 Whence follows many a vacant pang;  
 but O  
 With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger  
 boy,  
 The Head of all the golden-shafted  
 firm,

The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche  
too;  
He cleit me thro' the stomacher; and  
now  
What think you of it, Florian? do I  
chase  
The substance or the shadow? will it  
hold?  
I have no sorcerer's malison on me,  
No ghostly hauntings like his High-  
ness. I  
Flatter myself that always everywhere  
I know the substance when I see it.  
Well,  
Are castles shadows? Three of  
them? Is she  
The sweet proprietress a shadow?  
If not,  
Shall those three castles patch my  
tatter'd coat?  
For dear are those three castles to  
my wants,  
And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,  
And two dear things are one of double  
worth,  
And much I might have said, but  
that my zone  
Unmann'd me: then the Doctors! O  
to hear  
The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty  
plants  
Inibbing! once or twice I thought to  
roar,  
To break my chain, to shake my  
mane: but thou,  
Modulate me, Soul of mincing mimic-  
ry!  
Make liquid treble of that bassoon,  
my throat;  
Abase those eyes that ever loved to  
meet  
Star-sisters answering under crescent  
brows;  
Abate the stride, which speaks of  
man, and loose  
A flying charm of blushes o'er this  
cheek,  
Where they like swallows coming out  
of time  
Will wonder why they came: but  
hark the bell  
For dinner, let us go!'  
And in we stream'd

Among the columns, pacing staid and  
still  
By twos and threes, till all from end  
to end  
With beauties every shade of brown  
and fair  
In colors gayer than the morning  
mist,  
The long hall glitter'd like a bed of  
flowers.  
How might a man not wander from  
his wits  
Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I  
kept mine own  
Intent on her, who wrapt in glorious  
dreams,  
The second sight of some Astraeon  
age,  
Sat compass'd with professors: they,  
the while,  
Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and  
fro:  
A clamor thicken'd, mixt with inmost  
terms  
Of art and science: Lady Blanche  
alone  
Of faded form and haughtiest line-  
aments,  
With all her autumn tresses falsely  
brown,  
Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-  
cat  
In act to spring.  
At last a solemn grace  
Concluded, and we sought the gar-  
dens: there  
One walk'd reciting by herself, and  
one  
In this hand held a volume as to read,  
And smoothed a petted peacock down  
with that:  
Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,  
Or under arches of the marble bridge  
Hung, shadow'd from the heat: some  
hid and sought  
In the orange thickets: others tost a  
ball  
Above the fountain-jets, and back  
again  
With laughter: others lay about the  
lawns,  
Of the older sort, and murmur'd that  
their May

Was passing : what was learning unto  
 them?  
 They wish'd to marry; they could  
 rule a house;  
 Men hated learned women: but we  
 three  
 Sat muffled like the Fates; and often  
 came  
 Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts  
 Of gentle satire, kin to charity,  
 That harm'd not: then day droopt;  
 the chapel bells  
 Call'd us: we left the walks; we mixt  
 with those  
 Six hundred maidens clad in purest  
 white,  
 Before two streams of light from wall  
 to wall,  
 While the great organ almost burst  
 his pipes,  
 Groaning for power, and rolling thro'  
 the court  
 A long melodious thunder to the  
 sound  
 Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies.  
 The work of Ida, to call down from  
 Heaven  
 A blessing on her labors for the world.

## III.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,  
 Wind of the western sea,  
 Low, low, breathe and blow,  
 Wind of the western sea!  
 Over the rolling waters go,  
 Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
 Blow him again to me;  
 While my little one, while my pretty one,  
 sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
 Father will come to thee soon;  
 Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
 Father will come to thee soon,  
 Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
 Silver sails all out of the west,  
 Under the silver moon:  
 Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one,  
 sleep.

Morn in the white wake of the morn-  
 ing star

Came furrowing all the orient into  
 gold.  
 We rose, and each by other drest with  
 care  
 Descended to the court that lay three  
 parts  
 In shadow, but the Muses' heads were  
 touch'd  
 Above the darkness from their native  
 East.

There while we stood beside the  
 fount, and watch'd  
 Or seem'd to watch the dancing bub-  
 ble, approach'd  
 Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of  
 sleep,  
 Or grief, and glowing round her dewy  
 eyes  
 The circled Iris of a night of tears;  
 'And fly,' she cried, 'O fly, while yet  
 you may!  
 My mother knows: 'and when I ask'd  
 her 'how,'  
 'My fault' she wept 'my fault! and  
 yet not mine;  
 Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon  
 me.  
 My mother, 'tis her wont from night  
 to night  
 To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.  
 She says the Princess should have  
 been the Head,  
 Herself and Lady Psyche the two  
 arms;  
 And so it was agreed when first they  
 came;  
 But Lady Psyche was the right hand  
 now,  
 And she the left, or not, or seldom used;  
 Hers more than half the students, all  
 the love.  
 And so last night she fell to canvass  
 you  
 Her countrywomen! she did not envy  
 her.  
 "Who ever saw such wild barbarians?  
 Girls?—more like men!" and at these  
 words the snake,  
 My secret, seem'd to stir within my  
 breast;  
 And oh, Sirs, could I help it, but my  
 cheek

Began to burn and burn, and her lynx  
eye  
To fix and make me hotter, till she  
laugh'd:

"O marvellously modest maiden, you!  
Men! girls, like men! why, if they had  
been men

You need not set your thoughts in ru-  
bric thus  
For wholesale comment." Pardon, I  
am shamed

That I must needs repeat for my ex-  
cuse

What looks so little graceful: "men"  
(for still

My mother went revolving on the  
word)

"And so they are,—very like men in-  
deed—

And with that woman closeted for  
hours!"

Then came these dreadful words out  
one by one,

"Why—these—*are*—men:" I shud-  
der'd: "and you know it."

"O ask me nothing," I said: "And  
she knows too,

And she conceals it." So my mother  
clutch'd

The truth at once, but with no word  
from me;

And now thus early risen she goes to  
inform

The Princess: Lady Psyche will be  
crush'd;

But you may yet be saved, and there-  
fore fly:

But heal me with your pardon ere you  
go.

'What pardon, sweet Melissa, for  
a blush?'

Said Cyril: 'Pale one, blush again:  
than wear

Those lilies, better blush our lives  
away.

Yet let us breathe for one hour more  
in Heaven'

He added, 'lest some classic Angel  
speak

In scorn of us, "They mounted, Gany-  
medes,

To tumble, Vulcans, on the second  
morn."

But I will melt this marble into wax  
To yield us farther furlough:' and he  
went.

    Melissa shook her doubtful curls,  
    and thought

He scarce would prosper. 'Teil us,'  
    Florian ask'd,

'How grew this feud betwixt the right  
and left.'

'O long ago,' she said, 'betwixt these  
two

Division smoulders hidden; 'tis my  
mother,

Too jealous, often fretful as the wind  
Pent in a crevice: much I bear with her:

I never knew my father, but she says  
(God help her) she was wedded to a

fool;

And still she rail'd against the state  
of things.

She had the care of Lady Ida's youth,  
And from the Queen's decease she

brought her up.

But when your sister came she won  
the heart

Of Ida: they were still together, grew  
(For so they said themselves) inoscu-

lated;

Consonant chords that shiver to one  
note;

One mind in all things: yet my mother  
still

Affirms your Psyche thieved her theo-  
ries,

And angled with them for her pupil's  
love:

She calls her plagiarist: I know not  
what:

But I must go: I dare not tarry,' and  
light,

As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled.

    Then murmur'd Florian gazing after  
    her,

'An open-hearted maiden, true and  
pure.

If I could love, why this were she:  
how pretty

Her blushing was, and how she  
blush'd again,

As if to close with Cyril's random  
wish:

Not like your Princess cramm'd with  
erring pride,  
Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags  
in tow.

'The crane,' I said, 'may chatter of  
the crane,  
The dove may murmur of the dove,  
but I  
An eagle clang an eagle to the sphere.  
My princess, O my princess! true she  
errs,  
But in her own grand way: being her-  
self  
Three times more noble than three  
score of men,  
She sees herself in every woman else,  
And so she wears her error like a  
crown  
To blind the truth and me: for her,  
and her,  
Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix  
The nectar; but—ah she—whene'er  
she moves  
The Samian Herè rises and she  
speaks  
A Memnon smitten with the morning  
Sun.'

So saying from the court we paced,  
and gain'd  
The terrace ranged along the North-  
ern front,  
And leaning there on those balusters,  
high  
Above the empurpled champaign,  
drank the gale  
That blown about the foliage under-  
neath,  
And sated with the innumerable rose,  
Beat balm upon your eyelids. Hither  
came  
Cyril, and yawning 'O hard task,' he  
cried;  
'No fighting shadows here! I forced  
a way  
Thro' solid opposition crabb'd and  
gnarl'd.  
Better to clear prime forests, heave  
and thump  
A league of street in summer solstice  
down,  
Than hammer at this reverend gentle-  
woman.

I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd; found  
her there  
At point to move, and settled in her  
eyes  
The green malignant light of coming  
storm.  
Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-  
oil'd,  
As man's could be; yet maiden-meek  
I pray'd  
Concealment: she demanded who we  
were,  
And why we came? I fabled nothing  
fair,  
But, your example pilot, told her all.  
Up went the hush'd amaze of hand  
and eye.  
But when I dwelt upon your old  
affiance,  
She answer'd sharply that I talk'd  
astray.  
I urged the fierce inscription on the  
gate,  
And our three lives. True—we had  
limed ourselves  
With open eyes, and we must take  
the chance.  
But such extremes, I told her, well  
might harm  
The woman's cause. "Not more  
than now," she said,  
"So puddled as it is with favoritism."  
I tried the mother's heart. Shame  
might befall  
Melissa, knowing, saying not she  
knew:  
Her answer was "Leave me to deal  
with that."  
I spoke of war to come and many  
deaths,  
And she replied, her duty was to  
speak,  
And duty duty, clear of consequences.  
I grew discouraged, Sir; but since I  
knew  
No rock so hard but that a little wave  
May beat admission in a thousand  
years,  
I recommenced; "decide not ere you  
pause.  
I find you here but in the second place,  
Some say the third—the authentic  
foundress you.



I offer boldly : we will seat you highest.  
Wink at our advent : help my prince  
to gain  
His rightful bride, and here I promise  
you  
Some palace in our land, where you  
shall reign  
The head and heart of all our fair she-  
world,  
And your great name flow on with  
broadening time  
For ever." Well, she balanced this a  
little,  
And told me she would answer us to-  
day,  
Meantime be mute : thus much, nor  
more I gain'd.'

He ceasing, came a message from  
the Head.  
'That afternoon the Princess rode to  
take  
The dip of certain strata to the North.  
Would we go with her? we should  
find the land  
Worth seeing; and the river made a  
fall  
Out yonder: ' then she pointed on to  
where  
A double hill ran up his furrowy forks  
Beyond the thick-leaved platans of the  
vale.

Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro'  
all  
Its range of duties to the appointed  
hour.  
Then summon'd to the porch we went.  
She stood  
Among her maidens, higher by the  
head,  
Her back against a pillar, her foot on  
one  
Of those tame leopards. Kittenlike  
he roll'd  
And paw'd about her sandal. I drew  
near;  
I gazed. On a sudden my strange  
seizure came  
Upon me, the weird vision of our  
house:  
The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow  
show,

Her gay-furr'd cats a painted fantasy,  
Her college and her maidens, empty  
masks,  
And I myself the shadow of a dream,  
For all things were and were not. Yet  
I felt  
My heart beat thick with passion and  
with awe;  
Then from my breast the involuntary  
sigh  
Broke, as she smote me with the light  
of eyes  
That lent my knee desire to kneel, and  
shook  
My pulses, till to horse we got, and so  
Went forth in long retinue following  
up  
The river as it narrow'd to the hills.

I rode beside her and to me she  
said :  
'O friend, we trust that you esteem'd  
us not  
Too harsh to your companion yester-  
morn;  
Unwillingly we spake ' 'No—not to  
her,'  
I answer'd, 'but to one of whom we  
spake  
Your Highness might have seem'd  
the thing you say.'  
'Again?' she cried, 'are you ambassa-  
dresses  
From him to me? we give you, being  
strange,  
A license : speak, and let the topic die.'

I stammer'd that I knew him—could  
have wish'd—  
'Our king expects—was there no pre-  
contract?  
There is no truer-hearted—ah, you  
seem  
All he prefigured, and he could not  
see  
The bird of passage flying south but  
long'd  
To follow: surely, if your Highness  
keep  
Your purport, you will shock him ev'n  
to death,  
Or baser courses, children of despair.'

'Poor boy,' she said, 'can he not  
read—no books?  
Quoit, tennis, ball—no games? nor  
deals in that  
Which men delight in, martial exercise?  
To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,  
Methinks he seems no better than a  
girl;  
As girls were once, as we ourself have  
been:  
We had our dreams; perhaps he mixt  
with them:  
We touch on our dead self, nor shun  
to do it,  
Being other—since we learnt our  
meaning here,  
To lift the woman's fall'n divinity  
Upon an even pedestal with man.'

She paused, and added with a  
haughtier smile  
'And as to precontracts, we move,  
my friend,  
At no man's beck, but know ourself  
and thee,  
O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summon'd out  
She kept her state, and left the  
drunken king  
To brawl at Shushan underneath the  
the palms.'

'Alas your Highness breaths full  
East,' I said,  
'On that which leans to you. I know  
the Prince,  
I prize his truth; and then how vast a  
work  
To assail this gray preëminence of  
man!  
You grant me license; might I use it?  
think;  
Ere half be done perchance your life  
may fail;  
Then comes the feebler heiress of  
your plan,  
And takes and ruins all; and thus  
your pains  
May only make that footprint upon  
sand  
Which old-recurring waves of prej-  
udice  
Resmooth to nothing: might I dread  
that you,

With only Fame for spouse and your  
great deeds  
For issue, yet may live in vain, and  
miss,  
Meanwhile, what every woman counts  
her due,  
Love, children, happiness?'  
And she exclaim'd,  
'Peace, you young savage of the  
Northern wild!  
What! tho' your Prince's love were  
like a God's,  
Have we not made ourself the sacri-  
fice?  
You are bold indeed: we are not talk'd  
to thus:  
Yet will we say for children, would  
they grew  
Like field-flowers everywhere I we like  
them well:  
But children die; and let me tell you,  
girl,  
Howe'er you babble, great deeds can-  
not die;  
They with the sun and moon renew  
their light  
For ever, blessing those that look on  
them.  
Children—that men may pluck them  
from our hearts,  
Kill us with pity, break us with our-  
selves—  
O—children—there is nothing upon  
earth  
More miserable than she that has a son  
And sees him err: nor would we work  
for fame;  
Tho' she perhaps might reap the  
applause of Great,  
Who learns the one *POU STO* whence  
afterhands  
May move the world, tho' she herself  
effect  
But little; wherefore up and act, nor  
shrink  
For fear our solid aim be dissipated  
By frail successors. Would, indeed,  
we had been,  
In lieu of many mortal flies, a race  
Of giants living, each, a thousand  
years,  
That we might see our own work out,  
and watch

The sandy footprint harden into stone.'

I answer'd nothing, doubtful in myself  
If that strange Poet-princess with her grand  
Imaginations might at all be won.  
And she broke out interpreting my thoughts :

'No doubt we seem a kind of monster to you;  
We are used to that; for women, up till this  
Cramp'd under worse than South-sea-isle taboo,  
Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fail so far  
In high desire, they know not, cannot guess  
How much their welfare is a passion to us.  
If we could give them surer, quicker proof—  
Oh if our end were less achievable  
By slow approaches, than by single act  
Of immolation, any phase of death,  
We were as prompt to spring against the pikes,  
Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it,  
To compass our dear sisters' liberties.'

She bow'd as if to veil a noble tear;  
And up we came to where the river sloped  
To plunge in cataract, shattering on black blocks  
A breadth of thunder. O'er it shook the woods,  
And danced the color, and, below, stuck out  
The bones of some vast bulk that lived and roar'd  
Before man was. She gazed awhile and said,  
'As these rude bones to us, are we to her  
That will be.' 'Dare we dream of that,' I ask'd,  
'Which wrought us, as the workman and his work,  
That practice betters?' 'How,' she cried, 'you love

The metaphysics! read and earn our prize,  
A golden brooch: beneath an emerald plane  
Sits Diotima, teaching him that died  
Of hemlock; our device; wrought to the life;  
She rapt upon her subject, he on her:  
For there are schools for all.' 'And yet' I said  
'Methinks I have not found among them all  
One anatomic.' 'Nay, we thought of that,'  
She answer'd, 'but it pleased us not: in truth  
We shudder but to dream our maids should ape  
Those monstrous males that carve the living hound,  
And cram him with the fragments of the grave,  
Or in the dark dissolving human heart,  
And holy secrets of this microcosm,  
Dabbling a shameless hand with shameful jest,  
Encarnalize their spirits: yet we know  
Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter hangs:  
Howbeit myself, foreseeing casualty,  
Nor willing men should come among us, learnt,  
For many weary moons before we came,  
This craft of healing. Were you sick, ourself  
Would tend upon you. To your question now,  
Which touches on the workman and his work.  
Let there be light and there was light: 'tis so:  
For was, and is, and will be, are but is;  
And all creation is one act at once,  
The birth of light: but we that are not all,  
As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that,  
And live, perforce, from thought to thought, and make  
One act a phantom of succession: thus

Our weakness somehow shapes the  
shadow, Time;  
But in the shadow will we work, and  
mould  
The woman to the fuller day.'

She spake  
With kindled eyes: we rode a league  
beyond,  
And, o'er a bridge of pinewood cross-  
ing, came  
On flowery levels underneath the  
crag,  
Full of all beauty. 'O how sweet' I  
said

(For I was half-oblivious of my mask)  
'To linger here with one that loved  
us.' 'Yea,'

The answer'd, 'or with fair philoso-  
phies

That lift the fancy; for indeed these  
fields

Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian  
lawns,

Where paced the Demigods of old,  
and saw

The soft white vapor streak the  
crowned towers

Built to the Sun: ' then, turning to her  
maids,

'Pitch our pavilion here upon the  
sward;

Lay out the viands.' At the word,  
they raised

A tent of satin, elaborately wrought  
With fair Corinna's triumph; here she  
stood,

Engirt with many a florid maiden-  
check,

The woman-conqueror; woman-con-  
quer'd there

The bearded Victor of ten thousand  
hymns,

And all the men mourn'd at his side:  
but we

Set forth to climb; then, climbing,  
Cyril kept

With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I  
With mine affianced. Many a little  
hand

Glanced like a touch of sunshine on  
the rocks,

Many a light foot shone like a jewel  
set

In the dark crag: and then we turn'd,  
we wound

About the cliffs, the copses, out and  
in,

Hammering and clinking, chattering  
stony names

Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap  
and tuff,

Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the  
Sun

Grew broader toward his death and  
fell, and all

The rosy heights came out above the  
lawns.

## IV.

The splendor falls on castle walls

And snowy summits old in story:

The long light shakes across the lakes,

And the wild cataract leaps in glory.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes fly-  
ing.

Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dy-  
ing, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,

And thinner, clearer, farther going!

O sweet and far from cliff and scar

The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!

Blow, let us hear the purple glens reply-  
ing:

Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,  
dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,

They faint on hill or field or river:

Our echoes roll from soul to soul,

And grow for ever and for ever.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes fly-  
ing.

And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying,  
dying.

'There sinks the nebulous star we call  
the Sun,

If that hypothesis of theirs be sound'  
Said Ida; 'Let us down and rest;'

and we

Down from the lean and wrinkled  
precipices,

By every coppice-feather'd chasm and  
cleft,

Dropt through the ambrosial gloom to  
where below  
No bigger than a glow-worm shone  
the tent  
Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she  
lean'd on me,  
Descending; once or twice she lent  
her hand,  
And blissful palpitations in the blood,  
Stirring a sudden transport rose and  
fell.

But when we planted level feet, and  
dipt  
Beneath the satin dome and enter'd in,  
There leaning deep in broider'd down  
we sank  
Our elbows: on a tripod in the midst  
A fragrant flame rose, and before us  
glow'd  
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine,  
and gold.

Then she, ' Let some one sing to us:  
lightlier move  
The minutes fledged with music: ' and  
a maid,  
Of those beside her, smote her harp,  
and sang.

' Tears, idle tears, I know not what they  
mean,  
Tears from the depth of some divine de-  
spair  
Rise in the heart and gather to the eyes.  
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no more.

' Fresh as the first beam glittering on a  
sail,  
That brings our friends up from the under-  
world,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the  
verge;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

' Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer  
dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering  
square;

So sad, so strange, the days that are no  
more.

' Dear as remember'd kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy  
feign'd  
On lips that are for others; deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;  
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.'

She ended with such passion that  
the tear,  
She sang of, shook and fell, an err-  
ing pearl  
Lost in her bosom: but with some  
disdain  
Answer'd the Princess, ' If indeed  
there haunt  
About the moulder'd lodges of the  
Past  
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to  
men,

Well needs it we should cram our ears  
with wool  
And so pace by: but thine are fancies  
hatch'd  
In silken-folded idleness; nor is it  
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost,  
But trim our sails, and let old bygones  
be,

While down the streams that float us  
each and all  
To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs  
of ice,  
Throne after throne, and molten on  
the waste  
Becomes a cloud: for all things serve  
their time  
Toward that great year of equal  
mights and rights,  
Nor would I fight with iron laws, in  
the end

Found golden: let the past be past;  
let be

Their cancell'd Babels: tho' the  
rough kex break  
The starr'd mosaic, and the beard-  
blown goat  
Hang on the shaft, and the wild fig-  
tree split  
Their monstrous idols, care not while  
we hear

A trumpet in the distance pealing  
 news  
 Of better, and Hope, a poising eagle,  
 burns  
 Above the unrisen morrow: ' then to  
 me;  
 ' Know you no song of your own land,'  
 she said,  
 ' Not such as moans about the retro-  
 spect,  
 But deals with the other distance and  
 the hues  
 Of promise; not a death's-head at the  
 wine.'

Then I remember'd one myself had  
 made,  
 What time I watch'd the swallow  
 winging south  
 From mine own land, part made long  
 since, and part  
 Now while I sang, and maidenlike as far  
 As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

' O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying  
 South,  
 Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,  
 And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

' O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest  
 each,  
 That bright and fierce and fickle is the  
 South,  
 And dark and true and tender is the North.

' O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow,  
 and light  
 Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,  
 And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

' O were I thou that she might take me  
 in,  
 And lay me on her bosom, and her heart  
 Would rock the saowy cradle till I died.

' Why lingereth she to clothe her heart  
 with love,  
 Delaying as the tender ash delays  
 To clothe herself, when all the woods are  
 green?

' O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is  
 flown:  
 Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,  
 But in the North long since my nest is  
 made.

' O tell her, brief is life but love is long,  
 And brief the sun of summer in the North,  
 And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

' O Swallow, flying from the golden  
 woods,  
 Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and  
 make her mine,  
 And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.'

I ceased, and all the ladies, each  
 at each,  
 Like the Ithacensian suitors in old  
 time,

Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd  
 with alien lips,  
 And knew not what they meant; for  
 still my voice

Rang false: but smiling ' Not for  
 thee,' she said,

' O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan  
 Shall burst her veil: marsh-divers,  
 rather, maid,  
 Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-  
 crake

Grate her harsh kindred in the grass:  
 and this

A mere love-poem! O for such, my  
 friend,

We hold them slight: they mind us  
 of the time

When we made bricks in Egypt.  
 Knaves are men,

That lute and flute fantastic tender-  
 ness,

And dress the victim to the offering  
 up.

And paint the gates of Hell with  
 Paradise,

And play the slave to gain the tyr-  
 anny.

Poor soul! I had a maid of honor  
 once;

She wept her true eyes blind for such  
 a one,

A rogue of canzonets and serenades.  
 I loved her. Peace be with her. She

is dead.

So they blaspheme the muse! But  
 great is song

Used to great ends: ourself have  
 often tried

Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have  
 dash'd

The passion of the prophethess; for  
song  
Is duer unto freedom, force and  
growth  
Of spirit than to junketing and love.  
Love is it? Would this same mock-  
love, and this  
Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter  
bats,  
Till all men grew to rate us at our  
worth,  
Not vassals to be beat, nor pretty  
babes  
To be dandled, no, but living wills,  
and sphered  
Whole in ourselves and owed to none.  
Enough!  
But now to leaven play with profit,  
you,  
Know you no song, the true growth of  
your soil,  
That gives the manners of your coun-  
try-women?'

She spoke and turn'd her sumptu-  
ous head with eyes  
Of shining expectation fixt on mine.  
Then while I dragg'd my brains for  
such a song,  
Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd  
glass had wrought,  
Or master'd by the sense of sport,  
began  
To troll a careless, careless tavern-  
catch  
Of Moll and Meg, and strange experi-  
ences  
Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded  
at him,  
I frowning; Psyche flush'd and  
wann'd and shook;  
The lilylike Melissa droop'd her  
brows;  
'Forbear,' the Princess cried; 'For-  
bear, Sir' I;  
And heated thro' and thro' with  
wrath and love,  
I smote him on the breast; he started  
up;  
There rose a shriek as of a city  
sack'd;  
Melissa clamor'd 'Flee the death;'  
'To horse'

Said Ida; 'home! to horse!' and  
fled, as flies  
A troop of snowy doves athwart the  
dusk,  
When some one batters at the dove-  
cote-doors,  
Disorderly the women. Alone I  
stood  
With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at  
heart,  
In the pavilion: there like parting  
hopes  
I heard them passing from me: hoof  
by hoof,  
And every hoof a knell to my desire-,  
Clang'd on the bridge; and then  
another shriek,  
'The Head, the Head, the Princess,  
O the Head!'  
For blind with rage she miss'd the  
plank, and roll'd  
In the river. Out I sprang from  
glow to gloom:  
There whirl'd her white robe like a  
blossom'd branch  
Rapt to the horrible fall: a glance I  
gave,  
No more; but woman vested as I was  
Plunged; and the flood drew; yet I  
caught her; then  
Oaring one arm and bearing in my  
left  
The weight of all the hopes of half  
the world,  
Strove to buffet to land in vain. A  
tree  
Was half-disrooted from his place and  
stoop'd  
To drench his dark locks in the gur-  
gling wave  
Mid-channel. Right on this we drove  
and caught,  
And grasping down the boughs I  
gain'd the shore.

There stood her maidens glimmer-  
ingly group'd  
In the hollow bank. One reaching  
forward drew  
My burthen from mine arms; they  
cried 'she lives.'  
They bore her back into the tent: but  
I,

So much a kind of shame within me wrought,  
 Not yet endured to meet her opening eyes,  
 Nor found my friends; but push'd alone on foot  
 (For since her horse was lost I left her mine)  
 Across the woods, and less from Indian craft  
 Than beelike instinct hiveward, found at length  
 The garden portals. Two great statues, Art  
 And Science, Caryatids, lifted up  
 A weight of emblem, and betwixt were valves  
 Of open-work in which the hunter rued  
 His rash intrusion, manlike, but his brows  
 Had sprouted, and the branches there-upon  
 Spread out at top, and grimly spiked the gates.

A little space was left between the horns,  
 Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top with pain,  
 Dropt on the sward, and up the linden walks,  
 And, tost on thoughts that changed from hue to hue,  
 Now poring on the glowworm, now the star,  
 I paced the terrace, till the Bear had wheel'd  
 Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns. A step  
 Of lightest echo, then a loftier form  
 Than female, moving thro' the uncertain gloom,  
 Disturb'd me with the doubt 'if this were she,'  
 But it was Florian. 'Hist O Hist,' he said,  
 'They seek us: out so late is out of rules.  
 Moreover 'seize the strangers' is the cry.  
 How came you here?' I told him: 'I' said he,

'Last of the train, a moral leper, I,  
 To whom none spake, half-sick at heart, return'd.  
 Arriving all confused among the rest  
 With hooded brows I crept into the hall,  
 And, couch'd behind a Judith, underneath  
 The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw.  
 Girl after girl was call'd to trial: each  
 Disclaim'd all knowledge of us: last of all,  
 Melissa: trust me, Sir, I pitied her.  
 She, question'd if she knew us men, at first  
 Was silent; closer prest, denied it not:  
 And then, demanded if her mother knew,  
 Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied:  
 From whence the Royal mind, familiar with her,  
 Easily gather'd either guilt. She sent  
 For Psyche, but she was not there; she call'd  
 For Psyche's child to cast it from the doors;  
 She sent for Blanche to accuse her face to face;  
 And I slipt out; but whither will you now?  
 And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are fled;  
 What, if together? that were not so well.  
 Would rather we had never come! I dread  
 His wildness, and the chances of the dark.'

'And yet,' I said, 'you wrong him more than I  
 That struck him: this is proper to the clown,  
 Tho' smock'd, or furr'd and purpled, still the clown,  
 To harm the thing that trusts him, and to shame  
 That which he says he loves: for Cyril, howe'er  
 He deal in frolic, as to-night—the song  
 Might have been worse and sinn'd in grosser lips



Beyond all pardon—as it is, I hold  
These flashes on the surface are not he.  
He has a solid base of temperament:  
But as the waterlily starts and slides  
Upon the level in little puffs of wind,  
Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is  
he.'

Scarce had I ceased when from a  
tamarisk near  
Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying,  
'Names: '  
He, standing still, was clutch'd; but  
I began  
To thrid the musky-circled mazes,  
wind  
And double in and out the boles, and  
race  
By all the fountains: fleet I was of  
foot:  
Before me shower'd the rose in  
flakes; behind  
I heard the puff'd pursuer; at mine  
ear  
Bubbled the nightingale and heeded  
not,  
And secret laughter tickled all my  
soul.  
At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine,  
That claspt the feet of a Mnemosyne,  
And falling on my face was caught  
and known.

They haled us to the Princess where  
she sat  
High in the hall: above her droop'd  
a lamp,  
And made the single jewel on her  
brow  
Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-  
head,  
Prophet of storm: a handmaid on each  
side  
Bow'd toward her, combing out her  
long black hair  
Damp from the river; and close  
behind her stood  
Eight daughters of the plough,  
stronger than men,  
Huge women blowzed with health,  
and wind, and rain,  
And labor. Each was like a Druid  
rock;

Or like a spire of land that stands  
apart  
Cleft from the main, and wail'd about  
with mews.

Then, as we came, the crowd divid-  
ing clove  
An advent to the throne: and therebe-  
side,  
Half-naked as if caught at once from  
bed  
And tumbled on the purple footcloth,  
lay  
The lily-shining child; and on the  
left,  
Bow'd on her palms and folded up  
from wrong,  
Her round white shoulder shaken with  
her sobs,  
Melissa knelt; but Lady Blanche  
erect  
Stood up and spake, an affluent orator.

'It was not thus, O Princess, in old  
days:  
You prized my counsel, lived upon  
my lips:  
I led you then to all the Castalies;  
I fed you with the milk of every Muse;  
I loved you like this kneeler, and you  
me  
Your second mother: those were  
gracious times.  
Then came your new friend: you  
began to change—  
I saw it and grieved—to slacken and  
to cool;  
Till taken with her seeming openness  
You turn'd your warmer currents all  
to her,  
To me you froze: this was my need  
for all.  
Yet I bore up in part from ancient  
love,  
And partly that I hoped to win you  
back,  
And partly conscions of my own  
deserts,  
And partly that you were my civil head,  
And chiefly you were born for some-  
thing great,  
In which I might your fellow-worker  
be,

When time should serve; and thus a noble scheme  
 Grew up from seed we two long since had sown;  
 In us true growth, in her a Jonah's gourd,  
 Up in one night and due to sudden sun:  
 We took this palace; but even from the first  
 You stood in your own light and darken'd mine.  
 What student came but that you planed her path  
 To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,  
 A foreigner, and I your countrywoman,  
 I your old friend and tried, she new in all?  
 But still her lists were swell'd and mine were lean;  
 Yet I bore up in hope she would be known:  
 Then came these wolves: *they* knew her: *they* endured,  
 Long-closeted with her the yesternorn,  
 To tell her what they were, and she to hear:  
 And me none told: not less to an eye like mine  
 A lidless watcher of the public weal,  
 Last night, their mask was patent, and my foot  
 Was to you: but I thought again: I fear'd  
 To meet a cold "We thank you, we shall hear of it  
 From Lady Psyche:" you had gone to her,  
 She told, perforce; and winning easy grace,  
 No doubt, for slight delay, remain'd among us  
 In our young nursery still unknown, the stem  
 Less grain than touchwood, while my honest heat  
 Were all miscounted as malignant haste  
 To push my rival out of place and power.  
 But public use required she should be known;  
 And since my oath was ta'en for public use,

I broke the letter of it to keep the sense.  
 I spoke not then at first, but watch'd them well,  
 Saw that they kept apart, no mischief done;  
 And yet this day (tho' you should hate me for it)  
 I came to tell you; found that you had gone,  
 Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise: now, I thought,  
 That surely she will speak; if not, then I:  
 Did she? These monsters blazon'd what they were,  
 According to the coarseness of their kind,  
 For thus I hear; and known at last (my work)  
 And full of cowardice and guilty shame,  
 I grant in her some sense of shame, she flies;  
 And I remain on whom to wreak your rage,  
 I, that have lent my life to build up yours,  
 I that have wasted here health, wealth, and time,  
 And talent, I—you know it—I will not boast:  
 Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan,  
 Divorced from my experience, will be chaff  
 For every gust of chance, and men will say  
 We did not know the real light, but chased  
 The wisp that flickers where no foot can tread.'

She ceased: the Princess answer'd coldly, 'Good:  
 Your oath is broken: we dismiss you: go.  
 For this lost lamb (she pointed to the child)  
 Our mind is changed: we take it to ourself.'

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulture throat,

And shot from crooked lips a haggard smile.

'The plan was mine. I built the nest'  
she said

'To hatch the cuckoo. Rise!' and stoop'd to updrag

Melissa: she, half on her mother propt,

Half-drooping from her, turn'd her face, and cast

A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer,  
Which melted Florian's fancy as she hung.

A Niobean daughter, one arm out,  
Appealing to the bolts of Heaven;  
and while

We gazed upon her came a little stir  
About the doors, and on a sudden rush'd

Among us, out of breath, as one pursued,

A woman-post in flying raiment.  
Fear

Stared in her eyes, and chalk'd her face, and wing'd

Her transit to the throne, whereby she fell

Delivering seal'd dispatches which the Head

Took half-amazed, and in her lion's mood

Tore open, silent we with blind surmise

Regarding, while she read, till over brow

And cheek and bosom brake the wrathful bloom

As of some fire against a stormy cloud,  
When the wild peasant rights himself,  
the rick

Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens;

For anger most it seem'd, while now her breast,

Beaten with some great passion at her heart,

Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard

In the dead hush the papers that she held

Rustle: at once the lost lamb at her feet

Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam;

The plaintive cry jarr'd on her ire; she crush'd

The scrolls together, made a sudden turn

As if to speak, but, utterance failing her,

She whirl'd them on to me, as who should say

'Read,' and I read—two letters—one her sire's.

'Fair daughter, when we sent the Prince your way

We knew not your ungracious laws,  
which learnt,

We, conscious of what temper you are built,

Came all in haste to hinder wrong,  
but fell

Into his father's hands, who has this night,

You lying close upon his territory,  
Slipt round and in the dark invested you,

And here he keeps me hostage for his son.'

The second was my father's running thus:

'You have our son: touch not a hair of his head:

Render him up unscathed: give him your hand:

Cleave to your contract: tho' indeed we hear

You hold the woman is the better man;

A rampant heresy, such as if it spread  
Would make all women kick against their Lords

Thro' all the world, and which might well deserve

That we this night should pluck your palace down;

And we will do it, unless you send us back

Our son, on the instant, whole.'

So far I read;  
And then stood up and spoke impetuously.

'O not to pry and peer on your reserve,

But led by golden wishes, and a hope  
The child of regal compact, did I  
break

Your precinct; not a scorner of your sex  
But venerator, zealous it should be  
All that it might be: hear me, for I  
bear,

Tho' man, yet human, whatsoever your  
wrongs,  
From the flaxen curl to the gray lock  
a life

Less mine than yours: my nurse  
would tell me of you;

I babbled for you, as babies for the  
moon,

Vague brightness; when a boy, you  
stoop'd to me

From all high places, lived in all fair  
lights,

Came in long breezes rapt from  
inmost south

And blown to inmost north; at eve  
and dawn

With Ida, Ida, Ida, rang the woods;  
The leader wildswan in among the  
stars

Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of  
glowworm light

The mellow breaker murmur'd Ida.  
Now,

Because I would have reach'd you,  
had you been

Spher'd up with Cassiopëia, or the  
enthroned

Persephonë in Hades, now at length,  
Those winters of abeyance all worn  
out,

A man I came to see you: but, indeed,  
Not in this frequency can I lend full  
tongue,

O noble Ida, to those thoughts that  
wait

On you, their centre: let me say but  
this,

That many a famous man and woman,  
town

And landskip, have I heard of, after  
seen

The dwarfs of presage: tho' when  
known, there grew

Another kind of beauty in detail  
Made them worth knowing; but in  
you I found

My boyish dream involved and daz-  
zled down

And master'd, while that after-beauty  
makes

Such head from act to act, from hour  
to hour,

Within me, that except you slay me  
here,

According to your bitter statute-book,  
I cannot cease to follow you, as they  
say

The seal does music; who desire you  
more

Than growing boys their manhood;  
dying lips,

With many thousand matters left to  
do,

The breath of life; O more than poor  
men wealth,

Than sick men health—yours, yours,  
not mine—but half

Without you; with you, whole; and  
of those halves

You worthiest; and howe'er you  
block and bar

Your heart with system out from  
mine, I hold

That it becomes no man to nurse  
despair,

But in the teeth of clench'd antago-  
nisms

To follow up the worthiest till he die:  
Yet that I came not all unauthorized

Behold your father's letter.'

On one knee  
Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught,  
And dash'd

Unopen'd at her feet: a tide of fierce  
Invective seem'd to wait behind her

lips,  
As waits a river level with the dam

Ready to burst and flood the world  
with foam:

And so she would have spoken, but  
there rose

A hubbub in the court of half the  
maids

Gather'd together: from the illumined  
hall

Long lanes of splendor slanted o'er a  
press

Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded  
ewes,

And rainbow robes, and gems and  
gemlike eyes,  
And gold and golden heads; they to  
and fro  
Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some  
red, some pale,  
All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the  
light,  
Some crying there was an army in the  
land,  
And some that men were in the very  
walls,  
And some they cared not; till a  
clamor grew  
As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,  
And worse-confounded: high above  
them stood  
The placid marble Muses, looking  
peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head: but  
rising up  
Robed in the long night of her deep  
hair, so  
To the open window moved, remaining  
there  
Fixt like a beacon-tower above the  
waves  
Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling  
eye  
Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the  
light  
Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd  
her arms and call'd  
Across the tumult and the tumult fell.

'What fear ye, brawlers? am not I  
your Head?  
On me, me, me, the storm first breaks:  
I dare  
All these male thunderbolts: what is  
it ye fear?  
Peace! there are those to avenge us  
and they come:  
If not,—myself were like enough, O  
girls,  
To unfurl the maiden banner of our  
rights,  
And clad in iron burst the ranks of  
war,  
Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,  
Die: yet I blame you not so much for  
fear;

Six thousand years of fear have made  
you that  
From which I would redeem you: but  
for those  
That stir this hubbub—you and you  
—I know  
Your faces there in the crowd—to-mor-  
row morn  
We hold a great convention: then  
shall they  
That love their voices more than duty,  
learn  
With whom they deal, dismiss'd in  
shame to live  
No wiser than their mothers, house-  
hold stuff,  
Live chattels, mincers of each other's  
fame,  
Full of weak poison, turnspits for the  
clown,  
The drunkard's football, laughing-  
stocks of Time,  
Whose brains are in their hands and  
in their heels,  
But fit to faunt, to dress, to dance, to  
thrum,  
To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and  
to scour,  
For ever slaves at home and fools  
abroad.'

She ending, waved her hands: there-  
at the crowd  
Muttering, dissolved: then with a  
smile, that look'd  
A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,  
When all the glens are drown'd in  
azure gloom  
Of thunder-shower, she floated to us  
and said:

'You have done well and like a  
gentleman,  
And like a prince: you have our  
thanks for all:  
And you look well too in your woman's  
dress:  
Well have you done and like a gentle-  
man.  
You saved our life: we owe you  
bitter thanks:  
Better have died and spilt our bones  
in the flood—

Then men had said—but now—What  
 hinders me  
 To take such bloody vengeance on you  
 both ?  
 Yet since our father—Wasps in our  
 good hive,  
 You would-be quenchers of the light  
 to be,  
 Barbarians, grosser than your native  
 bears—  
 O would I had his sceptre for one  
 hour !  
 You that have dared to break our  
 bound, and gull'd  
 Our servants, wrong'd and lied and  
 thwarted us—  
 I wed with thee ! I bound by precon-  
 tract  
 Your bride, your bonds slave ! not tho'  
 all the gold  
 That veins the world were pack'd to  
 make your crown,  
 And every spoken tongue should lord  
 you. Sir,  
 Your falsehood and yourself are hate-  
 ful to us :  
 I trample on your offers and on you :  
 Begone : we will not look upon you  
 more.

Here, push them out at gates.  
 In wrath she spake,  
 Then those eight mighty daughters of  
 the plough  
 Bent their broad faces toward us and  
 address'd  
 Their motion : twice I sought to plead  
 my cause,  
 But on my shoulder hung their heavy  
 hands,  
 The weight of destiny : so from her face  
 They pushed us, down the steps, and  
 thro' the court,  
 And with grim laughter thrust us out  
 at gates.

We cross'd the street and gain'd a  
 petty mound  
 Beyond it, whence we saw the lights  
 and heard  
 The voices murmuring. While I  
 listen'd, came  
 On a sudden the weird seizure and the  
 doubt :

I seem'd to move among a world of  
 ghosts ;  
 The Princess with her monstrous  
 woman-guard,  
 The jest and earnest working side by  
 side,  
 The cataract and the tumult and the  
 kings  
 Were shadows ; and the long fantastic  
 night  
 With all its doings had and had not  
 been,  
 And all things were and were not.  
 This went by  
 As strangely as it came, and on my  
 spirits  
 Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy ;  
 Not long ; I shook it off ; for spite of  
 doubts  
 And sudden ghostly shadowings I was  
 one  
 To whom the touch of all mischance  
 but came  
 As night to him that sitting on a hill  
 Sees the midsummer, midnight, Nor-  
 way sun  
 Set into sunrise ; then we moved  
 away.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,  
 That beat to battle where he stands ;  
 Thy face across his fancy comes,  
 And gives the battle to his hands :  
 A moment, while the trumpets blow,  
 He sees his brood about thy knee ;  
 The next, like fire he meets the foe,  
 And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

So Lilia sang : we thought her half-  
 possess'd,  
 She struck such warbling fury thro'  
 the words ;  
 And, after, feigning pique at what she  
 call'd  
 The raillery, or grotesque, or false  
 sublime—  
 Like one that wishes at a dance to  
 change  
 The music—clapt her hands and cried  
 for war,  
 Or some grand fight to kill and make  
 an end :  
 And he that next inherited the tale

Half turning to the broken statue,  
 said,  
 'Sir Ralph has got your colors: if I  
 prove  
 Your knight, and fight your battle,  
 what for me?'  
 It chanced, her empty glove upon the  
 tomb  
 Lay by her like a model of her hand.  
 She took it and she flung it. 'Fight,'  
 she said,  
 'And make us all we would be, great  
 and good.'  
 He knightlike in his cap instead of  
 casque,  
 A cap of Tyrol borrow'd from the  
 hall,  
 Arranged the favor, and assumed the  
 Prince.

## v.

Now, scarce three paces measnred  
 from the mound,  
 We stumbled on a stationary voice,  
 And 'Stand, who goes?' 'Two from  
 the palace' I.  
 'The second two: they wait,' he said,  
 'pass on;  
 His Highness wakes:' and one, that  
 clash'd in arms,  
 By glimmering lanes and walls of can-  
 vas led  
 Threading the soldier-city, till we  
 heard  
 The drowsy folds of our great ensign  
 shake  
 From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial  
 tent  
 Whispers of war.  
 Entering, the sudden light  
 Dazed me half-blind: I stood and  
 seem'd to hear,  
 As in a poplar grove when a light  
 wind wakes  
 A lisping of the innumerable leaf and  
 dies,  
 Each hissing in his neighbor's ear;  
 and then  
 A strangled titter, out of which there  
 brake  
 On all sides, clamoring etiquette to  
 death,

Unmeasured mirth; while now the  
 two old kings  
 Began to wag their baldness up and  
 down,  
 The fresh young captains flash'd their  
 glittering teeth,  
 The huge bush-bearded Barons heaved  
 and blew,  
 And slain with laughter roll'd the  
 gilded Squire.

At length my Sire, his rough cheek  
 wet with tears,  
 Panted from weary sides 'King, you  
 are free!  
 We did but keep you surety for our  
 son,  
 If this be he,—or a draggled mawkin,  
 thou,  
 That tends her bristled grunters in the  
 sludge:'  
 For I was drench'd with ooze and  
 torn with briars,  
 More crumpled than a poppy from the  
 sheath,  
 And all one rag, disprinc'd from head  
 to heel.  
 Then some one sent beneath his  
 vaulted palm  
 A whisper'd jest to some one near  
 him, 'Look,  
 He has been among his shadows.'  
 'Satan take  
 The old women and their shadows!  
 (thus the King  
 Roar'd) make yourself a man to fight  
 with men.  
 Go: Cyril told us all.'

As boys that slink  
 From ferule and the trespass-chiding  
 eye,  
 Away we stole, and transient in a trice  
 From what was left of faded woman-  
 slough  
 To sheathing splendors and the golden  
 scale  
 Of harness, issued in the sun, that  
 now  
 Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the  
 Earth,  
 And hit the Northern hills. Here  
 Cyril met us.  
 A little shy at first, but by and by

We twain, with mutual pardon ask'd  
and given  
For stroke and song, resolder'd peace,  
whereon  
Follow'd his tale. Amazed he fled  
away  
Thro' the dark land, and later in the  
night  
Had come on Pysche weeping : ' then  
we fell  
Into your father's hand, and there she  
lies,  
But will not speak, nor stir.'

He show'd a tent  
A stone-shot off : we enter'd in, and  
there  
Among piled arms and rough accou-  
trements,  
Pitiful sight, wrapp'd in a soldier's  
cloak,  
Like some sweet sculpture draped  
from head to foot,  
And push'd by rude hands from its  
pedestal,  
All her fair length upon the ground  
she lay :  
And at her head a follower of the  
camp,  
A charr'd and wrinkled piece of  
womanhood,  
Sat watching like a watcher by the  
dead.

. Then Florian knelt, and 'Come ' he  
whisper'd to her,  
'Lift up your head, sweet sister : lie  
not thus.  
What have you done but right? you  
could not slay  
Me, nor your prince : look up : be  
comforted :  
Sweet is it to have done the thing one  
ought,  
When fall'n in darker ways.' And  
likewise I :  
'Be comforted : have I not lost her  
too,  
In whose least act abides the name-  
less charm  
That none has else for me?' She  
heard, she moved,  
She moan'd, a folded voice ; and up  
she sat,

And raised the cloak from brows as  
pale and smooth  
As those that mourn half-shrouded  
over death  
In deathless marble. ' Her,' she said,  
' my friend—  
Parted from her—betray'd her cause  
and mine—  
Where shall I breathe? why kept ye  
not your faith?  
O base and bad ! what comfort? none  
for me !'  
To whom remorseful Cyril, ' Yet I  
pray  
Take comfort : live, dear lady, for  
your child !'  
At which she lifted up her voice and  
cried.

' Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah,  
my child,  
My one sweet child, whom I shall see  
no more !  
For now will cruel Ida keep her back ;  
And either she will die for want of  
care,  
Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say  
The child is hers—for every little fault,  
The child is hers ; and they will beat  
my girl  
Remembering her mother : O my  
flower !  
Or they will take her, they will make  
her hard,  
And she will pass me by in after-life  
With some cold reverence worse than  
were she dead.  
Ill mother that I was to leave her  
there,  
To lag behind, scared by the cry they  
made,  
The horror of the shame among them  
all :  
But I will go and sit beside the doors,  
And make a wild petition night and  
day,  
Until they hate to hear me like a wind  
Wailing forever, till they open to me,  
And lay my little blossom at my feet,  
My babe, my sweet Aglaia, my one  
child :  
And I will take her up and go my  
way,  
And satisfy my soul with kissing her :



Ah! what might that man not deserve  
of me  
Who gave me back my child?' 'Be  
comforted,'  
Said Cyril, 'you shall have it:' but  
again  
She veil'd her brows, and prone she  
sank, and so  
Like tender things that being caught  
feign death,  
Spoke not, nor stirr'd.  
By this a murmur ran  
Thro' all the camp and inward raced  
the scouts  
With rumor of Prince Arac hard at  
hand.  
We left her by the woman, and without  
Found the gray kings at parle: and  
'Look you' cried  
My father 'that our compact be ful-  
fill'd:  
You have spoil't this child; she laughs  
at you and man:  
She wrongs herself, her sex, and me,  
and him:  
But red-faced war has rods of steel and  
fire;  
She yields, or war.'  
Then Gama turn'd to me:  
'We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy  
time  
With our strange girl: and yet they  
say that still  
You love her. Give us, then, your  
mind at large:  
How say you, war or not?'  
'Not war, if possible,  
O king,' I said, 'lest from the abuse of  
war,  
The desecrated shrine, the trampled  
year,  
The smouldering homestead, and the  
household flower  
Torn from the lintel—all the common  
wrong—  
A smoke go up thro' which I loom to  
her  
Three times a monster: now she  
lightens scorn  
At him that mars her plan, but then  
would hate  
(And every voice she talk'd with ratify  
it,

And every face she look'd on justify it)  
The general foe. More soluble is this  
knot,  
By gentleness than war. I want her  
love.  
What were I nigher this altho' we  
dash'd  
Your cities into shards with catapults,  
She would not love;—or brought her  
chain'd, a slave,  
The lifting of whose eyelash is my  
lord,  
Not ever would she love; but brood-  
ing turn  
The book of scorn, till all my fitting  
chance  
Were caught within the record of her  
wrongs,  
And crush'd to death: and rather, Sire,  
than this  
I would the old God of war himself  
were dead,  
Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills,  
Rotting on some wild shore with ribs  
of wreck,  
Or like an old-world mammoth bulk'd  
in ice,  
Not to be molten out.'  
And roughly spake  
My father, 'Tut, you know them not,  
the girls.  
Boy, when I hear you prate I almost  
think  
That idiot legend credible. Look you,  
Sir!  
Man is the hunter; woman is his  
game:  
The sleek and shining creatures of the  
chase,  
We hunt them for the beauty of their  
skins;  
They love us for it, and we ride them  
down.  
Wheedling and siding with them!  
Out! for shame!  
Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear  
to them  
As he that does the thing they dare  
not do,  
Breathing and sounding beauteous  
battle, comes  
With the air of the trumpet round  
him, and leaps in

Among the women, snares them by the  
score  
Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho'  
dash'd with death  
He reddens what he kisses: thus I  
won  
Your mother, a good mother, a good  
wife,  
Worth winning; but this firebrand—  
gentleness  
To such as her! if Cyril spake her  
true,  
To catch a dragon in a cherry net,  
To trip a tigress with a gossamer,  
Were wisdom to it?  
' Yea but Sire,' I cried,  
' Wild natures need wise curbs. The  
soldier? No:  
What dares not Ida do that she should  
prize  
The soldier? I beheld her, when she  
rose  
The yesternight, and storming in  
extremes,  
Stood for her cause, and flung defiance  
down  
Gagelike to man, and had not shunn'd  
the death,  
No, not the soldier's: yet I hold her,  
king,  
True woman: but you clash them all  
in one,  
That have as many differences as we.  
The violet varies from the lily as far  
As oak from elm: one loves the  
soldier, one  
The silken priest of peace, one this,  
one that,  
And some unworthily; their sinless  
faith,  
A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,  
Glorifying clown and satyr; whence  
they need  
More breadth of culture: is not Ida  
right?  
They worth it? truer to the law within?  
Severer in the logic of a life?  
Twice as magnetic to sweet influences  
Of earth and heaven? and she of  
whom you speak,  
My mother, looks as whole as some  
serene  
Creation minted in the golden moods

Of sovereign artists; not a thought, a  
touch,  
But pure as lines of green that streak  
the white  
Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves; I  
say,  
Not like the piebald miscellany man,  
Bursts of great heart and slips in  
sensual mire,  
But whole and one: and take them  
all-in-all,  
Were we ourselves but half as good,  
as kind,  
As truthful, much that Ida claims as  
right  
Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly  
theirs  
As dues of Nature. To our point: not  
war:  
Lest I lose all.'  
' Nay, nay, you spake but sense'  
Said Gama. ' We remember love  
ourselves  
In our sweet youth; we did not rate  
him then  
This red-hot iron to be shaped with  
blows.  
You talk almost like Ida: *she* can  
talk;  
And there is something in it as you  
say:  
But you talk kindlier: we esteem you  
for it.—  
He seems a gracious and a gallant  
Prince,  
I would he had our daughter: for the  
rest,  
Our own detention, why, the causes  
weigh'd,—  
Fatherly fears—you used us cour-  
teously—  
We would do much to gratify your  
Prince—  
We pardon it; and for your ingress  
here  
Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair  
land,  
You did but come as goblins in the  
night,  
Nor in the furrow broke the plough-  
man's head,  
Nor burnt the grange, nor buss'd the  
milking-maid,

Nor robb'd the farmer of his bowl of  
cream:  
But let your Prince (our royal word  
upon it,  
He comes back safe) ride with us to  
our lines.  
And speak with Arac: Arac's word is  
thrice  
As ours with Ida: something may be  
done—  
I know not what—and ours shall see  
us friends.  
You, likewise, our late guests, if so  
you will,  
Follow us: who knows? we four may  
build some plan  
Foursquare to opposition.\*  
Here he reach'd  
White hands of farewell to my sire,  
who growl'd  
An answer which, half-muffled in his  
beard,  
Let so much out as gave us leave to  
go.

Then rode we with the old king  
across the lawns  
Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings  
of Spring  
In every bole, a song on every spray  
Of birds that piped their Valentines,  
and woke  
Desire in me to infuse my tale of love  
In the old king's ears, who promised  
help, and oozed  
All o'er with honey'd answer as we  
rode  
And blossom-fragrant slipt the heavy  
dews  
Gather'd by night and peace, with  
each light air  
On our mail'd heads: but other  
thoughts than Peace  
Burnt in us, when we saw the embat-  
tled squares,  
And squadrons of the Prince, tramp-  
ling the flowers  
With clamor: for among them rose a  
cry  
As if to greet the king; they made a  
halt;  
The horses yell'd; they clash'd their  
arms; the drum

Beat; merrily-blowing shrill'd the  
martial life;  
And in the blast and bray of the long  
horn  
And serpent-throated bugle, undu-  
lated  
The banner: anon to meet us lightly  
pranced  
Three captains out: nor ever had I  
seen  
Such thews of men: the midmost and  
the highest  
Was Arac: all about his motion  
clung  
The shadow of his sister, as the beam  
Of the East, that play'd upon them,  
made them glance  
Like those three stars of the airy  
Giant's zone,  
That glitter burnish'd by the frosty  
dark;  
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,  
And bickers into red and emerald,  
shone  
Their morions, wash'd with morning,  
as they came.

And I that prated peace, when first  
I heard  
War-music, felt the blind wildbeast of  
force,  
Whose home is in the sinews of a  
man,  
Stir in me as to strike: then took the  
king  
His three broad sons; with now a  
wandering hand  
And now a pointed finger, told them  
all:  
A common light of smiles at our dis-  
guise  
Broke from their lips, and, ere the  
windy jest  
Had labor'd down within his ample  
lungs,  
The genial giant, Arac, roll'd himself  
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in  
words.

\* Our land invaded, 'sdeath! and he  
himself  
Your captive, yet my father wills not  
war:

And, 'sdeath! myself, what care I,  
 war or no?  
 But then this question of your troth  
 remains:  
 And there's a downright honest mean-  
 ing in her;  
 She flies too high, she flies too high!  
 and yet  
 She ask'd but space and fairplay for  
 her scheme;  
 She prest and prest it on me—I my-  
 self,  
 What know I of these things? but,  
 life and soul!  
 I thought her half-right talking of her  
 wrongs;  
 I say she flies too high, 'sdeath! what  
 of that?  
 I take her for the flower of woman-  
 kind,  
 And so I often told her, right or  
 wrong,  
 And, Prince, she can be sweet to those  
 she loves,  
 And, right or wrong, I care not: this  
 is all,  
 I stand upon her side: she made me  
 swear it—  
 'Sdeath—and with solemn rites by  
 candle-light—  
 Swear by St. something—I forget her  
 name—  
 Her that talk'd down the fifty wisest  
 men;  
*She* was a princess too; and so I  
 swore.  
 Come, this is all; she will not: waive  
 your claim:  
 If not, the foughten field, what else,  
 at once  
 Decides it, 'sdeath! against my fath-  
 er's will.'

I lagg'd in answer loth to render up  
 My precontract, and loth by brainless  
 war  
 To cleave the rift of difference deeper  
 yet;  
 Till one of those two brothers, half  
 aside  
 And fingering at the hair about his lip,  
 To prick us on to combat 'Like to  
 like!

The woman's garment hid the wo-  
 man's heart.  
 A taunt that clench'd his purpose like  
 a blow!  
 For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-  
 scoff,  
 And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon  
 the point  
 Where idle boys are cowards to their  
 shame,  
 'Decide it here: why not? we are  
 three to three.'

Then spake the third 'But three  
 to three? no more?  
 No more, and in our noble sister's  
 cause?  
 More, more, for honor: every cap-  
 tain waits  
 Hungry for honor, angry for his king.  
 More, more, some fifty on a side, that  
 each  
 May breathe himself, and quick! by  
 overthrow  
 Of these or those, the question settled  
 die.'

'Yea,' answer'd I, 'for this wild  
 wreath of air,  
 This flake of rainbow flying on the  
 highest  
 Foam of men's deeds—this honor, if  
 ye will.  
 It needs must be for honor if at all:  
 Since, what decision? if we fail, we  
 fail,  
 And if we win, we fail: she would not  
 keep  
 Her compact.' 'Sdeath! but we will  
 send to her,'  
 Said Arac, 'worthy reasons why she  
 should  
 Bide by this issue: let our missive  
 thro',  
 And you shall have her answer by the  
 word.'

'Boys!' shriek'd the old king, but  
 vainlier than a hen  
 To her false daughters in the pool;  
 for none  
 Regarded; neither seem'd there more  
 to say:



"WITH TWO TAME LEOPARDS CROUCH'D BESIDE HER THRONE"—Page 38.



Back rode we to my father's camp  
and found  
He thrice had sent a herald to the  
gates,  
To learn if Ida yet would cede our  
claim,  
Or by denial flush her babbling wells  
With her own people's life: three  
times he went:  
The first, he blew and blew, but none  
appear'd:  
He batter'd at the doors; none came:  
the next,  
An awful voice within had warn'd him  
thence:  
The third, and those eight daughters  
of the plough  
Came sallying thro' the gates, and  
caught his hair,  
And so belabor'd him on rib and cheek  
They made him wild: not less one  
glance he caught  
Thro' open doors of Ida station'd  
there  
Unshaken, clinging to her purpose,  
firm  
Tho' compass'd by two armies and  
the noise  
Of arms; and standing like a stately  
Pine  
Set in a cataract on an island-crag,  
When storm is on the heights, and  
right and left  
Suck'd from the dark heart of the  
long hills roll  
The torrents, dash'd to the vale: and  
yet her will  
Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

But when I told the king that I was  
pledged  
To fight in tourney for my bride, he  
clash'd  
His iron palms together with a cry;  
Himself would tilt it out among the  
lads:  
But overborne by all his bearded lords  
With reasons drawn from age and  
state, perforce  
He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce  
demur:  
And many a bold knight started up  
in heat,

And sware to combat for my claim till  
death.

All on this side the palace ran the  
field  
Flat to the garden-wall: and likewise  
here,  
Above the garden's glowing blossom-  
belts,  
A column'd entry shone and marble  
stairs,  
And great bronze valves, emboss'd  
with Tomyris  
And what she did to Cyrus after fight,  
But now fast barr'd: so here upon the  
flat  
All that long morn the lists were  
hammer'd up,  
And all that morn the heralds to and  
fro,  
With message and defiance, went and  
came;  
Last, Ida's answer, in a royal hand,  
But shaken here and there, and roll-  
ing words  
Oration-like. I kiss'd it and I read.

'O brother, you have known the  
pangs we felt,  
What heats of indignation when we  
heard  
Of those that iron-cramp'd their  
women's feet;  
Of lands in which at the altar the poor  
bride  
Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift  
a scourge;  
Of living hearts that crack within the  
fire  
Where smoulder their dead despots;  
and of those,—  
Mothers,—that, all prophetic pity,  
fling  
Their pretty maids in the running  
flood, and swoops  
The vulture, beak and talon, at the  
heart  
Made for all noble motion: and I  
saw  
That equal baseness lived in sleeker  
times  
With smoother men: the old leaven  
leaven'd all:

Millions of throats would bawl for  
civil rights,  
No woman named: therefore I set my  
face  
Against all men, and lived but for  
mine own.  
Far off from men I built a fold for  
them:  
I stored it full of rich memorial:  
I fenced it round with gallant insti-  
tutes,  
And biting laws to scare the beasts of  
prey  
And prosper'd; till a rout of saucy boys  
Brake on us at our books, and marr'd  
our peace,  
Mask'd like our maids, blustering I  
know not what  
Of insolence and love, some pretext  
held  
Of baby troth, invalid, since my will  
Seal'd not the bond—the striplings!—  
for their sport!—  
I tamed my leopards: shall I not  
tame these?  
Or you? or I? for since you think me  
touch'd  
In honor—what, I would not aught of  
false—  
Is not our cause pure? and whereas  
I know  
Your prowess, Arac, and what moth-  
er's blood  
You draw from, fight; you failing, I  
abide  
What end soever: fail you will not.  
Still  
Take not his life: he risk'd it for my  
own;  
His mother lives: yet whatsoe'er you  
do,  
Fight and fight well; strike and  
strike home. O dear  
Brothers, the woman's Angel guards  
you, you  
The sole men to be mingled with our  
cause,  
The sole men we shall prize in the  
after-time,  
Your very armor hallow'd, and your  
statues  
Rear'd. sung to, when, this gad-fly  
brush'd aside,

We plant a solid foot into the Time,  
And mould a generation strong to  
move  
With claim on claim from right to  
right, till she  
Whose name is yoked with children's,  
know herself;  
And Knowledge in our own land  
make her free,  
And, ever following those two crowned  
twins,  
Commerce and conquest, shower the  
fiery grain  
Of freedom broadcast over all that  
orbs  
Between the Northern and the South-  
ern morn.'

Then came a postscript dash'd  
across the rest.  
'See that there be no traitors in your  
camp:  
We seem a nest of traitors—none to  
trust  
Since our arms fail'd—this Egypt-  
plague of men!  
Almost our maids were better at  
their homes,  
Than thus man-girdled here: indeed  
I think  
Our chiefest comfort is the little child  
Of one unworthy mother; which she  
left:  
She shall not have it back: the child  
shall grow  
To prize the authentic mother of her  
mind.  
I took it for an hour in mine own bed  
This morning: there the tender or-  
phan hands  
Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm  
from thence  
The wrath I nursed against the world:  
farewell.'

I ceased; he said, 'Stubborn, but  
she may sit  
Upon a king's right hand in thunder-  
storms,  
And breed up warriors! See now,  
tho' yourself  
Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to  
sloughs



That swallow common sense, the  
spindling king,  
This Gama swamp'd in lazy toler-  
ance.

When the man wants weight, the  
woman takes it up,  
And topples down the scales; but  
this is fixt

As are the roots of earth and base of  
all;

Man for the field, and woman for the  
hearth :

Man for the sword and for the needle  
she :

Man with the head and woman with  
the heart :

Man to command and woman to obey;  
All else confusion. Look you! the  
gray mare

Is ill to live with, when her whinny  
shrills

From tile to scullery, and her small  
goodman

Shrinks in his arm chair while the  
fires of Hell

Mix with his hearth: but you—she's  
yet a colt—

Take, break her: strongly groom'd  
and straitly curb'd

She might not rank with those de-  
testable

That let the bantling scald at home,  
and brawl

Their rights or wrongs like potherbs  
in the street.

They say she's comeiy; there's the  
fairer chance:

/ like her none the less for rating at  
her!

Besides, the woman wed is not as we,  
but suffers change of frame. A lusty  
brace

Of twins may weed her of her folly.  
Boy,

The bearing and the training of a  
child

Is woman's wisdom.'

Thus the hard old king :  
I took my leave, for it was nearly  
noon :

I pored upon her letter which I held,  
And on the little clause 'take not his  
life:'

I mused on that wild morning in the  
woods,

And on the ' Follow, follow, thou  
shalt win :'

I thought on all the wrathful king had  
said,

And how the strange betrothment  
was to end :

Then I remember'd that burnt sor-  
cerer's curse

That one should fight with shadows  
and should fall ;

And like a flash the weird affection  
came :

King, camp and college turn'd to  
hollow shows ;

I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,  
And doing battle with forgotten

ghosts,  
To dream myself the shadow of a  
dream :

And ere I woke it was the point of  
noon,

The lists were ready. Empanoplied  
and plumed

We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there  
Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet

blared

At the barrier like a wild horn in a land  
Of echoes, and a moment, and once  
more

The trumpet, and again : at which the  
storm

Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge  
of spears

And riders front to front, until they  
closed

In conflict with the crash of shivering  
points,

And thunder. Yet it seem'd a dream,  
I dream'd

Of fighting. On his haunches rose  
the steed,

And into fiery splinters leapt the  
lance,

And out of stricken helmets sprang  
the fire.

Part sat like rocks: part reel'd but  
kept their seats :

Part roll'd on the earth and rose  
again and drew :

Part stumbled mixt with flounder-  
ing horses. Down

From those two bulks at Arac's side,  
 and down  
 From Arac's arm, as from a giant's  
 flail,  
 The large blows rain'd, as here and  
 everywhere  
 He rode the mellay, lord of the ring-  
 ing lists,  
 And all the plain,—brand, mace, and  
 shaft, and shield—  
 Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvil  
 bang'd  
 With hammers; till I thought, can  
 this be he  
 From Gama's dwarfish loins? if this  
 be so,  
 The mother makes us most—and in  
 my dream  
 I glanced aside, and saw the palace-  
 front  
 Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies'  
 eyes,  
 And highest, among the statues,  
 statuelike,  
 Between a cymbal'd Miriam and a  
 Jael,  
 With Psyche's babe, was Ida watching  
 us,  
 A single band of gold about her hair,  
 Like a Saint's glory up in heaven:  
 but she  
 No saint—inexorable—no tender-  
 ness—  
 Too hard, too cruel: yet she sees me  
 fight,  
 Yea, let her see me fall! with that I  
 drave  
 Among the thickest and bore down a  
 Prince,  
 And Cyril, one. Yea, let me make  
 my dream  
 All that I would. But that large-  
 moulded man,  
 His visage all agrin as at a wake,  
 Made at me thro' the press, and, stag-  
 gering back  
 With stroke on stroke the horse and  
 horseman, came  
 As comes a pillar of electric cloud,  
 Flaying the roofs and sucking up the  
 drains,  
 And shadowing down the champaign  
 till it strikes

On a wood, and takes, and breaks,  
 and cracks, and splits,  
 And twists the grain with such a roar  
 that Earth  
 Reels, and the herdsmen cry; for  
 everything  
 Gave way before him: only Florian,  
 he  
 That loved me closer than his own  
 right eye,  
 Thrust in between; but Arac rode  
 him down:  
 And Cyril seeing it, push'd against  
 the Prince,  
 With Psyche's color round his helmet,  
 tough,  
 Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at  
 arms;  
 But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that  
 smote  
 And threw him: last I spurr'd; I felt  
 my veins  
 Stretch with fierce heat; a moment  
 hand to hand,  
 And sword to sword, and horse to  
 horse we hung,  
 Till I struck out and shouted; the  
 blade glanced,  
 I did but shear a feather, and dream  
 and truth  
 Flow'd from me; darkness closed  
 me; and I fell.

## VI.

Home they brought her warrior dead:  
 She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:  
 All her maidens, watching, said,  
 'She must weep or she will die.'  
 Then they praised him, soft and low,  
 Call'd him worthy to be loved,  
 Truest friend and noblest foe;  
 Yet she neither spoke nor moved.  
 Stole a maiden from her place,  
 Lightly to the warrior stept,  
 Took the face-cloth from the face;  
 Yet she neither moved nor wept.  
 Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
 Set his child upon her knee—  
 Like a summer tempest came her tears—  
 'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'

My dream had never died or lived again.

As in some mystic middle state I lay;  
Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard:  
Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me all  
So often that I speak as having seen.

For so it seem'd, or so they said to me,

That all things grew more tragic and more strange;

That when our side was vanquish'd and my cause

For ever lost, there went up a great cry,

The Prince is slain. My father heard and ran

In on the lists, and there unlaced my casque

And grovell'd on my body, and after him

Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaïa.

But high upon the palace Ida stood  
With Psyche's babe in arm: there on the roofs

Like that great dame of Lapidoth she sang.

' Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: the seed,

The little seed they laugh'd at in the dark,  
Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown a bulk

Of spanless girth, that lays on every side  
A thousand arms and rushes to the Sun.

' Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they came;

The leaves were wet with women's tears: they heard

A noise of songs they would not understand:  
They mark'd it with the red cross to the fall,

And would have strown it, and are fall'n themselves.

' Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they came,

The woodmen with their axes: lo the tree!  
But we will make it faggots for the hearth,  
And shape it plank and beam for roof and floor,

And boats and bridges for the use of men.

' Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n, they struck;

With their own blows they hurt themselves, nor knew

There dwelt an iron nature in the grain:  
The glittering axe was broken in their arms,

Their arms were shatter'd to the shoulder blade.

' Our enemies have fall'n, but this shall grow

A night of Summer from the heat, a breadth

Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power: and roll'd

With music in the growing breeze of Time,  
The tops shall strike from star to star, the fangs

Shall move the stony bases of the world.

' And now, O maids, behold our sanctuary

Is violate, our laws broken: fear we not

To break them more in their behoof, whose arms

Champion'd our cause and won it with a day

Blanch'd in our annals, and perpetual feast,

When dames and heroines of the golden year

Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of Spring,

To rain an April of ovation round  
Their statues, borne aloft, the three:

but come,  
We will be liberal, since our rights are won.

Let them not lie in the tents with coarse mankind,

Ill nurses; but descend, and proffer these

The brethren of our blood and cause, that there

Lie bruised and maim'd, the tender ministries

Of female hands and hospitality.'

She spoke, and with the babe yet in her arms,

Descending, burst the great bronze valves, and led

A hundred maids in train across the  
 Park.  
 Some cowl'd and some bare-headed,  
 on they came,  
 Their feet in flowers, her loveliest . by  
 them went  
 The enamor'd air sighing, and on  
 their curls  
 From the high tree the blossom waver-  
 ing fell,  
 And over them the tremulous isles of  
 light  
 Slided, they moving under shade .  
 but *Blanche*  
 At distance follow'd : so they came :  
 anon  
 Thro' open field into the lists they  
 wound  
 Timorously ; and as the leader of the  
 herd  
 That holds a stately fretwork to the  
 Sun,  
 And follow'd up by a hundred airy  
 does,  
 Steps with a tender foot, light as on  
 air,  
 The lovely, lordly creature floated on  
 To where her wounded brethren lay ;  
 there stay'd ;  
 Knelt on one knee,—the child on one,  
 —and prest  
 Their hands, and call'd them dear del-  
 liverers,  
 And happy warriors, and immortal  
 names,  
 And said ' You shall not lie in the  
 tents but here,  
 And nursed by those for whom you  
 fought, and served  
 With female hands and hospitality.'

Then, whether moved by this, or  
 was it chance,  
 She past my way. Up started from  
 my side  
 The old lion, glaring with his whelp-  
 less eye,  
 Silent ; but when she saw me lying  
 stark,  
 Dishelm'd and mute, and motionlessly  
 pale,  
 Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd ; and  
 when she saw

The haggard father's face and rever-  
 end beard  
 Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the  
 blood  
 Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of  
 pain  
 Tortured her mouth, and o'er her fore-  
 head past  
 A shadow, and her hue changed, and  
 she said :  
 ' He saved my life : my brother slew  
 him for it.'  
 No more ; at which the king in bitter  
 scorn  
 Drew from my neck the painting and  
 the tress,  
 And held them up : she saw them,  
 and a day  
 Rose from the distance on her mem-  
 ory,  
 When the good Queen, her mother,  
 shore the tress  
 With kisses, ere the days of Lady  
*Blanche* .  
 And then once more she look'd at  
 my pale face  
 Till understanding all the foolish  
 work  
 Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,  
 Her iron will was broken in her mind ;  
 Her noble heart was molten in her  
 breast ;  
 She bow'd, she set the child on the  
 earth ; she laid  
 A feeling finger on my brows, and  
 presently  
 ' O *Sire*,' she said, ' he lives : he is not  
 dead :  
 O let me have him with my brethren  
 here  
 In our own palace : we will tend on  
 him  
 Like one of these ; if so, by any  
 means,  
 To lighten this great clog of thanks,  
 that make  
 Our progress falter to the woman's  
 goal.'

She said : but at the happy word  
 ' he lives '  
 My father stoop'd, re-father'd o'er my  
 wounds.

So those two foes above my fallen  
life,  
With brow to brow like night and  
evening mixt  
Their dark and gray, while Psyche  
ever stole  
A little nearer, till the babe that by  
us,  
Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden  
brede,  
Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the  
grass,  
Uncared for, spied its mother and  
began  
A blind and babbling laughter, and to  
dance  
Its body, and reach its fatling innocent  
arms  
And lazy lingering fingers. She the  
appeal  
Brook'd not, but clamoring out 'Mine  
—mine—not yours,  
It is not yours, but mine: give me the  
child'  
Ceased all on tremble: piteous was  
the cry:  
So stood the unhappy mother open-  
mouth'd,  
And turn'd each face her way: wan  
was her cheek  
With hollow watch, her blooming  
mantle torn,  
Red grief and mother's hunger in her  
eye,  
And down dead-heavy sank her curls,  
and half  
The sacred mother's bosom, panting,  
burst  
The laces toward her babe; but she  
nor cared  
Nor knew it, clamoring on, till Ida  
heard,  
Look'd up, and rising slowly from me,  
stood  
Erect and silent, striking with her  
glance  
The mother, me, the child; but he that  
lay  
Beside us, Cyril, batter'd as he was,  
Trail'd himself up on one knee: then  
he drew  
Her robe to meet his lips, and down  
she look'd

At the arm'd man sideways, pitying as  
it seem'd,  
Or self-involved; but when she learnt  
his face,  
Remembering his ill-omen'd song,  
arose  
Once more thro' all her height, and  
o'er him grew  
Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand  
When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and  
he said:

'O fair and strong and terrible!  
Lioness  
That with your long locks play the  
Lion's mane!  
But Love and Nature, these are two  
more terrible  
And stronger. See, your foot is on  
our necks,  
We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your  
will.  
What would you more? give her the  
child! remain  
Orb'd in your isolation: he is dead,  
Or all as dead: henceforth we let you  
be:  
Win you the hearts of women; and  
beware  
Lest, where you seek the common  
love of these,  
The common hate with the revolving  
wheel  
Should drag you down, and some  
great Nemesis  
Break from a darken'd future, crown'd  
with fire,  
And tread you out for ever: but how-  
soe'er  
Fix'd in yourself, never in your own  
arms  
To hold your own, deny not hers to  
her,  
Give her the child! O if, I say, you  
keep  
One pulse that beats true woman, if  
you loved  
The breast that fed or arm that dan-  
dled you,  
Or own one port of sense not flint to  
prayer,  
Give her the child! or if you scorn to  
lay it,

Yourself, in hands so lately claspt  
with yours,  
Or speak to her, your dearest, her one  
fault  
The tenderness, not yours, that could  
not kill,  
Give *me* it: *I* will give it her.'

He said:  
At first her eye with slow dilation  
roll'd  
Dry flame, she listening: after sank  
and sank  
And, into mournful twilight mellow-  
ing, dwelt  
Full on the child; she took it:  
'Pretty bud!  
Lily of the vale! half open'd bell of  
the woods!  
Sole comfort of my dark hour, when  
a world  
Of traitorous friend and broken sys-  
tem made  
No purple in the distance, mystery,  
Pledge of a love not to be mine,  
farewell;  
These men are hard upon us as of  
old,  
We two must part; and yet how fain  
was I  
To dream thy cause embraced in mine,  
to think  
I might be something to thee, when I  
felt  
Thy helpless warmth about my barren  
breast  
In the dead prime: but may thy  
mother prove  
As true to thee as false, false, false to  
me!  
And, if thou needs must bear the  
yoke, I wish it  
Gentle as freedom'—here she kiss'd  
it: then—  
'All good go with thee! take it Sir,'  
and so  
Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed  
hands,  
Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as  
she sprang  
To meet it, with an eye that swum in  
thanks;  
Then felt it sound and whole from  
head to foot,

And hugg'd and never hugg'd it close  
enough,  
And in her hunger mouth'd and  
mumbled it,  
And hid her bosom with it; after that  
Put on more calm and added suppli-  
antly:

'We two were friends: I go to  
mine own land  
For ever: find some other: as for me  
I scarce am fit for your great plans:  
yet speak to me,  
Say one soft word and let me part  
forgiven.'

But Ida spoke not, rapt upon the  
child.  
Then Arac. 'Ida—'sdeath! you  
blame the man;  
You wrong yourselves—the woman is  
so hard  
Upon the woman. Come, a grace to  
me!  
I am your warrior: I and mine have  
fought  
Your battle: kiss her; take her hand,  
she weeps  
'Sdeath! I would sooner fight thrice  
o'er than see it.'

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the  
ground,  
And reddening in the furrows of his  
chin,  
And moved beyond his custom,  
Gama said:

'I've heard that there is iron in the  
blood,  
And I believe it. Not one word? not  
one?  
Whence drew you this steel temper?  
not from me,  
Not from your mother, now a saint  
with saints.  
She said you had a heart—I heard  
her say it—  
"Our Ida has a heart"—just ere she  
died—  
"But see that some one with authority  
Be near her still" and I—I sought  
for one—

All people said she had authority—  
 The Lady Blanche: much profit!  
 Not one word;  
 No! tho' your father sues: see how  
 you stand  
 Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the good  
 knights maim'd,  
 I trust that there is no one hurt to  
 death,  
 Fr your wild whim: and was it then  
 for this,  
 Was it for this we gave our palace  
 up,  
 Where we withdrew from summer  
 heats and state,  
 And had our wine and chess beneath  
 the planes,  
 And many a pleasant hour with her  
 that's gone,  
 Ere you were born to vex us? Is it  
 kind?  
 Speak to her I say: is this not she of  
 whom,  
 When first she came, all flush'd you  
 said to me  
 Now had you got a friend of your own  
 age,  
 Now could you share your thought:  
 now should men see  
 Two women faster welded in one love  
 Than pairs of wedlock; she you  
 walk'd with, she  
 You talk'd with, whole nights long,  
 up in the tower,  
 Of sine and arc, spheroïd and azi-  
 muth,  
 And right ascension, Heaven knows  
 what; and now  
 A word, but one, one little kindly  
 word,  
 Not one to spare her: out upon you,  
 flint!  
 You love nor her, nor me, nor any;  
 nay,  
 You shame your mother's judgment  
 too. Not one?  
 You will not? well!—no heart have  
 you, or such  
 As fancies like the vermin in a nut  
 Have fretted all to dust and bitter-  
 ness.  
 So said the small king moved beyond  
 his wont.

But Ida stood nor spoke, drain'd of  
 her force  
 By many a varying influence and so  
 long,  
 Down thro' her limbs a drooping  
 languor wept:  
 Her head a little bent; and on her  
 mouth  
 A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded  
 moon  
 In a still water: then brake out my  
 sire,  
 Lifting his grim head from my  
 wounds. 'O you,  
 Woman, whom we thought woman  
 even now,  
 And were half fool'd to let you tend  
 our son,  
 Because he might have wish'd it—but  
 we see  
 The accomplice of your madness  
 unforgiven,  
 And think that you might mix his  
 draught with death,  
 When your skies change again: the  
 rougher hand  
 Is safer: on to the tents: take up the  
 Prince.'

He rose, and while each ear was  
 prick'd to attend  
 A tempest, thro' the cloud that  
 dimm'd her broke  
 A genial warmth and light once more,  
 and shone  
 Thro' glittering drops on her sad  
 friend.

'Come hither.  
 O Psyche,' she cried out, 'embrace  
 me, come,  
 Quick while I melt; make reconcil-  
 ement sure  
 With one that cannot keep her mind  
 an hour:  
 Come to the hollow heart they  
 slander so!  
 Kiss and be friends, like children  
 being chid!  
 I seem no more: I want forgiveness  
 too:  
 I should have had to do with none  
 but maids,

That have no links with men. Ah  
false but dear,  
Dear traitor, too much loved, why?—  
why?—Yet see,  
Before these kings we embrace you  
yet once more  
With all forgiveness, all oblivion,  
And trust, not love, you less.

And now, O sire,  
Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait  
upon him,  
Like mine own brother. For my debt  
to him,  
This nightmare weight of gratitude, I  
know it;  
Taunt me no more: yourself and yours  
shall have  
Free adit; we will scatter all our maids  
Till happier times each to her proper  
hearth:

What use to keep them here—now?  
grant my prayer.

Help, father, brother, help; speak to  
the king:

Thaw this male nature to some touch  
of that

Which kills me with myself, and drags  
me down

From my fixt height to mob me up  
with all

The soft and milky rabble of woman-  
kind,

Poor weakling ev'n as they are.'

Passionate tears  
Follow'd: the king replied not: Cyril  
said:

'Your brother, Lady,—Florian,—ask  
for him

Of your great head—for he is wounded  
too—

That you may tend upon him with the  
prince.'

'Ay so,' said Ida with a bitter smile,  
'Our laws are broken: let him enter  
too.'

Then Violet, she that sang the mourn-  
ful song,

And had a cousin tumbled on the plain,  
Petition'd too for him. 'Ay so,' she  
said,

'I stagger in the stream: I cannot keep  
My heart an eddy from the brawling  
hour:

We break our laws with ease, but let  
it be.'

'Ay so?' said Blanche: 'Amazed am  
I to hear

Your Highness: but your Highness  
breaks with ease

The law your Highness did not make:  
'twas I.

I had been wedded wife, I knew man-  
kind,

And block'd them out; but these men  
came to woo

Your Highness—verily I think to win.'

So she, and turn'd askance a wintry  
eye:

But Ida with a voice, that like a bell  
Toll'd by an earthquake in a trembling  
tower,

Rang ruin, answer'd full of grief and  
scorn.

'Fling our doors wide! all, all, not  
one, but all,

Not only he, but by my mother's soul,  
Whatever man lies wounded, friend or  
foe,

Shall enter, if he will. Let our girls  
flit,

Till the storm die! but had you stood  
by us,

The roar that breaks the Pharos from  
his base

Had left us rock. She fain would  
sting us too,

But shall not. Pass, and mingle with  
your likes.

We brook no further insult but are  
gone.'

She turn'd; the very nape of her  
white neck

Was rosed with indignation: but the  
Prince

Her brother came; the king her father  
charm'd

Her wounded soul with words: nor  
did mine own

Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his  
hand.

Then us they lifted up, dead weights,  
and bare



Straight to the doors: to them the  
doors gave way  
Groaning, and in the Vestal entry  
shriek'd

The virgin marble under iron heels:  
And on they moved and gain'd the hall,  
and there

Rested: but great the crush was, and  
each base,

To left and right, of those tall columns  
drown'd

In silken fluctuation and the swarm  
Of female whisperers: at the further  
end

Was Ida by the throne, the two great  
cats

Close by her, like supporters on a  
shield,

Bow-back'd with fear: but in the  
centre stood

The common men with rolling eyes;  
amazed

They glared upon the women, and  
aghast

The women stared at these, all silent,  
save

When armor clash'd or jingled, while  
the day,

Descending, struck athwart the hall,  
and shot

A flying splendor out of brass and steel,  
That o'er the statues leapt from head  
to head,

Now fired an angry Pallas on the  
helm,

Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on  
flame,

And now and then an echo started up,  
And shuddering fled from room to  
room, and died

Of fright in far apartments.

Then the voice  
Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance:  
And me they bore up the broad stairs,  
and thro'

The long-laid galleries past a hundred  
doors

To one deep chamber shut from sound,  
and due

To languid limbs and sickness; left  
me in it;

And others elsewhere they laid; and  
all

That afternoon a sound arose of hoof  
And chariot, many a maiden passing  
home

Till happier times; but some were left  
of those

Held sagest, and the great lords out  
and in,

From those two hosts that lay beside  
the walls,

Walk'd at their will, and everything  
was changed.

VII.

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the  
sea;

The cloud may stoop from heaven and  
take the shape

With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;  
But O too food, when have I answer'd  
thee?

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I  
give?

I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:  
Yet O my friend, I will not have thee  
die:

Ask me no more, lest I should hid thee  
live;

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are  
seal'd:

I strove against the stream and all in  
vain:

Let the great river take me to the main:  
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;  
Ask me no more.

So was their sanctuary violated,  
So their fair college turn'd to hospital;  
At first with all confusion: by and by  
Sweet order lived again with other  
laws:

A kindlier influence reign'd; and  
everywhere

Low voices with the ministering hand  
Hung round the sick: the maidens  
came, they talk'd,

They sang, they read: till she not fair  
began

To gather light, and she that was,  
became

Her former beauty treble ; and to and fro  
 With books, with flowers, with Angel offices,  
 Like creatures native unto gracious act,  
 And in their own clear element, they moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,  
 And hatred of her weakness, blent with shame.  
 Old studies fail'd ; seldom she spoke :  
 but oft  
 Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for hours  
 On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men  
 Darkening her female field : void was her use,  
 And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze  
 O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud  
 Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night,  
 Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore  
 And suck the blinding splendor from the sand,  
 And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn  
 Expunge the world : so fared she gazing there ;  
 So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank  
 And waste it seem'd and vain ; till down she came,  
 And found fair peace once more among the sick.

And twilight dawn'd ; and morn by morn the lark  
 Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres,  
 but I  
 Lay silent in the muffled cage of life :  
 And twilight gloom'd ; and broader-grown the bowers  
 Drew the great night into themselves, and Heaven,  
 Star after star, arose and fell ; but I,  
 Deeper than those weird doubts could reach me, lay

Quite sunder'd from the moving Universe,  
 Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the hand  
 That nursed me, more than infants in their sleep.

But Psyche tended Florian : with her oft,  
 Melissa came ; for Blanche had gone, but left  
 Her child among us, willing she should keep  
 Court-favor : here and there the small bright head,  
 A light of healing, glanced about the couch,  
 Or thro' the parted silks the tender face  
 Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded man  
 With blush and smile, a medicine in themselves  
 To wile the length from languorous hours, and draw  
 The sting from pain ; nor seem'd it strange that soon  
 He rose up whole, and those fair charities  
 Join'd at her side ; nor stranger seem'd that hearts  
 So gentle, so employ'd, should close in love,  
 Than when two dewdrops on the petal shake  
 To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper down,  
 And slip at once all-fragrant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit obtain'd  
 At first with Psyche. Not tho' Blanche had sworn  
 That after that dark night among the fields  
 She needs must wed him for her own good name ;  
 Not tho' he built upon the babe restored ;  
 Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she, but fear'd  
 To incense the Head once more ; till on a day

When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind  
Seen but of Psyche: on her foot she  
    hung  
A moment, and she heard, at which  
    her face  
A little flush'd, and she past on; but  
    each  
Assumed from thence a half-consent  
    involved  
In stillness, plighted troth, and were  
    at peace.

Nor only these: Love in the sacred  
    halls  
Held carnival at will, and flying struck  
With showers of random sweet on  
    maid and man.  
Nor did her father cease to press my  
    claim,  
Nor did mine own now reconciled;  
    nor yet  
Did those twin brothers, risen again  
    and whole;  
Nor Arac, satiate with his victory.

But I lay still, and with me oft she  
    sat:  
Then came a change; for sometimes  
    I would catch  
Her hand in wild delirium, gripe it  
    hard,  
And fling it like a viper off, and  
    shriek  
'You are not Ida;' clasp it once again,  
And call her Ida, tho' I knew her not,  
And call her sweet, as if in irony,  
And call her hard and cold which  
    seem'd a truth:  
And still she fear'd that I should lose  
    my mind,  
And often she believed that I should  
    die:  
Till out of long frustration of her care,  
And pensive tendance in the all-  
    weary noons,  
And watches in the dead, the dark,  
    when clocks  
Throbb'd thunder thro' the palace  
    floors, or call'd  
On flying Time from all their silver  
    tongues—  
And out of memories of her kindlier  
    days,

And sidelong glances at my father's  
    grief,  
And at the happy lovers heart in  
    heart—  
And out of hauntings of my spoken  
    love,  
And lonely listenings to my mutter'd  
    dream,  
And often feeling of the helpless  
    hands,  
And wordless broodings on the wasted  
    cheek—  
From all a closer interest flourish'd up,  
Tenderness touch by touch, and last,  
    to these,  
Love, like an Alpine harebell hung  
    with tears  
By some cold morning glacier; frail  
    at first  
And feeble, all unconscious of itself,  
But such as gather'd color day by day.

Last I woke sane, but well-nigh  
    close to death  
For weakness: it was evening: silent  
    light  
Slept on the painted walls, wherein  
    were wrought  
Two grand designs; for on one side  
    arose  
The women up in wild revolt, and  
    storm'd  
At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes,  
    they cramm'd  
The forum, and half-crush'd among  
    the rest  
A dwarf-like Cato cower'd. On the  
    other side  
Hortensia spoke against the tax;  
    behind,  
A train of dames: by axe and eagle  
    sat,  
With all their foreheads drawn in  
    Roman scowls,  
And half the wolf's-milk curdled in  
    their veins,  
The fierce triumvirs; and before them  
    paused  
Hortensia pleading: angry was her  
    face.

I saw the forms: I knew not where  
    I was:

They did but look like hollow shows ;  
 nor more  
 Sweet Ida : palm to palm she sat : the  
 dew  
 Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her  
 shape  
 And rounder seem'd : I moved : I  
 sigh'd : a touch  
 Came round my wrist, and tears upon  
 my hand :  
 Then all for languor and self-pity ran  
 Mine down my face, and with what  
 life I had,  
 And like a flower that cannot all  
 unfold,  
 So drench'd it is with tempest, to the  
 sun,  
 Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on  
 her  
 Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whis-  
 peringly :

' If you be, what I think you, some  
 sweet dream,  
 I would but ask you to fulfil yourself :  
 But if you be that Ida whom I knew,  
 I ask you nothing : only, if a dream,  
 Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die  
 to-night.  
 Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere  
 I die.'

I could no more, but lay like one in  
 trance,  
 That hears his burial talk'd of by his  
 friends,  
 And cannot speak, nor move, nor  
 make one sign,  
 But lies and dreads his doom. She  
 turn'd ; she paused ;  
 She stoop'd ; and out of languor leapt  
 a cry ;  
 Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of  
 death ;  
 And I believed that in the living  
 world  
 My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips ;  
 Till back I fell, and from mine arms  
 she rose  
 Glowing all over noble shame ; and  
 all  
 Her falsèr self slipt from her like a  
 robe,

And left her woman, lovelier in her  
 mood  
 Than in her mould that other, when  
 she came  
 From barren deeps to conquer all  
 with love ;  
 And down the streaming crystal dropt ;  
 and she  
 Far-fleeted by the purple islandsides,  
 Naked, a double light in air and wave,  
 To meet her Graces, where they  
 deck'd her out  
 For worship without end ; nor end of  
 mine,  
 Stateliest, for thee ! but mute she  
 glided forth,  
 Nor glanced behind her, and I sank  
 and slept,  
 Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a  
 happy sleep.

Deep in the night I woke : she,  
 near me, held  
 A volume of the Poets of her land :  
 There to herself, all in low tones, she  
 read.

' Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the  
 white ;  
 Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk ;  
 Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry  
 font ;  
 The fire-fly wakens : waken thou with me.

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like  
 a ghost,  
 And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the stars,  
 And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and  
 leaves  
 A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,  
 And slips into the bosom of the lake :  
 So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip  
 Into my bosom and be lost in me.'

I heard her turn the page ; she  
 found a small  
 Sweet Idyl, and once more, as low, she  
 read :

'Come down, O maid, from yonder  
mountain height:

What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd  
sang):

In height and cold, the splendor of the  
hills?

But cease to move so near the Heavens,  
and cease

To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,  
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire ;  
And come, for Love is of the valley, come,  
For Love is of the valley, come thou down  
And find him ; by the happy threshold, he,  
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,  
Or red with spirted purple of the vats,  
Or foxlike in the vine ; nor cares to walk  
With Death and Moring on the silver  
horns,

Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,  
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,  
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven  
falls

To roll the torrent out of dusky doors :  
But follow ; let the torrent dance thee  
down

To find him in the valley ; let the wild  
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave  
The monstrous ledges there to slope, and  
spill

Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-  
smoke,

That like a broken purpose waste in air :  
So waste not thou ; but come ; for all the  
vales

Await thee ; azure pillars of the hearth  
Arise to thee ; the children call, and I  
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every  
sound,

Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is  
sweet ;

Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the  
lawn,

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,  
And murmuring of innumerable bees.'

So she low-toned ; while with shut  
eyes I lay

Listening ; then look'd. Pale was  
the perfect face ;

The bosom with long sighs labor'd ;  
and meek

Seem'd the full lips, and mild the lu-  
minous eyes,

And the voice trembled and the hand.  
She said

Brokenly, that she knew it, she had  
fail'd

In sweet humility ; had fail'd in all ;  
That all her labor was but as a  
block

Left in the quarry ; but she still were  
loth,

She still were loth to yield herself to  
one

That wholly scorn'd to help their  
equal rights

Against the sons of men, and barbar-  
ous laws.

She pray'd me not to judge their  
cause from her

That wrong'd it, sought far less for  
truth than power

In knowledge : something wild within  
her breast,

A greater than all knowledge, beat  
her down.

And she had nursed me there from  
week to week :

Much had she learnt in little time.  
In part

It was ill counsel had misled the girl  
To vex true hearts : yet was she but a  
girl—

'Ah fool, and made myself a Queen of  
farce!

When comes another such ? never, I  
think,

Till the Sun drop, dead, from the  
signs.'

Her voice  
Choked, and her forehead sank upon  
her hands,

And her great heart thro' all the  
faultful Past

Went sorrowing in a pause I dared  
not break ;

Till notice of a change in the dark  
world

Was lispt about the acacias, and a  
bird,

That early woke to feed her little  
ones,

Sent from a dewy breast a cry for  
light :

She moved, and at her feet the vol-  
ume fell.

'Blame not thyself too much,' I  
 said, 'nor blame  
 Too much the sons of men and bar-  
 barous laws ;  
 These were the rough ways of the  
 world till now.  
 Henceforth thou hast a helper, me,  
 that know  
 The woman's cause is man's : they  
 rise or sink  
 Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or  
 free :  
 For she that out of Lethe scales with  
 man  
 The shining steps of Nature, shares  
 with man  
 His nights, his days, moves with him  
 to one goal,  
 Stays all the fair young planet in her  
 hands—  
 If she be small, slight-natured, miser-  
 able,  
 How shall men grow ? but work no  
 more alone !  
 Our place is much : as far as in us  
 lies  
 We two will serve them both in aid-  
 ing her—  
 Will clear away the parasitic forms  
 That seem to keep her up but drag  
 her down—  
 Will leave her space to burgeon out  
 of all  
 Within her—let her make herself her  
 own  
 To give or keep, to live and learn and  
 be  
 All that not harms distinctive woman-  
 hood.  
 For woman is not undevelop't man,  
 But diverse : could we make her as  
 the man,  
 Sweet Love were slain : his dearest  
 bond is this,  
 Not like to like, but like in difference.  
 Yet in the long years liker must they  
 grow ;  
 The man be more of woman, she of  
 man ;  
 He gain in sweetness and in moral  
 height,  
 Nor lose the wrestling thews that  
 throw the world ;

She mental breadth, nor fail in child-  
 ward care,  
 Nor lose the childlike in the larger  
 mind ;  
 Till at the last she set herself to man,  
 Like perfect music unto noble words ;  
 And so these twain, upon the skirts  
 of Time,  
 Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all  
 their powers,  
 Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,  
 Self-reverent each and reverencing  
 each,  
 Distinct in individualities,  
 But like each other ev'n as those who  
 love.  
 Then comes the statelier Eden back  
 to men :  
 Then reign the world's great bridal, s,  
 chaste and calm :  
 Then springs the crowning race of  
 humankind.  
 May these things be !'  
 Sighing she spoke ' I fear  
 They will not.  
 ' Dear, but let us type them now  
 In our own lives, and this proud  
 watchword rest  
 Of equal ; seeing either sex alone  
 Is half itself, and in true marriage lies  
 Nor equal, nor unequal : each fulfils  
 Defect in each, and always thought in  
 thought,  
 Purpose in purpose, will in will, they  
 grow,  
 The single pure and perfect animal,  
 The two-cell'd heart beating, with one  
 full stroke,  
 Life.'  
 And again sighing she spoke : ' A  
 dream  
 That once was mine ! what woman  
 taught you this ?'  
 ' Alone,' I said, ' from earlier than I  
 know,  
 Immersed in rich foreshadowings of  
 the world,  
 I loved the woman : he, that doth not,  
 lives  
 A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,  
 Or pines in sad experience worse than  
 death,

Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt  
with crime:  
Yet was there one thro' whom I  
loved her, one  
Not learned, save in gracious house-  
hold ways,  
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender  
wants,  
No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt  
In Angel instincts, breathing Para-  
dise,  
Interpreter between the Gods and  
men,  
Who look'd all native to her place,  
and yet  
On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a  
sphere  
Too gross to tread, and all male  
minds perforce  
Sway'd to her from their orbits as  
they moved,  
And girdled her with music. Happy he  
With such a mother! faith in woman-  
kind  
Beats with his blood, and trust in all  
things high  
Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip  
and fall  
He shall not blind his soul with clay.'  
'But I,'  
Said Ida, tremulously, 'so all unlike—  
It seems you love to cheat yourself  
with words:  
This mother is your model. I have  
heard  
Of your strange doubts: they well  
might be: I seem  
A mockery to my own self. Never,  
Prince;  
You cannot love me.'  
'Nay but thee' I said  
'From yearlong poring on thy  
pictured eyes,  
Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen,  
and saw  
Thee woman thro' the crust of iron  
moods  
That mask'd thee from men's rever-  
ence up, and forced  
Sweet love on pranks of saucy boy-  
hood: now,  
Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro'  
thee,

Indeed I love: the new day comes,  
the light  
Dearer for night, as dearer thou for  
faults  
Lived over: lift thine eyes; my  
doubts are dead,  
My haunting sense of hollow shows:  
the change,  
This truthful change in thee has kill'd  
it. Dear,  
Look up, and let thy nature strike on  
mine,  
Like yonder morning on the blind  
half-world;  
Approach and fear not; breathe upon  
my brows;  
In that fine air I tremble, all the past  
Melts mist-like into this bright hour,  
and this  
Is morn to more, and all the rich to-  
come  
Reels, as the golden Autumn wood-  
land reels  
Athwart the smoke of burning weeds.  
Forgive me,  
I waste my heart in signs: let be.  
My bride,  
My wife, my life. O we will walk  
this world,  
Yoked in all exercise of noble end,  
And so thro' those dark gates across  
the wild  
That no man knows. Indeed I love  
thee: come,  
Yield thyself up: my hopes and thine  
are one:  
Accomplish thou my manhood and  
thyself;  
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and  
trust to me.'

## CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give  
you all  
The random scheme as wildly as it  
rose:  
The words are mostly mine; for  
when we ceased  
There came a minute's pause, and  
Walter said,  
'I wish she had not yielded!' then to  
me,

'What, if you drest it up poetically!'  
 So pray'd the men, the women: I  
 gave assent:  
 Yet how to bind the scatter'd scheme  
 of seven  
 Together in one sheaf? What style  
 could suit?  
 The men required that I should give  
 throughout  
 The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque,  
 With which we banter'd little Lilia  
 first:  
 The women—and perhaps they felt  
 their power,  
 For something in the ballads which  
 they sang,  
 Or in their silent influence as they sat,  
 Had ever seem'd to wrestle with  
 burlesque,  
 And drove us, last, to quite a solemn  
 close—  
 They hated banter, wish'd for some-  
 thing real,  
 A gallant fight, a noble princess—  
 why  
 Not make her true-heroic—true-  
 sublime?  
 Or all, they said, as earnest as the  
 close?  
 Which yet with such a framework  
 scarce could be.  
 Then rose a little feud betwixt the  
 two,  
 Betwixt the mockers and the realists:  
 And I, betwixt them both, to please  
 them both,  
 And yet to give the story as it rose,  
 I moved as in a strange diagonal,  
 And maybe neither pleased myself  
 nor them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took  
 no part  
 In our dispute: the sequel of the  
 tale  
 Had touch'd her; and she sat, she  
 pluck'd the grass,  
 She flung it from her, thinking: last,  
 she fixt  
 A showery glance upon her aunt, and  
 said,  
 'You—tell us what we are' who  
 might have told,

For she was cramm'd with theories  
 out of books,  
 But that there rose a shout: the gates  
 were closed  
 At sunset, and the crowd were swarm-  
 ing now,  
 To take their leave, about the garden  
 rails.

So I and some went out to these:  
 we climb'd  
 The slope to Vivian-place, and turn-  
 ing saw  
 The happy valleys, half in light, and  
 half  
 Far-shadowing from the west, a land  
 of peace;  
 Gray halls alone among their massive  
 groves;  
 Trim hamlets; here and there a rustic  
 tower  
 Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths  
 of wheat;  
 The shimmering glimpses of a stream;  
 the seas;  
 A red sail, or a white; and far beyond,  
 Imagined more than seen, the skirts  
 of France.

'Look there, a garden!' said my  
 college friend,  
 The Tory member's elder son, 'and  
 there!  
 God bless the narrow sea which keeps  
 her off,  
 And keeps our Britain, whole within  
 herself,  
 A nation yet, the rulers and the  
 ruled—  
 Some sense of duty, something of a  
 faith,  
 Some reverence for the laws our-  
 selves have made,  
 Some patient force to change them  
 when we will,  
 Some civic manhood firm against the  
 crowd—  
 But yonder, whiff! there comes a  
 sudden heat,  
 The gravest citizen seems to lose his  
 head,  
 The king is scared, the soldier will  
 not fight,



The little boys begin to shoot and stab,  
A kingdom topples over with a shriek  
Like an old woman, and down rolls  
the world  
In mock heroics stranger than our  
own;  
Revolts, republics, revolutions, most  
No graver than a schoolboys' barring  
out;  
Too comic for the solemn things they  
are,  
Too solemn for the comic touches in  
them,  
Like our wild Princess with as wise a  
dream  
As some of theirs—God bless the  
narrow seas!  
I wish they were a whole Atlantic  
broad.'

'Have patience,' I replied, 'our-  
selves are full  
Of social wrong; and maybe wildest  
dreams  
Are but the needful preludes of the  
truth:  
For me, the genial day, the happy  
crowd,  
The sport half-science, fill me with a  
faith,  
This fine old world of ours is but a  
child  
Yet in the go-cart. Patience! Give  
it time  
To learn its limbs: there is a hand  
that guides.'

In such discourse we gain'd the gar-  
den rails,  
And there we saw Sir Walter where  
he stood,  
Before a tower of crimson holly-  
oaks,  
Among six boys, head under head, and  
look'd  
No little lily-handed Baronet he,  
A great broad-shoulder'd genial Eng-  
lishman,  
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,  
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,  
A patron of some thirty charities,  
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain.

A quarter-sessions chairman, abler  
none;  
Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy  
morn;  
Now shaking hands with him, now  
him, of those  
That stood the nearest—now address'd  
to speech—  
Who spoke few words and pithy, such  
as closed  
Welcome, farewell, and welcome for  
the year  
To follow: a shout rose again, and  
made  
The long line of the approaching  
rookery swerve  
From the elms, and shook the  
branches of the deer  
From slope to slope thro' distant ferns,  
and rang  
Beyond the bourn of sunset; O, a  
shout  
More joyful than the city-roar that  
hails  
Premier or king! Why should not  
these great Sirs  
Give up their parks some dozen times  
a year  
To let the people breathe? So thrice  
they cried,  
I likewise, and in groups they stream'd  
away.

But we went back to the Abbey,  
and sat on,  
So much the gathering darkness  
charm'd: we sat  
But spoke not, rapt in nameless  
reverie,  
Perchance upon the future man: the  
walls  
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and  
owls whoop'd,  
And gradually the powers of the night,  
That range above the region of the  
wind,  
Deepening the courts of twilight broke  
them up  
Thro' all the silent spaces of the  
worlds,  
Beyond all thought into the Heaven  
of Heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,  
Disrobed the glimmering statue of  
Sir Ralph  
From those rich silks, and home well-  
pleased we went.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE  
DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

PUBLISHED IN 1852.

I.

BURY the Great Duke  
With an empire's lamentation,  
Let us bury the Great Duke  
To the noise of the mourning of a  
mighty nation,  
Mourning when their leaders fall,  
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,  
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II.

Where shall we lay the man whom  
we deplore?  
Here, in streaming London's central  
roar.  
Let the sound of those he wrought  
for,  
And the feet of those he fought for,  
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III.

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,  
As fits an universal woe,  
Let the long long procession go,  
And let the sorrowing crowd about it  
grow,  
And let the mournful martial music  
blow;  
The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,  
Remembering all his greatness in the  
Past.  
No more in soldier fashion will he  
greet  
With lifted hand the gazer in the  
street.

O friends, our chief state-oracle is  
mute:  
Mourn for the man of long-enduring  
blood,  
The statesman-warrior, moderate,  
resolute,  
Whole in himself, a common good.  
Mourn for the man of amplest  
influence,  
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,  
Our greatest yet with least pretence,  
Great in council and great in war,  
Foremost captain of his time,  
Rich in saving common-sense,  
And, as the greatest only are,  
In his simplicity sublime.  
O good gray head which all men  
knew,  
O voice from which their omens all  
men drew,  
O iron nerve to true occasion true,  
O fall'n at length that tower of  
strength  
Which stood four-square to all the  
winds that blew!  
Such was he whom we deplore.  
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.  
The great World-victor's victor will  
be seen no more.

V.

All is over and done:  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
England, for thy son.  
Let the bell be toll'd.  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
And render him to the mould.  
Under the cross of gold  
That shines over city and river,  
There he shall rest for ever  
Among the wise and the bold.  
Let the bell be toll'd:  
And a reverent people behold  
The towering car, the sable steeds:  
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,  
Dark in its funeral fold.  
Let the bell be toll'd:  
And a deeper knell in the heart be  
knoll'd;  
And the sound of the sorrowing  
anthem roll'd  
Thro' the dome of the golden cross;

And the volleying cannon thunder his  
loss ;  
He knew their voices of old.  
For many a time in many a clime  
His captain's-ear has heard them  
boom  
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom :  
When he with those deep voices  
wrought,  
Guarding realms and kings from  
shame ;  
With those deep voices our dead  
captain taught  
The tyrant, and asserts his claim  
In that dread sound to the great name,  
Which he has worn so pure of blame,  
In praise and in dispraise the same,  
A man of well-attemper'd frame.  
O civic muse, to such a name,  
To such a name for ages long,  
To such a name.  
Preserve a broad approach of fame,  
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

## VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an hon-  
or'd guest,  
With banner and with music, with  
soldier and with priest,  
With a nation weeping, and breaking  
on my rest ?  
Mighty Seaman, this is he  
Was great by land as thou by sea.  
Thine island loves thee well, thou  
famous man,  
The greatest sailor since our world  
began.  
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,  
To thee the greatest soldier comes ;  
For this is he  
Was great by land as thou by sea ;  
His foes were thine ; he kept us free ;  
O give him welcome, this is he  
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,  
And worthy to be laid by thee ;  
For this is England's greatest son,  
He that gain'd a hundred fights,  
Nor ever lost an English gun ;  
This is he that far away  
Against the myriads of Assaye  
Clash'd with his fiery few and won ;  
And underneath another sun,

Warring on a later day,  
Round affrighted Lisbon drew  
The treble works, the vast designs  
Of his labor'd rampart-lines,  
Where he greatly stood at bay,  
Whence he issued forth anew,  
And ever great and greater grew,  
Beating from the wasted vines  
Back to France her banded swarms,  
Back to France with countless blows,  
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew  
Beyond the Pyrenean pines,  
Follow'd up in valley and glen  
With blare of bugle, clamor of men,  
Roll of cannon and clash of arms.  
And England pouring on her foes.  
Such a war had such a close.  
Again their ravening eagle rose  
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadow-  
ing wings,  
And barking for the thrones of  
kings ;  
Till one that sought but Duty's iron  
crown  
On that loud sabbath shook the  
spoiler down ;  
A day of onsets of despair !  
Dash'd on every rocky square  
Their surging charges foam'd them-  
selves away ;  
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew ;  
Thro' the long-tormented air  
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,  
And down we swept and charged and  
overthrew.  
So great a soldier taught us there,  
What long-enduring hearts could do  
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo !  
Mighty Seaman tender and true,  
And pure as he from taint of craven  
guile,  
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,  
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,  
If aught of things that here befall  
Touch a spirit among things divine,  
If love of country move thee there at  
all,  
Be glad, because his bones are laid by  
thine !  
And thro' the centuries let a people's  
voice  
In full acclaim,  
A people's voice,

The proof and echo of all human  
fame,  
A people's voice, when they rejoice  
At civic revel and pomp and game,  
Attest their great commander's claim  
With honor, honor, honor, honor to  
him,  
Eternal honor to his name.

## VII.

A people's voice! we are a people  
yet.  
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams  
forget,  
Confused by brainless mobs and law-  
less Powers;  
Thank Him who isled us here, and  
roughly set  
His Briton in blown seas and storm-  
ing showers,  
We have a voice, with which to pay  
the debt  
Of boundless love and reverence and  
regret  
To those great men who fought, and  
kept it ours.  
And keep it ours, O God, from brute  
control;  
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye,  
the soul  
Of Europe, keep our noble England  
whole,  
And save the one true seed of free-  
dom sown  
Betwixt a people and their ancient  
throne,  
That sober freedom out of which  
there springs  
Our loyal passion for our temperate  
kings;  
For, saving that, ye help to save man-  
kind  
Till public wrong be crumbled into  
dust,  
And drill the raw world for the march  
of mind,  
Till crowds at length be sane and  
crowns be just.  
But wink no more in slothful over-  
trust.  
Remember him who led your hosts;  
He bad you guard the sacred coasts.

Your cannons moulder on the sea-  
ward wall;  
His voice is silent in your council  
hall

For ever; and whatever tempests lour  
For ever silent; even if they broke  
In thunder, silent; yet remember all  
He spoke among you, and the Man  
who spoke;  
Who never sold the truth to serve the  
hour,  
Nor palter'd with Eternal God for  
power;  
Who let the turbid streams of rumor  
flow  
Thro' either babbling world of high  
and low;  
Whose life was work, whose language  
rife  
With rugged maxims hewn from life;  
Who never spoke against a foe;  
Whose eighty winters freeze with one  
rebuke  
All great self-seekers trampling on  
the right;  
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred  
named;  
Truth-lover was our English Duke;  
Whatever record leap to light  
He never shall be ashamed.

## VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars  
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,  
Follow'd by the brave of other lands,  
He, on whom from both her open  
hands  
Lavish Honor shower'd all her  
stars,  
And affluent Fortune emptied all her  
horn.  
Yea, let all good things await  
Him who cares not to be great,  
But as he saves or serves the state.  
Not once or twice in our rough  
island-story,  
The path of duty was the way to  
glory:  
He that walks it, only thirsting  
For the right, and learns to deaden  
Love of self, before his journey  
closes,

He shall find the stubborn thistle  
bursting  
Into glossy purples, which outredden  
All voluptuous garden-roses.  
Not once or twice in our fair island-  
story,  
The path of duty was the way to  
glory :  
He, that ever following her com-  
mands,  
On with toil of heart and knees and  
hands,  
Thro' the long gorge to the far light  
has won  
His path upward, and prevail'd,  
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty  
scaled  
Are close upon the shining table-lands  
To which our God Himself is moon  
and sun.  
Such was he : his work is done.  
But while the races of mankind en-  
dure,  
Let his great example stand  
Colossal, seen of every land,  
And keep the soldier firm, the  
statesman pure :  
Till in all lands and thro' all human  
story  
The path of duty be the way to glory :  
And let the land whose hearths he  
saved from shame  
For many and many an age proclaim  
At civic revel and pomp and game,  
And when the long-illuminated cities  
flame,  
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,  
With honor, honor, honor, honor to  
him,  
Eternal honor to his name.

IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung  
By some yet un moulded tongue  
Far on in summers that we shall not  
see :  
Peace, it is a day of pain  
For one about whose patriarchal knee  
Late the little children clung :  
O peace, it is a day of pain  
For one, upon whose hand and heart  
and brain

Once the weight and fate of Europe  
hung.  
Ours the pain, be his the gain !  
More than is of man's degree  
Must be with us, watching here  
At this, our great solemnity.  
Whom we see not we revere ;  
We revere, and we refrain  
From talk of battles loud and vain,  
And brawling memories all too free  
For such a wise humility  
As befits a solemn fane :  
We revere, and while we hear  
The tides of Music's golden sea  
Setting toward eternity,  
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,  
Until we doubt not that for one so  
true  
There must be other nobler work to  
do  
Than when he fought at Waterloo,  
And Victor he must ever be.  
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the  
hill  
And break the shore, and evermore  
Make and break, and work their will ;  
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads  
roll  
Round us, each with different powers,  
And other forms of life than ours,  
What know we greater than the soul ?  
On God and Godlike men we build  
our trust.  
Hush, the Dead March wails in the  
people's ears :  
The dark crowd moves, and there are  
sobs and tears :  
The black earth yawns : the mortal  
disappears ;  
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;  
He is gone who seem'd so great.—  
Gone ; but nothing can bereave him  
Of the force he made his own  
Being here, and we believe him  
Something far advanced in State,  
And that he wears a truer crown  
Than any wreath that man can weave  
him.  
Speak no more of his renown,  
Lay your earthly fancies down,  
And in the vast cathedral leave him,  
God accept him, Christ receive him.

THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY,  
1852.

My Lords, we heard you speak : you  
told us all  
That England's honest censure went  
too far ;  
That our free press should cease to  
brawl,  
Not sting the fiery Frenchman into  
war.  
It was our ancient privilege, my Lords,  
To fling whate'er we felt, not fearing,  
into words.

We love not this French God, the  
child of Hell,  
Wild War, who breaks the converse  
of the wise ;  
But though we love kind Peace so  
well,  
We dare not ev'n by silence sanc-  
tion lies.  
It might be safe our censures to with-  
draw ;  
And yet, my Lords, not well : there is  
a higher law.

As long as we remain, we must speak  
free,  
Tho' all the storm of Europe on us  
break ;  
No little German state are we,  
But the one voice in Europe : we  
*must* speak ;  
That if to-night our greatness were  
struck dead,  
There might be left some record of the  
things we said.

If you be fearful, then must we be bold.  
Our Britain cannot salve a tyrant  
o'er.  
Better the waste Atlantic roll'd  
On her and us and ours for ever-  
more.  
What! have we fought for Freedom  
from our prime,

At last to dodge and palter with a  
public crime ?

Shall we fear *him*? our own we never  
fear'd.  
From our first Charles by force we  
wrung our claims.  
Prick'd by the Papal spur, we rear'd,  
We flung the burthen of the second  
James.  
I say, we *never* feared! and as for  
these,  
We broke them on the land, we drove  
them on the seas.

And you, my Lords, you make the  
people muse  
In doubt if you be of our Barons'  
breed—  
Were those your sires who fought at  
Lewes?  
Is this the manly strain of Runny-  
mede?  
O fall'n nobility, that, overawed,  
Would lisp in honey'd whispers of this  
monstrous fraud!

*We* feel, at least, that silence here  
were sin,  
Not ours the fault if we have feeble  
hosts—  
If easy patrons of their kin  
Have left the last free race with  
naked coasts!  
They knew the precious things they  
had to guard :  
For us, we will not spare the tyrant  
one hard word.

Tho' niggard throats of Manchester  
may bawl,  
What England was, shall her true  
sons forget?  
We are not cotton-spinners all,  
But some love England and her  
honor yet.  
And these in our Thermopylæ shall  
stand,  
And hold against the world this honor  
of the land.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT  
BRIGADE.

I.

HALF a league, half a league,  
Half a league onward,  
All in the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.  
Forward, the Light Brigade!  
Charge for the guns! ' he said :  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

II.

' Forward, the Light Brigade! '  
Was there a man dismay'd ?  
Not tho' the soldier knew  
Some one had blunder'd :  
Their's not to make reply,  
Their's not to reason why,  
Their's but to do and die :  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

III.

Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon in front of them  
Volley'd and thunder'd ;  
Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
Boldly they rode and well,  
Into the jaws of Death,  
Into the mouth of Hell  
Rode the six hundred.

IV.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,  
Flash'd as they turn'd in air  
Sabring the gunners there,  
Charging an army, while  
All the world wonder'd :  
Plunged in the battery-smoke  
Right thro' the line they broke ;  
Cossack and Russian  
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke  
Shatter'd and sunder'd  
Then they rode back, but not  
Not the six hundred.

V.

Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon behind them  
Volley'd and thunder'd ;  
Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
While horse and hero fell,  
They that had fought so well  
Came thro' the jaws of Death,  
Back from the mouth of Hell,  
All that was left of them,  
Left of six hundred.

VI.

When can their glory fade ?  
O the wild charge they made !  
All the world wonder'd.  
Honor the charge they made !  
Honor the Light Brigade,  
Noble six hundred !

ODE SUNG AT THE OPENING  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
EXHIBITION.

I.

UPLIFT a thousand voices full and  
sweet,  
In this wide hall with earth's in-  
vention stored,  
And praise the invisible universal  
Lord,  
Who lets once more in peace the  
nations meet,  
Where Science, Art, and Labor  
have outpour'd  
Their myriad horns of plenty at our  
feet.

II.

O silent father of our Kings to be  
Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,  
For this, for all, we weep our thanks  
to thee !

III.

The world-compelling plan was  
thine,—  
And, lo ! the long laborious miles

Of Palace; lo! the giant aisles,  
 Rich in model and design;  
 Harvest-tool and husbandry,  
 Loom and wheel and enginery,  
 Secrets of the sullen mine,  
 Steel and gold, and corn and wine,  
 Fabric rough, or fairy-fine,  
 Sunny tokens of the Line,  
 Polar marvels, and a feast  
 Of wonder, out of West and East,  
 And shapes and hues of Art divine!  
 All of beauty, all of use,  
 That one fair planet can produce,  
     Brought from under every star,  
 Blown from over every main,  
 And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,  
     The works of peace with works of war.

## iv.

Is the goal so far away?  
 Far, how far no tongue can say,  
 Let us dream our dream to-day.

## v.

O ye, the wise who think, the wise  
     who reign,  
 From growing commerce loose her  
     latest chain,  
 And let the fair white-wing'd peace-  
     maker fly  
 To happy havens under all the sky,  
 And mix the seasons and the golden  
     hours;  
 Till each man find his own in all men's  
     good,  
 And all men work in noble brother-  
     hood,  
 Breaking their mailed fleets and armed  
     towers,  
 And ruling by obeying Nature's  
     powers,  
 And gathering all the fruits of earth  
     and crown'd with all her flowers.

## A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRIA.

MARCH 7, 1863.

SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the  
     sea,

Alexandria!

Saxon and Norman and Dane are  
     we,  
 But all of us Danes in our welcome of  
     thee,

Alexandria!

Welcome her, thunders of fort and of  
     fleet!

Welcome her, thundering cheer of the  
     street!

Welcome her, all things youthful and  
     sweet,

Scatter the blossom under her feet!

Break, happy land, into earlier flow-  
     ers!

Make music, O bird, in the new-bud-  
     ded bowers!

Blazon your mottoes of blessing and  
     prayer!

Welcome her, welcome her, all that is  
     ours!

Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blare!

Flags, flutter out upon turrets and  
     towers!

Flames, on the windy headland flare!

Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire!

Clash, ye bells, in the merry March  
     air!

Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire!

Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and  
     higher

Melt into stars for the land's desire!

Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice,

Roll as a ground-swell dash'd on the  
     strand,

Roar as the sea when he welcomes  
     the land,

And welcome her, welcome the land's  
     desire,

The sea-kings' daughter as happy as  
     fair,

Blissful bride of a blissful heir,

Bride of the heir of the kings of the  
     sea—

O joy to the people and joy to the  
     throne,

Come to us, love us and make us your  
     own:

For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,

Teuton or Celt, or whatever we be,  
 We are each all Dane in our welcome  
     of thee,

Alexandria!



A WELCOME TO HER ROYAL  
HIGHNESS MARIE ALEX-  
ANDROVNA, DUCHESS OF  
EDINBURGH.

MARCH 7, 1874.

I.

THE Son of him with whom we strove  
for power—  
Whose will is lord thro' all his  
world-domain—  
Who made the serf a man, and  
burst his chain—  
Has given our Prince his own imper-  
ial Flower,  
Alexandrovna.  
And welcome, Russian flower, a peo-  
ple's pride,  
To Britain, when her flowers begin  
to blow!  
From love to love, from home to  
home you go,  
From mother unto mother, stately  
bride,  
Marie Alexandrovna!

II.

The golden news along the steppes is  
blown,  
And at thy name the Tartar tents  
are stirr'd;  
Elburz and all the Caucasus have  
heard;  
And all the sultry palms of India  
known,  
Alexandrovna.  
The voices of our universal sea  
On capes of Africa as on cliffs of Kent,  
The Maoris and that Isle of Con-  
tinent,  
And loyal pines of Canada murmur  
thee,  
Marie Alexandrovna!

III.

Fair empires branching, both, in lusty  
life!—  
Yet Harold's England fell to Nor-  
man swords;

Yet thine own land has bow'd to  
Tartar hordes  
Since English Harold gave its throne  
a wife,

Alexandrovna!  
For thrones and peoples are as waifs  
that swing,  
And float or fall, in endless ebb and  
flow;  
But who love best have best the  
grace to know  
That Love by right divine is death-  
less king,  
Marie Alexandrovna!

IV.

And Love has led thee to the stranger  
land,  
Where men are bold and strongly  
say their say;—  
See, empire upon empire smiles to-  
day,  
As thou with thy young lover hand in  
hand  
Alexandrovna!  
So now thy fuller life is in the west,  
Whose hand at home was gracious  
to thy poor:  
Thy name was blest within the  
narrow door;  
Here also, Marie, shall thy name be  
blest, Marie Alexandrovna!

V.

Shall fears and jealous hatreds flame  
again?  
Or at thy coming, Princess, every-  
where,  
The blue heaven break, and some  
diviner air  
Breathe thro' the world and change  
the hearts of men,  
Alexandrovna?  
But hearts that change not, love that  
cannot cease,  
And peace be yours, the peace of  
soul in soul!  
And howsoever this wild world may  
roll,  
Between your peoples truth and man-  
ful peace,  
Alfred—Alexandrovna!

## THE GRANDMOTHER.

## I.

AND Willy, my eldest-born, is gone, you say, little Anne?  
Ruddy and white, and strong on his legs, he looks like a man.  
And Willy's wife has written: she never was over-wise,  
Never the wife for Willy: he wouldn't take my advice.

## II.

For, Annie, you see, her father was not the man to save,  
Hadn't a head to manage, and drank himself into his grave.  
Pretty enough, very pretty! but I was against it for one.  
Eh!—but he wouldn't hear me—and Willy, you say, is gone.

## III.

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the flower of the flock;  
Never a man could fling him: for Willy stood like a rock.  
'Here's a leg for a babe of a week!' says doctor; and he would be bound,  
There was not his like that year in twenty parishes round.

## IV.

Strong of his hands, and strong on his legs, but still of his tongue!  
I ought to have gone before him: I wonder he went so young.  
I cannot cry for him, Annie: I have not long to stay;  
Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for he lived far away.

## V.

Why do you look at me, Annie? you think I am hard and cold;  
But all my children have gone before me, I am so old:  
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I weep for the rest;  
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

## VI.

For I remember a quarrel I had with your father, my dear,  
All for a slanderous story, that cost me many a tear.  
I mean your grandfather, Annie: it cost me a world of woe,  
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

## VII.

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the place, and I knew right well  
That Jenny had tript in her time: I knew, but I would not tell.  
And she to be coming and slandering me, the base little liar!  
But the tongue is a fire as you know, my dear, the tongue is a fire.



"MELISSA, WITH HER HAND UPON THE LOCK."—Page 43.



VIII.

And the parson made it his text that week, and he said likewise,  
That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies,  
That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with outright,  
But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.

IX.

And Willy had not been down to the farm for a week and a day ;  
And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it was the middle of May.  
Jenny, to slander me, who knew what Jenny had been !  
But soiling another, Annie, will never make oneself clean.

X.

And I cried myself well-nigh blind, and all of an evening late  
I climb'd to the top of the garth, and stood by the road at the gate.  
The moon like a rick on fire was rising over the dale,  
And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside me chirrup the nightingale.

XI.

All of a sudden he stopt : there past by the gate of the farm,  
Willy,—he didn't see me,—and Jenny hung on his arm.  
Out into the road I started, and spoke I scarce knew how ;  
Ah, there's no fool like the old one—it makes me angry now.

XII.

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd the thing that he meant ;  
Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking curtsy and went.  
And I said, ' Let us part : in a hundred years it'll all be the same,  
You cannot love me at all, if you love not my good name.'

XIII.

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all wet, in the sweet moonshine :  
' Sweetheart, I love you so well that your good name is mine.  
And what do I care for Jane, let her speak of you well or ill ;  
But marry me out of hand : we two shall be happy still.'

XIV.

' Marry you, Willy ! ' said I, ' but I needs must speak my mind,  
And I fear you'll listen to tales, be jealous and hard and unkind.'  
But he turn'd and claspt me in his arms, and answer'd, ' No, love, no ;'  
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

XV.

So Willy and I were wedded : I wore a lilac gown ;  
And the ringers rang with a will, and he gave the ringers a crown.  
But the first that ever I bare was dead before he was born,  
Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and thorn.

## XVI.

That was the first time, too, that ever I thought of death.  
 There lay the sweet little body that never had drawn a breath.  
 I had not wept, little Anne, not since I had been a wife ;  
 But I wept like a child that day, for the babe had fought for his life.

## XVII.

His dear little face was troubled, as if with anger or pain :  
 I look'd at the still little body—his trouble had all been in vain.  
 For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him another morn :  
 But I wept like a child for the child that was dead before he was born.

## XVIII.

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for he seldom said me nay :  
 Kind, like a man, was he ; like a man, too, would have his way :  
 Never jealous—not he : we had many a happy year ;  
 And he died, and I could not weep—my own time seem'd so near.

## XIX.

But I wish'd it had been God's will that I, too, then could have died :  
 I began to be tired a little, and fain had slept at his side.  
 And that was ten years back, or more, if I don't forget :  
 But as to the children, Annie, they're all about me yet.

## XX.

Pattering over the boards, my Annie who left me at two,  
 Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an Annie like you :  
 Pattering over the boards, she comes and goes at her will,  
 While Harry is in the five-acre and Charlie ploughing the hill.

## XXI.

And Harry and Charlie, I hear them too—they sing to their team :  
 Often they come to the door in a pleasant kind of a dream.  
 They come and sit by my chair, they hover about my bed—  
 I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.

## XXII.

And yet I know for a truth, there's none of them left alive ;  
 For Harry went at sixty, your father at sixty-five :  
 And Willy, my eldest-born, at nigh threescore and ten ;  
 I knew them all as babies, and now they're elderly men.

## XXIII.

For mine is a time of peace, it is not often I grieve ;  
 I am oftener sitting at home in my father's farm at eve :  
 And the neighbors come and laugh and gossip, and so do I ;  
 I find myself often laughing at things that have long gone by.

## XXI

To be sure the preacher says, our sins should make us sad :  
 But mine is a time of peace, and there is Grace to be had ;  
 And God, not man, is the Judge of us all when life shall cease :  
 And in this Book, little Annie, the message is one of Peace.

## XXV.

And age is a time of peace, so it be free from pain,  
 And happy has been my life ; but I would not live it again.  
 I seem to be tired a little, that's all, and long for rest ;  
 Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

## XXVI.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my eldest-born, my flower,  
 But how can I weep for Willy, he has but gone for an hour,—  
 Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into the next ;  
 I, too, shall go in a minute. What time have I to be vext ?

## XXVII.

And Willy's wife has written, she never was over-wise.  
 Get me my glasses, Annie : thank God that I keep my eyes.  
 There is but a trifle left you, when I shall have past away.  
 But stay with the old woman now : you cannot have long to stay.

## NORTHERN FARMER.

## OLD STYLE.

## I.

WHEER 'asta beän saw long and meä liggin' 'ere aloän ?  
 Noorse ? thourt nowt o' a noorse : whoy, Doctor's abeän an' agoän :  
 Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle : but I beänt a fool :  
 Git ma my aäle, fur I beänt a-gawin' to bräk my rule.

## II.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a says what's nawways true :  
 Naw soort o' koind o' use to saäy the things that a do.  
 I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight sin' I beän 'ere.  
 An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight for foorty year.

## III.

Parson's a beän loikewise, an' a sittin' 'ere o' my bed.  
 ' The amoighty's a tääkin o' you ' to 'issén, my friend,' a said,  
 An' a towd ma my sins, an's toithe were due, an' I gied it in hond ;  
 I done moy duty boy 'um, as I' a done boy the lond.

<sup>1</sup> ou as in hour.

## IV.

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot sa mooch to larn.  
But a cast oop, thot a did, 'bout Bessy Marris's barne.  
Thaw a knaws I hallus voätet wi' Squire an' choorch an' staäte,  
An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver agin the raäte.

## V.

An' I hallus coom'd to 's chooch afoor moy Sally wur deäd,  
An' 'eärd 'um a bummin' awaäy loike a buzzard-clock <sup>1</sup> over my 'eäid,  
An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd but I thowt a 'ad summut to saäy,  
An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said an' I coom'd awaäy.

## VI.

Bessy Marris's barne! tha knaws she laäid it to meä.  
Mowt a beän, mayhap, for she wur a bad un, sheä.  
'Siver, I kep 'um, I kep 'um, my lass, tha mun understand;  
I done moy duty boy 'um as I 'a done boy the lond.

## VII.

But Parson a cooms an' a goäs, an' a says it eäsy an' freeä  
'The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my friend,' says 'eä.  
I weänt saäy men be loiars, thaw summun said it in 'aäste:  
But 'e reäds wonn sarmin a weeäk, an' I 'a stubb'd Thurnaby waäste.

## VIII.

D'ya moind the waäste, my lass? naw, tha was not born then;  
Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eärd 'um mysen;  
Moäst loike a butter-bump,<sup>2</sup> fur I 'eärd 'um about an' about,  
But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an' raäved an' rembled 'um out.

## IX.

Keäper's it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer a-laaid of 'is faäce  
Down i' the woild 'enemies<sup>3</sup> afoor I coom'd to the plaäce.  
Noäks or Thimbleby—toäner<sup>4</sup> 'ed shot 'um as deäd as a naäil  
Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize—but git ma my aäle.

## X.

Dubbut looök at the waäste: theer warn't not feeäd för a cow;  
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an' looök at it now—  
Warn't worth nowt a haäcre, an' now theer's lots o' feeäd,  
Fourscoor<sup>5</sup> yows upon it an' some on it down i' seeäd.<sup>6</sup>

## XI.

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd to 'a stubb'd it at fall,  
Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd plow thruff it an' all,  
If godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let ma aloän.  
Meä, wi' haäte hoonderd haäcre o' Squire's, an' lond o' my oän.

<sup>1</sup> Cockchafer. <sup>2</sup> Bittern. <sup>3</sup> Anemones. <sup>4</sup> One or other. <sup>5</sup> ou as in hour. <sup>6</sup> Clover.



## XII.

Do godamoighty know what a's doing a-taakin' o' meä?  
 I beän wonn as saws 'ere a beän an' yonder a peä;  
 An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all—a' dear a' dear!  
 And I 'a managed for Squire coom Michaelmas thutty year.

## XIII.

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant not a 'aäpoth o' sense,  
 Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins—a niver mended a fence:  
 But godamoighty a moost taäke meä an' taäke ma now  
 Wi' aäf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby hoälmus to plow!

## XIV.

Loök 'aw quoloty smoiles when they seeäs ma a passin' boy,  
 Says to thessen naw doubt 'what a man a beä sewer-loj!  
 Fur they knows what I beän to Squire sin fust a coom'd to the 'All;  
 I done moy duty by Squire an' I done moy duty boy hall.

Squire's i' Lunnon, an' summun I reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,  
 For whoä's to howd the lond ater meä thot muddles ma quoit;  
 Sartin-sewer I beä, thot a weänt niver give it to Joänes,  
 Naw, nor a moänt to Robins—a niver rembles the stoäns.

## XVI.

But summun 'ull come ater meä mayhap wi' 'is kittle o' steäm  
 Huzzin' an' maäzin' the blessed feälds wi' the Devil's oän teäm.  
 Sin' I mun doj I mun doj, thaw loife they says is sweet,  
 But sin' I mun doj I mun doj, for I couldn abeär to see it.

## XVII.

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn bring ma the aäle?  
 Doctor's a 'toättler, lass, an a's hallus i' the owd taäle;  
 I weänt breäk rules fur Doctor, a knows naw moor nor a floy;  
 Git ma my aäle I tell tha, an' if I mun doj I mun doj.

## NORTHERN FARMER.

## NEW STYLE.

## I.

Dosn't thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they canters awaäy?  
 Proputty, proputty, proputty—that's what I 'ears 'em saäy.  
 Proputty, proputty, proputty—Sam, thou's an ass for thy paaäns:  
 Theer's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs nor in all thy braaäms.

## II.

Woä—theer's a crow to pluck wi' tha, Sam: yon's parson's 'ouse—  
 Dosn't thou know that a man mun be eäther a man or a mouse?  
 Time to think on it then; for thou'll be twenty to weeäk.<sup>1</sup>  
 Proputty, proputty—woä then woä—let ma 'ear mysén speäk.

## III.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as b'än a-talkin' o' thee;  
 Thou's beän talkin' to muther, an' she beän a tellin' it me.  
 Thou'll not marry for munny—thou's sweet upo' parson's lass—  
 Noä—thou'll marry for luvv—an' we boäth on us thinks tha an ass.

## IV.

Seeä'd her to-daäy goä by—Saäint's-daäy—they was ringin the bells.  
 She's a beauty thou thinks—an' soä is scoors o' gells,  
 Them as' as munny an' all—wot's a beauty?—the flower as blaws.  
 But proputty, proputty sticks, an' proputty, proputty graws.

## V.

Do'ant be stunt: <sup>2</sup> taäke time; I knaws what maäkes tha sa mad.  
 Warn't I craäzed fur the lasses mysén when I wur a lad?  
 But I know'd a Quaäker feller as often 'as tow'd ma this:  
 'Doänt thou marry for munny, but goä wheer munny is!'

## VI.

An' I went wheer munny war: an' thy muther coom to 'and,  
 Wp' lots o' munny laaä'd by, an' a nicetish bit o' land.  
 Maäybe she warn't a beauty:—I niver giv it a thowt—  
 But warn't she as good to cuddle an' kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt?

## VII.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weänt 'a nowt when 'e's deä'd,  
 Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and addle <sup>3</sup> her breä'd:  
 Why? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an' weänt niver git bissen clear,  
 An' 'e maäde the bed as 'e ligs on afoor 'e coom'd to the shere.

## VIII.

'An thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi' lots o' Varsity debt,  
 Stook to his taäil they did, an' 'e 'ant got shut on 'em yet.  
 An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi' noän to lend 'im a shuvv,  
 Woorse nor a far-welter'd <sup>4</sup> yowe: fur, Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

<sup>1</sup> This week.<sup>2</sup> Obstinate.<sup>3</sup> Earn.<sup>4</sup> Or fow-welter'd,—said of a sheep lying on its back.

## IX.

Luvv? what's luvv? thou can luvv thy lass an' 'er munny too,  
 Maakin' 'em goä together as they've good right to do.  
 Could'n I luvv thy muther by cause o' 'er munny laaid by?  
 Naäy—fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor fur it: reäson why.

## X.

Ay an' thy muther says thou wants to marry the lass,  
 Cooms of a gentleman burn: an' we boäth on us thinks tha an ass.  
 Woä then, propuppy, wiltha?—an ass as near as mays nowt!<sup>1</sup>—  
 Woä then, wiltha? dangtha!—the bees is as fell as owt.<sup>2</sup>

## XI.

Bräk me a bit o' the esh for his 'eäd, lad, out o' the fence!  
 Gentleman burn! what's gentleman burn? is it shillius an' pence?  
 Propuppy, propuppy's ivrything 'ere, an', Sammy, I'm blest  
 If it isn't the saäme oop yonder, fur them as 'as it's the best.

## XII.

Tis'n them as 'as munny as bräkks into 'ouses an' steäls,  
 Them as 'as coäts to their backs an' taäkes their regular meäls.  
 Noä, but it's them as niver knaws wheer a meäl's to be 'ad.  
 Taäke my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad.

## XIII.

Them or thir feythers, tha sees, mun 'a beän a laäzy lot,  
 Fur work mun a 'gone to the gittin 'whiniver munny was got.  
 Feyther 'ad ammost nowt; leästways 'is munny was 'id.  
 But 'e tued an moil'd' 'issén deäd, an 'e died a good un, 'e did.

## XIV.

Looök thou theer wheer Wrigglesby beck cooms out by the 'ill!  
 Feyther run oop to the farm, an' I ruus oop to the mill;  
 An' I'll run oop to the brig, an' that thou'll live to see;  
 And if thou marries a good un I'll läve the land to thee.

## XV.

Thim's my noätions, Sammy, wheerby I means to stick;  
 But if thou marries a bad un, I'll läve the land to Dick.—  
 Coom oop, propuppy, propuppy—that's what I 'ears 'im saäy—  
 Propuppy, propuppy, propuppy—canter 'an canter awaäy.

<sup>1</sup> Makes nothing.<sup>2</sup> The flies are as fierce as anything.

## THE DAISY.

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

O LOVE, what hours were thine and mine,  
In lands of palm and southern pine ;  
In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,  
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbia show'd  
In ruin, by the mountain road ;  
How like a gem, beneath, the city  
Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell  
The torrent vineyard streaming fell  
To meet the sun and sunny waters,  
That only heaved with a summer swell.

What slender campanili grew  
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue ;  
Where, here and there, on sandy beaches  
A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove,  
Yet present in his natal grove,  
Now watching high on mountain cornice,  
And steering, now, from a purple cove,

Now pacing mute by ocean's rim ;  
Till, in a narrow street and dim,  
I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,  
And drank, and loyally drank to him.

Nor knew we well what pleased us  
most,  
Not the clipt palm of which they  
boast ;  
But distant color, happy hamlet,  
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen  
A light amid its olives green ;  
Or olive-hoary cape in ocean ;  
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flush'd the bed  
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread ;

And, crossing, oft we saw the  
glisten  
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and  
cold,  
Those niched shapes of noble mould,  
A princely people's awful princes,  
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,  
In those long galleries, were ours ;  
What drives about the fresh Cas-  
cinè,  
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each com-  
plete,  
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,  
Or palace, how the city glitter'd,  
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we crost the Lombard plain  
Remember what a plague of rain ;  
Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma ;  
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles  
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard  
piles ;  
Porch-pillars on the lion resting,  
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,  
The giant windows' blazon'd fires,  
The height, the space, the gloom,  
the glory !  
A mount of marble, a hundred spires !

I climb'd the roofs at break of day ;  
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.  
I stood among the silent statues,  
And stuated pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-  
fair,  
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there  
A thousand shadowy-pencill'd val-  
leys  
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last  
To Como ; shower and storm and  
blast

Had blown the lake beyond his  
limit,  
And all was flooded; and how we  
past

From Como, when the light was gray,  
And in my head, for half the day,  
The rich Virgilian rustic measure  
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-burthen music, kept,  
As on 'The Lariano crept  
To that fair port below the castle  
Of Queen Theodolind, where we  
slept;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake  
A cypress in the moonlight shake.  
The moonlight touching o'er a ter-  
race  
One tall Agavè above the lake.

What more? we took our last adieu,  
And up the snowy Splugen drew,  
But ere we reach'd the highest  
summit  
I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,  
And now it tells of Italy.  
O love, we two shall go no longer  
To lands of summer across the sea;

So dear a life your arms enfold  
Whose crying is a cry for gold:  
Yet here to-night in this dark city,  
When ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,  
This nurseling of another sky  
Still in the little book you lent me,  
And where you tenderly laid it by:

And I forgot the clouded Forth,  
The gloom that saddens Heaven and  
Earth,  
The bitter east, the misty summer  
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,  
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,  
Perchance, to dream you still beside  
me,  
My fancy fled to the South again.

TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.

COME, when no graver cares employ,  
Godfather, come and see your boy:  
Your presence will be sun in win-  
ter,  
Making the little one leap for joy.

For, being of that honest few,  
Who give the Fiend himself his due,  
Should eighty-thousand college-  
councils  
Thunder 'Anathema,' friend, at you;

Should all our churchmen foam in  
spite  
At you, so careful of the right,  
Yet one lay-hearth would give you  
welcome  
(Take it and come) to the Isle of  
Wight;

Where, far from noise and smoke of  
town,  
I watch the twilight falling brown  
All round a careless-order'd garden  
Close to the ridge of a noble down.

You'll have no scandal while you  
dine,  
But honest talk and wholesome wine,  
And only hear the magpie gossip  
Garrulous under a roof of pine:

For groves of pine on either hand,  
To break the blast of winter, stand:  
And further on, the hoary Channel  
Tumbles a billow on chalk and sand;

Where, if below the milky steep  
Some ship of battle slowly creep,  
And on thro' zones of light and  
shadow  
Glimmer away to the lonely deep,

We might discuss the Northern sin  
Which made a selfish war begin;  
Dispute the claims, arrange the  
chances;  
Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win:

Or whether war's avenging rod  
Shall lash all Europe into blood ;  
Till you should turn to dearer mat-  
ters,  
Dear to the man that is dear to God ;

How best to help the slender store,  
How mend the dwellings, of the poor ;  
How gain in life, as life advances,  
Valor and charity more and more.

Come, Maurice, come : the lawn as  
yet  
Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet ;  
But when the wreath of March has  
blossom'd,  
Crocus, anemone, violet,

Or later, pay one visit here,  
For those are few we hold as dear ;  
Nor pay but one, but come for  
many,  
Many and many a happy year.

*January, 1854.*

#### WILL

##### I.

O WELL for him whose will is strong !  
He suffers, but he will not suffer  
long ;  
He suffers, but he cannot suffer  
wrong :  
For him nor moves the loud world's  
random mock,  
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves con-  
found,  
Who seems a promontory of rock,  
That, compass'd round with turbulent  
sound,  
In middle ocean meets the surging  
shock.  
Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

##### II.

But ill for him who, bettering not  
with time,  
Corrupts the strength of heaven-de-  
scended Will,

And ever weaker grows thro' acted  
crime,  
Or seeming-genial venial fault,  
Recurring and suggesting still !  
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,  
Toiling in immeasurable sand,  
And o'er a weary sultry land,  
Far beneath a blazing vault,  
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous  
hill,  
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

#### IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.

ALL along the valley, stream that  
flashest white,  
Deepening thy voice with the deepen-  
ing of the night,  
All along the valley, where thy waters  
flow,  
I walk'd with one I loved two and  
thirty years ago.  
All along the valley, while I walk'd  
to-day,  
The two and thirty years were a mist  
that rolls away ;  
For all along the valley, down thy  
rocky bed,  
Thy living voice to me was as the  
voice of the dead,  
And all along the valley, by rock and  
cave and tree,  
The voice of the dead was a living  
voice to me.

#### IN THE GARDEN AT SWAINSTON.

NIGHTINGALES warbled without,  
Within was weeping for thee :  
Shadows of three dead men  
Walk'd in the walks with me,  
Shadows of three dead men and  
thou wast one of the three.

Nightingales sang in his woods :  
The Master was far away :  
Nightingales warbled and sang  
Of a passion that lasts but a day ;

Still in the house in his coffin the  
Prince of courtesy lay.

Two dead men have I known  
In courtesy like to thee :  
Two dead men have I loved  
With a love that ever will be :  
Three dead men have I loved and  
thou art last of the three.

#### THE FLOWER.

ONCE in a golden hour  
I cast to earth a seed.  
Up there came a flower,  
The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went  
Thro' my garden-bower,  
And muttering discontent  
Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall  
It wore a crown of light,  
But thieves from o'er the wall  
Stole the seed by night.

Sow'd it far and wide  
By every town and tower,  
Till all the people cried,  
'Splendid is the flower.'

Read my little fable :  
He that runs may read.  
Most can raise the flowers now,  
For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,  
And some are poor indeed ;  
And now again the people  
Call it but a weed.

#### REQUIESCAT.

FAIR is her cottage in its place,  
Where yon broad water sweetly  
slowly glides.  
It sees itself from thatch to base  
Dream in the sliding tides.

And fairer she, but ah how soon to die!  
Her quiet dream of life this hour  
may cease.  
Her peaceful being slowly passes by  
To some more perfect peace.

#### THE SAILOR BOY.

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,  
Shot o'er the seething harbor-bar,  
And reach'd the ship and caught the  
rope,  
And whistled to the morning star.

And while he whistled long and loud  
He heard a fierce mermaid cry,  
'O boy, tho' thou art young and  
proud,  
I see the place where thou wilt lie.

'The sands and yeasty surges mix  
In caves about the dreary bay,  
And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,  
And in thy heart the scrawl shall  
play.'

'Fool,' he answer'd, 'death is sure  
To those that stay and those that  
roam,  
But I will nevermore endure  
To sit with empty hands at home.

'My mother clings about my neck,  
My sisters crying, "Stay for shame;"  
My father raves of death and wreck,  
They are all to blame, they are all  
to blame.

'God help me! save I take my part  
Of danger on the roaring sea,  
A devil rises in my heart,  
Far worse than any death to me.'

#### THE ISLET.

'WHITHER, O whither, love, shall  
we go,  
For a score of sweet little summers  
or so?'  
The sweet little wife of the singer  
said,

On the day that follow'd the day she  
was wed,  
' Whither, O whither, love, shall we  
go?'

And the singer shaking his curly head  
Turn'd as he sat, and struck the keys  
There at his right with a sudden  
crash,

Singing, 'And shall it be over the seas  
With a crew that is neither rude nor  
rash,

But a bevy of Eroses apple-cheek'd,  
In a shallop of crystal ivory-beak'd,  
With a satin sail of a ruby glow,  
To a sweet little Eden on earth that  
I know,

A mountain islet pointed and peak'd;  
Waves on a diamond shingle dash,  
Cataract brooks to the ocean run,  
Fairly-delicate palaces shine  
Mixt with myrtle and clad with vine,  
And over stream'd and silvery-  
streak'd

With many a rivulet high against the  
Sun

The facets of the glorious mountain  
flash  
Above the valleys of palm and pine.'

' Thither, O thither, love, let us go.'

' No, no, no !  
For in all that exquisite isle, my  
dear,  
There is but one bird with a musi-  
cal throat,  
And his compass is but of a single  
note,  
That it makes one weary to hear.'

' Mock me not ! mock me not ! love,  
let us go.'

' No, love, no.  
For the bud ever breaks into bloom  
on the tree,  
And a storm never wakes on the  
lonely sea,  
And a worm is there in the lonely  
wood,  
That pierces the liver and blackens  
the blood ;  
And makes it a sorrow to be.'

## CHILD-SONGS.

I.

## THE CITY CHILD.

DAINTY little maiden, whither would  
you wander?

Whither from this pretty home, the  
home where mother dwells?

' Far and far away,' said the dainty  
little maiden,

' All among the gardens, auriculas,  
anemones,

Roses and lilies and Canterbury-  
bells.'

Dainty little maiden, whither would  
you wander?

Whither from this pretty house, this  
city-house of ours?

' Far and far away,' said the dainty  
little maiden,

' All among the meadows, the clover  
and the clematis,

Daisies and kingcups and honey-  
suckle-flowers.'

II.

## MINNIE AND WINNIE.

MINNIE and Winnie  
Slept in a shell.  
Sleep, little ladies !  
And they slept well.

Pink was the shell within,  
Silver without ;  
Sounds of the great sea  
Wander'd about.

Sleep, little ladies !  
Wake not soon !  
Echo on echo  
Dies to the moon.

Two bright stars  
Peep'd into the shell.  
' What are they dreaming of ?  
Who can tell ?'



Started a green linnnet  
Out of the croft ;  
Wake, little ladies,  
The sun is aloft !

### THE SPITEFUL LETTER.

HERE, it is here, the close of the year,  
And with it a spiteful letter.  
My name in song has done him much  
wrong,  
For himself has done much better.

O little bard, is your lot so hard,  
If men neglect your pages ?  
I think not much of yours or of mine,  
I hear the roll of the ages.

Rhymes and rhymes in the range of  
the times !  
Are mine for the moment stronger ?  
Yet hate me not, but abide your lot,  
I last but a moment longer.

This faded leaf, our names are as brief ;  
What room is left for a hater ?  
Yet the yellow leaf hates the greener  
leaf,  
For it hangs one moment later.

Greater than I—is that your cry ?  
And men will live to see it.  
Well—if it be so—so it is, you know ;  
And if it be so, so be it.

Brief, brief is a ummer leaf,  
But this is the time of hollies.  
O hollies and ivies and evergreens,  
How I hate the spites and the  
follies !

### LITERARY SQUABBLES.

AH God ! the petty fools of rhyme  
That shriek and sweat in pigmy wars  
Before the stony face of Time,  
And look'd at by the silent stars :

Who hate each other for a song,  
And do their little best to bite

And pinch their brethren in the throng,  
And scratch the very dead for spite :

And strain to make an inch of room  
For their sweet selves, and cannot  
hear  
The sullen Lethe rolling doom  
On them and theirs and all things  
here :

When one small touch of Charity  
Could lift them nearer God-like state  
Than if the crowded Orb should cry  
Like those who cried Diana great :

And I too, talk, and lose the touch  
I talk of. Surely, after all,  
The noblest answer unto such  
Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

### THE VICTIM.

#### I.

A PLAGUE upon the people fell,  
A famine after laid them low,  
Then thorpe and byre arose in fire,  
For on them brake the sudden foe ;  
So thick they died the people cried,  
' The Gods are moved against the  
land.'

The Priest in horror about his altar  
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand :  
' Help us from famine  
And plague and strife !  
What would you have of us ?  
Human life ?  
Were it our nearest,  
Were it our dearest,  
(Answer, O answer)  
We give you his life.'

#### II.

But still the foeman spoil'd and burn'd,  
And cattle died, and deer in wood,  
And bird in air, and fishes turn'd  
And whiten'd all the rolling flood ;  
And dead men lay all over the way,  
Or down in a furrow scathed with  
flame :  
And ever and aye the Priesthood  
moan'd,

Till at last it seem'd that an answer came.

'The King is happy  
In child and wife;  
Take you his dearest,  
Give us a life.'

## III.

The Priest went out by heath and hill;  
The King was hunting in the wild;  
They found the mother sitting still;  
She cast her arms about the child.  
The child was only eight summers old,  
His beauty still with his years increased,

His face was ruddy, his hair was gold,  
He seem'd a victim due to the priest.  
The Priest beheld him,  
And cried with joy,  
'The Gods have answer'd:  
We give them the boy.'

## IV.

The King return'd from out the wild,  
He bore but little game in hand;  
The mother said, 'They have taken  
the child

To spill his blood and heal the land:  
The land is sick, the people diseased,  
And blight and famine on all the lea:  
The holy Gods, they must be appeased,  
So I pray you tell the truth to me.

They have taken our son,  
They will have his life.  
Is *he* your dearest?  
Or I, the wife?'

## V.

The King bent low, with hand on brow;  
He stay'd his arms upon his knee:  
'O wife, what use to answer now?  
For now the Priest has judged for  
me.'

The King was shaken with holy fear;  
'The Gods,' he said, 'would have  
chosen well;  
Yet both are near, and both are dear  
And which the dearest I cannot tell!  
But the Priest was happy,  
His victim won:  
'We have his dearest,  
His only son!'

## VI.

The rites prepared, the victim bared,  
The knife uprising toward the blow  
To the altar-stone she sprang alone,  
'Me, not my darling, no!'

He caught her away with a sudden  
cry;

Suddenly from him brake his wife,  
And shrieking 'I am his dearest, I—  
I am his dearest!' rush'd on the  
knife.

And the Priest was happy,  
'O, Father Odin,  
We give you a life.

Which was his nearest?  
Who was his dearest?  
The Gods have answer'd  
We give them the wife!'

## WAGES.

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,  
Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea—  
Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong—  
Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no lover of glory she:  
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be.

The wages of sin is death: if the wages of Virtue be dust,  
Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly?  
She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,  
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky:  
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—  
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?

Is not the Vision He? tho' He be not that which He seems?  
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,  
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?

Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason why;  
For is He not all but that which has power to feel 'I am I'?

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou fulfillest thy doom  
Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—  
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us rejoice,  
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.

Law is God, say some: no God at all, says the fool;  
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see;  
But if we could see and hear, this Vision—were it not He?

THE VOICE AND THE PEAK.

I.

THE voice and the Peak  
Far over summit and lawn,  
The lone glow and long roar  
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones  
of dawn!

II.

All night have I heard the voice  
Rave over the rocky bar,  
But thou wert silent in heaven,  
Above thee glided the star.

III.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak,  
That standest high above all?  
'I am the voice of the Peak,  
I roar and rave for I fall.

IV.

'A thousand voices go  
To North, South, East, and West;  
They leave the heights and are trou-  
bled,  
And moan and sink to their rest.

V.

'The fields are fair beside them,  
The chestnut towers in his bloom;  
But they—they feel the desire of the  
deep—  
Fall, and follow their doom.

VI.

'The deep has power on the height,  
And the height has power on the  
deep;  
They are raised for ever and ever,  
And sink again into sleep.'

## VII.

Not raised for ever and ever,  
 But when their cycle is o'er,  
 The valley, the voice, the peak, the  
 star  
 Pass, and are found no more.

## VIII.

The Peak is high and flush'd  
 At his highest with sunrise fire ;  
 The Peak is high, and the stars are  
 high,  
 And the thought of a man is higher.

## IX.

A deep below the deep,  
 And a height beyond the height !  
 Our hearing is not hearing,  
 And our seeing is not sight.

## X.

The voice and the Peak  
 Far into heaven withdrawn,  
 The lone glow and long roar  
 Green-rushing from the rosy thrones  
 of dawn !

FLOWER in the crannied wall,  
 I pluck you out of the crannies,  
 I hold you here, root and all, in my  
 hand,

Little flower—but if I could under-  
 stand  
 What you are, root and all, and all in  
 all,  
 I should know what God and man is.

## A DEDICATION.

DEAR, near and true—no truer Time  
 himself  
 Can prove you, tho' he make you  
 evermore  
 Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life  
 Shoots to the fall—take this and pray  
 that he  
 Who wrote it, honoring your sweet  
 faith in him,  
 May trust himself; and after praise  
 and scorn,  
 As one who feels the immeasurable  
 world,  
 Attain the wise indifference of the  
 wise ;  
 And after Autumn past—if left to pass  
 His autumn into seeming-leafless  
 days—  
 Draw toward the long frost and long-  
 est night,  
 Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the  
 fruit  
 Which in our winter woodland looks  
 a flower.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The fruit of the Spindle-tree (*Eunony-  
 mus Europæus*).

## EXPERIMENTS.

## BOÏDICEA.

WHILE about the shore of Mona those Neronian legionaries  
 Burnt and broke the grove and altar of the Druid and Druidess,  
 Far in the East Boïdicéa, standing loftily charioted,  
 Mad and maddening all that heard her in her fierce volubility,  
 Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near the colony Câmudûne,  
 Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters o'er a wild confederacy.

' They that scorn the tribes and call us Britain's barbarous populaces,  
 Did they hear me, would they listen, did they pity me supplicating ?  
 Shall I heed them in their anguish ? shall I brook to be supplicated ?  
 Hear Icenian, Caticuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant !

Must their ever-ravening eagle's beak and talon annihilate us?  
 Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave it gorily quivering?  
 Bark an answer, Britain's raven! bark and blacken innumerable,  
 Blacken round the Roman carrion, make the carcass a skeleton,  
 Kite and kestrel, wolf and wolfkin, from the wilderness, wallow in it.  
 Till the face of Bel be brighten'd, 'Taranis be propitiated.  
 Lo their colony half-defended! lo their colony, C  mulod  ne!  
 There the horde of Roman robbers mock at a barbarous adversary.  
 There the hive of Roman liars worship an emperor-idiot.  
 Such is Rome, and this her deity: hear it, Spirit of C  siv  laun!

'Hear it, Gods! the Gods have heard it, O Icenian, O Coritanian!  
 Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd, Catiuchlanian, Trinobant.  
 These have told us all their anger in miraculous utterances,  
 Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a murmur heard a  rially,  
 Phantom sound of blows descending, moan of an enemy massacred,  
 Phantom wail of women and children, multitudinous agonies.  
 Bloodily flow'd the Tamesa rolling phantom bodies of horses and men;  
 Then a phantom colony smoulder'd on the reflux estuary;  
 Lastly yonder yester-even, suddenly giddily tottering—  
 There was one who watch'd and told me—down their statue of Victory fell.  
 Lo their precious Rman bantling, lo the colony C  mulod  ne,  
 Shall we teach it a Roman lesson? shall we care to be pitiful?  
 Shall we deal with it as an infant? shall we dandle it amorously?

'Hear Icenian, Catiuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!  
 While I roved about the forest, long and bitterly meditating,  
 There I heard them in the darkness, at the mystical ceremony,  
 Loosely robed in flying raiment, sang the terrible prophetesses,  
 "Fear not, isle of blowing woodland, isle of silvery parapets!  
 Tho' the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho' the gathering enemy narrow thee,  
 Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle, thou shalt be the mighty one yet!  
 Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine the deeds to be celebrated,  
 Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light and shadow illimitable,  
 Thine the lands of lasting summer, many-blossoming Paradises,  
 Thine the North and thine the South and thine the battle-thunder of God,"  
 So they chanted: how shall Britain light upon auguries happier?  
 So they chanted in the darkness, and there cometh a victory now.

'Hear Icenian, Catiuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!  
 Me the wife of rich Pras  tagus, me the lover of liberty,  
 Me they seized and me they tortured, me they lash'd and humiliated,  
 Me the sport of ribald Veterans, mine of ruffian violators!  
 See they sit, they hide their faces, miserable in ignominy!  
 Wherefore in me burns an anger, not by blood to be satiated.  
 Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the colony C  mulod  ne!  
 There they ruled, and thence they wasted all the flourishing territory,  
 Thither at their will they haled the yellow-ringed Britoness—  
 Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe, unexhausted, inexorable.  
 Shout Icenian, Catiuchlanian, shout Coritanian, Trinobant,  
 Till the victim hear within and yearn to hurry precipitously  
 Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind, like the smoke in a hurricane whirl'd.  
 Lo the colony, there they rioted in the city of C  nobeline!

There they drank in cups of emerald, there at tables of ebony lay,  
 Rolling on their purple couches in their tender effeminacy.  
 There they dwelt and there they rioted; there—there—they dwell no more.  
 Burst the gates, and burn the palaces, break the works of the statuary,  
 Take the hoary Roman head and shatter it, hold it abominable,  
 Cut the Roman boy to pieces in his lust and voluptuousness,  
 Lash the maiden into swooning, me they lash'd and humiliated,  
 Chop the breasts from off the mother, dash the brains of the little one out,  
 Up my Britons, on my chariot, on my chargers, trample them under us.'

So the Queen Boádhcéa, standing loftily charioted,  
 Brandishing in her hand a dart and rolling glances lioness-like,  
 Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters in her fierce volubility.  
 Till her people all around the royal chariot agitated,  
 Madly dash'd the darts together, writhing barbarous lineaments,  
 Made the noise of frosty woodlands, when they shiver in January,  
 Roar'd as when the roaring breakers boom and blanch on the precipices,  
 Yell'd as when the winds of winter tear an oak on a promontory.  
 So the silent colony hearing her tumultuous adversaries  
 Clash the darts and on the buckler beat with rapid unanimous hand,  
 Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all her pitiless avarice,  
 Till she felt the heart within her fall and flutter tremulously,  
 Then her pulses at the clamoring of her enemy fainted away.  
 Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyranny tyranny buds.  
 Ran the land with Roman slaughter, multitudinous agonies.  
 Perish'd many a maid and matron, many a valorous legionary,  
 Fell the colony, city, and citadel, London, Verulam, Cámulodúne.

## IN QUANTITY.

## ON TRANSLATIONS OF HOMER.

*Hexameters and Pentameters.*

THESE lame hexameters the strong-wing'd music of Homer!  
 No—but a most burlesque barbarous experiment.  
 When was a harsher sound ever heard, ye Muses, in England?  
 When did a frog coarser croak upon our Helicon?  
 Hexameters no worse than daring Germany gave us,  
 Barbarous experiment, barbarous hexameters.

## MILTON.

*Alcaics.*

O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D inventor of harmonies,  
 O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,  
 God-gifted organ-voice of England,  
 Milton, a name to resound for ages;

Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,  
 Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,  
 Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean  
 Rings to the roar of an angel onset—  
 Me rather all that bowery loneliness,  
 The brooks of Edeu mazy murmuring,

And bloom profuse and cedar arches  
 Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,  
 Where some refulgent sunset of India  
 Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean  
 isle,  
 And crimson-hued the stately palm-  
 woods  
 Whisper in odorous heights of  
 even.



*Hendecasyllabics.*

O YOU chorus of indolent reviewers,  
 Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,  
 Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem  
 All composed in a metre of Catullus,  
 All in quantity, careful of my motion,  
 Like the skater on ice that hardly  
 bears him,  
 Lest I fall unawares before the people,  
 Waking laughter in indolent reviewers.  
 Should I flounder awhile without a  
 tumble  
 Thro' this metrification of Catullus,  
 They should speak to me not without  
 a welcome,  
 All that chorus of indolent reviewers.  
 Hard, hard, hard is it, only not to  
 tumble,  
 So fantastical is the dainty metre.  
 Wherefore slight me not wholly, nor  
 believe me  
 Too presumptuous, indolent reviewers.  
 O blatant Magazines, regard me  
 rather—  
 Since I blush to belaud myself a moment—  
 As some rare little rose, a piece of in-  
 most  
 Horticultural art, or half coquette-  
 like  
 Maiden, not to be greeted unbenign-  
 ly.

SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION OF THE ILIAD IN BLANK VERSE.

So Hector spake; the Trojans roar'd  
 applause;  
 Then loosed their sweating horses  
 from the yoke,  
 And each beside his chariot bound his  
 own;  
 And oxen from the city, and goodly  
 sheep  
 In haste they drove, and honey-hearted  
 wine  
 And bread from out the houses  
 brought, and heap'd  
 Their firewood, and the winds from off  
 the plain  
 Roll'd the rich vapor far into the  
 heaven.  
 And these all night upon the bridge<sup>1</sup>  
 of war  
 Sat glorying; many a fire before them  
 blazed:  
 As when in heaven the stars about the  
 moon  
 Look beautiful, when all the winds are  
 laid,  
 And every height comes out, and jut-  
 ting peak  
 And valley, and the immeasurable  
 heavens  
 Break open to their highest, and all  
 the stars  
 Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in  
 his heart:  
 So many a fire between the ships and  
 stream  
 Of Xanthus blazed before the towers  
 of Troy,  
 A thousand on the plain; and close by  
 each  
 Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;  
 And eating hoary grain and pulse the  
 steeds  
 Fixt by their cars, waited the golden  
 dawn. *Iliad* VIII. 542-561.

<sup>1</sup> Or, ridge.



## THE WINDOW;

### OR, THE SONG OF THE WRENS.

Four years ago Mr. Sullivan requested me to write a little song-cycle, German fashion, for him to exercise his art upon. He had been very successful in setting such old songs as 'Orpheus with his lute,' and I dressed up for him, partly in the old style, a puppet, whose almost only merit is, perhaps, that it can dance to Mr. Sullivan's instrument. I am sorry that my four-year-old puppet should have to dance at all in the dark shadow of these days; but the music is now completed, and I am bound by my promise.

*December, 1870.*

A. TENNYSON.

### THE WINDOW.

#### ON THE HILL.

THE lights and shadows fly!  
Yonder it brightens and darkens down  
on the plain.

A jewel, a jewel dear to a lover's  
eye!

Oh is it the brook, or a pool, or her  
window pane,  
When the winds are up in the  
morning?

Clouds that are racing above,  
And winds and lights and shadows  
that cannot be still,

All running on one way to the home  
of my love,

You are all running on, and I stand  
on the slope of the hill,  
And the winds are up in the  
morning!

Follow, follow the chase!

And my thoughts are as quick and as  
quick, ever on, on, on.

O lights, are you flying over her  
sweet little face?

And my heart is there before you are  
come, and gone,

When the winds are up in the  
morning!

Follow them down the slope!

And I follow them down to the win-  
dow-pane of my dear,

And it brightens and darkens and  
brightens like my hope,

And it darkens and brightens and  
darkens like my fear,  
And the winds are up in the  
morning.

#### AT THE WINDOW.

Vine, vine and eglantine,  
Clasp her window, trail and twine!  
Rose, rose and clematis,  
Trail and twine and clasp and kiss,  
Kiss, kiss; and make her a bower  
All of flowers, and drop me a  
flower,  
Drop me a flower.

Vine, vine and eglantine,  
Cannot a flower, a flower be mine?  
Rose, rose and clematis,  
Drop me a flower, a flower, to kiss,  
Kiss, kiss—and out of her bower  
All of flowers, a flower, a flower,  
Dropt, a flower.

#### GONE.

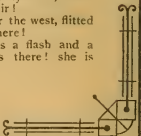

Gone!  
Gone, till the end of the year,  
Gone, and the light gone with her,  
and left me in shadow here!

Gone—fitted away,  
Taken the stars from the night and  
the sun from the day!

Gone, and a cloud in my heart, and a  
storm in the air!

Flown to the east or the west, fitted  
I know not where!

Down in the south is a flash and a  
groan: she is there! she is  
there!





WINTER.

The frost is here,  
And fuel is dear,  
And woods are sear,  
And fires burn clear,  
And frost is here  
And has bitten the heel of the going  
year.

Bite, frost, bite!  
You roll up away from the light  
The blue wood-louse, and the plump  
dormouse,  
And the bees are still'd, and the flies  
are kill'd,  
And you bite far into the heart of the  
house,  
But not into mine.

Bite, frost, bite!  
The woods are all the searer,  
The fuel is all the dearer,  
The fires are all the clearer,  
My spring is all the nearer,  
You have bitten into the heart of the  
earth,  
But not into mine.

SPRING.

Birds' love and birds' song  
Flying here and there,  
Birds' song and birds' love,  
And you with gold for hair!  
Birds' song and birds' love,  
Passing with the weather,  
Men's song and men's love,  
To love once and for ever.

Men's love and bird's love,  
And women's love and men's!  
And you my wren with a crown of  
gold,  
You my queen of the wrens!  
You the queen of the wrens—  
We'll be birds of a feather,  
I'll be King of the Queen of the  
wrens,  
And all in a nest together.

THE LETTER.

Where is another sweet as my sweet,  
Fine of the fine, and shy of the shy?  
Fine little hands, fine little feet—  
Dewy blue eye.  
Shall I write to her? shall I go?  
Ask her to marry me by and by?  
Somebody said that she'd say no;  
Somebody knows that she'll say ay!

Ay or no, if ask'd to her face?  
Ay or no, from shy of the shy?  
Go, little letter, apace, apace,  
Fly;  
Fly to the light in the valley below—  
Tell my wish to her dewy blue eye:  
Somebody said that she'd say no;  
Somebody knows that she'll say ay!

NO ANSWER.

The mist and the rain, the mist and  
the rain!  
Is it ay or no? is it ay or no?  
And never a glimpse of her window  
pane!  
And I may die but the grass will  
grow,  
And the grass will grow when I am  
gone,  
And the wet west wind and the world  
will go on.  
Ay is the song of the wedded spheres,  
No is trouble and cloud and storm,  
Ay is life for a hundred years,  
No will push me down to the  
worm,  
And when I am there and dead and  
gone,  
The wet west wind and the world  
will go on.

The wind and the wet, the wind and  
the wet!  
Wet west wind how you blow, you  
blow!  
And never a line from my lady yet!  
Is it ay or no? is it ay or no?  
Blow then, blow, and when I am gone,  
The wet west wind and the world  
may go on.

## NO ANSWER.

Winds are loud and you are dumb,  
 Take my love, for love will come,  
 Love will come but once a life.  
 Winds are loud and winds will pass !  
 Spring is here with leaf and grass :  
 Take my love and be my wife.  
 After-loves of maids and men  
 Are but dainties drest again :  
 Love me now, you'll love me then :  
 Love can love but once a life.

## THE ANSWER.

Two little hands that meet,  
 Claspt on her seal, my sweet !  
 Must I take you and break you,  
 Two little hands that meet ?  
 I must take you, and break you,  
 And loving hands must part—  
 Take, take—break, break—  
 Break—you may break my heart.  
 Faint heart never won—  
 Break, break, and all's done.

## AY.

Be merry, all birds, to-day,  
 Be merry on earth as you never  
 were merry before,  
 Be merry in heaven, O larks, and far  
 away,  
 And merry for ever and ever, and  
 one day more.  
 Why ?  
 For it's easy to find a rhyme.  
 Look, look, how he flits,  
 The fire-crown'd king of the wrens,  
 from out of the pine !  
 Look how they tumble the blossom,  
 the mad little tits !  
 'Cuck-oo ! Cuck-oo !' was ever a  
 May so fine ?  
 Why ?  
 For it's easy to find a rhyme.  
 O merry the linnet and dove,  
 And swallow and sparrow and  
 thristle, and have your desire !  
 O merry my heart, you have gotten  
 the wings of love,  
 And flit like the king of the wrens  
 with a crown of fire.  
 Why ?  
 For it's ay ay, ay ay.

## WHEN.

Sun comes, moon comes,  
 Time slips away.  
 Sun sets, moon sets,  
 Love, fix a day.

'A year hence, a year hence.'  
 'We shall both be gray.'  
 'A month hence, a month hence.'  
 'Far, far away.'

'A week hence, a week hence.'  
 'Ah, the long delay.'  
 'Wait a little, wait a little,  
 You shall fix a day.'

'To-morrow, love, to-morrow,  
 And that's an age away.'  
 Blaze upon her window, sun,  
 And honor all the day.

## MARRIAGE MORNING.

Light, so low upon earth,  
 You send a flash to the sun.  
 Here is the golden close of love,  
 All my wooing is done.  
 Oh, the woods and the meadows,  
 Woods where we hid from the wet,  
 Stiles where we stay'd to be kind,  
 Meadows in which we met !  
 Light, so low in the vale  
 You flash and lighten afar,  
 For this is the golden morning of  
 love,  
 And you are his morning star.  
 Flash, I am coming, I come,  
 By meadow and stile and wood,  
 Oh, lighten into my eyes and my  
 heart,  
 Into my heart and my blood !

Heart, are you great enough  
 For a love that never tires ?  
 O heart, are you great enough for  
 love ?  
 I have heard of thorns and briars.  
 Over the thorns and briars,  
 Over the meadows and stiles,  
 Over the world to the end of it  
 Flash for a million miles.



## IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.

OBITU MDCCLXXXIII.

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we, that have not seen  
thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove ;

Thine are these orbs of light and  
shade ;  
Thou madest Life in man and  
brute ;  
Thou madest Death ; and lo, thy  
foot  
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust :  
Thou madest man, he knows not  
why,  
He thinks he was not made to die ;  
And thou hast made him : thou art  
just.

Thou seemest human and divine,  
The highest, holiest manhood,  
thou :  
Our wills are ours, we know not  
how ;  
Our wills are ours, to make them  
thine.

Our little systems have their day ;  
They have their day and cease to  
be :  
They are but broken lights of  
thee,  
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith : we cannot know ;  
For knowledge is of things we  
see ;  
And yet we trust it comes from  
thee,  
A beam in darkness : let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to  
more,  
But more of reverence in us dwell ;  
That mind and soul, according  
well,  
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight ;  
We mock thee when we do not  
fear :  
But help thy foolish ones to bear ;  
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me ;  
What seem'd my worth since I  
began ;  
For merit lives from man to  
man,  
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,  
Thy creature, whom I found so  
fair.  
I trust he lives in thee, and there  
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering  
cries,  
Confusions of a wasted youth ;  
Forgive them where they fail in  
truth,  
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

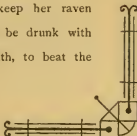
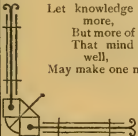
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### I.

I HELD it truth, with him who sings  
To one clear harp in divers tones,  
That men may rise on stepping-  
stones  
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years  
And find in loss a gain to match ?  
Or reach a hand thro' time to  
catch  
The far-off interest of tears ?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be  
drown'd,  
Let darkness keep her raven  
gloss :  
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with  
loss,  
To dance with death, to beat the  
ground,



Than that the victor Hours should  
 scorn  
 The long result of love, and boast,  
 'Behold the man that loved and  
 lost,  
 But all he was is overworn.'

## II.

Old Yew, which graspest at the stones  
 That name the under-lying dead,  
 Thy fibres net the dreamless  
 head,  
 Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again,  
 And bring the firstling to the  
 flock ;  
 And in the dusk of thee, the clock  
 Beats out the little lives of men.

O not for thee the glow, the bloom,  
 Who changest not in any gale,  
 Nor branding summer suns avail  
 To touch thy thousand years of gloom :

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,  
 Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,  
 I seem to fail from out my blood  
 And grow incorporate into thee.

## III.

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,  
 O Priestess in the vaults of  
 Death,  
 O sweet and bitter in a breath,  
 What whispers from thy lying lip ?

'The stars,' she whispers, blindly  
 run ;  
 A web is wov'n across the sky ;  
 From out waste places comes a  
 cry,  
 And murmurs from the dying sun :

'And all the phantom. Nature,  
 stands—  
 With all the music in her tone,  
 A hollow echo of my own,—  
 A hollow form with empty hands.'

And shall I take a thing so blind,  
 Embrace her as my natural good ;

Or crush her, like a vice of blood,  
 Upon the threshold of the mind ?

## IV.

To Sleep I give my powers away ;  
 My will is bondsman to the dark ;  
 I sit within a helmless bark,  
 And with my heart I muse and say :

O heart, how fares it with thee now,  
 That thou should'st fail from thy  
 desire,  
 Who scarcely darest to inquire,  
 'What is it makes me beat so low ?'

Something it is which thou hast lost,  
 Some pleasure from thine early  
 years.  
 Break, thou deep vase of chilling  
 tears,  
 That grief hath shaken into frost !

Such clouds of nameless trouble cross  
 All night below the darken'd  
 eyes ;  
 With morning wakes the will,  
 and cries,  
 'Thou shalt not be the fool of loss.'

## V.

I sometimes hold it half a sin  
 To put in words the grief I feel ;  
 For words, like Nature, half  
 reveal  
 And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,  
 A use in measured language lies ;  
 The sad mechanic exercise,  
 Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,  
 Like coarsest clothes against the  
 cold :  
 But that large grief which these  
 enfold  
 Is given in outline and no more.

## VI.

One writes, that 'Other friends  
 remain,'

That 'Loss is common to the  
race'—  
And common is the common-  
place,  
And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make  
My own less bitter, rather more:  
Too common! Never morning  
wore  
To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,  
Who pledgest now thy gallant  
son;  
A shot, ere half thy draught be  
done,  
Hath still'd the life that beat from  
thee.

O mother, praying God will save  
Thy sailor,—while thy head is  
bow'd,  
His heavy-shotted hammock-  
shroud  
Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought  
At that last hour to please him  
well;  
Who mused on all I had to tell,  
And something written, something  
thought;

Expecting still his advent home;  
And ever met him on his way  
With wishes, thinking, 'here to-  
day,'  
Or 'here to-morrow will he come.'

O somewhere, meek, unconscious  
dove,  
That sittest ranging golden hair;  
And glad to find thyself so fair,  
Poor child, that waitest for thy love!

For now her father's chimney glows  
In expectation of a guest;  
And thinking 'this will please  
him best,'  
She takes a riband or a rose;

For he will see them on to-night;  
And with the thought her color  
burns;  
And, having left the glass, she  
turns  
Once more to set a ringlet right;

And, even when she turn'd, the curse  
Had fallen, and her future Lord  
Was drown'd in passing thro' the  
ford,  
Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

O what to her shall be the end?  
And what to me remains of good?  
To her, perpetual maidenhood,  
And unto me no second friend.

## VII.

Dark house, by which once more I  
stand  
Here in the long unlovely street,  
Doors, where my heart was used  
to beat  
So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clasp'd no more—  
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,  
And like a guilty thing I creep  
At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here; but far away  
The noise of life begins again,  
And ghastly thro' the drizzling  
rain  
On the bald street breaks the blank  
day.

## VIII.

A happy lover who has come  
To look on her that loves him  
well,  
Who 'lights and rings the gate-  
way bell,  
And learns her gone and far from  
home;

He saddens, all the magic light  
Dies off at once from bower and  
hall,  
And all the place is dark, and all  
The chambers emptied of delight:

So find I every pleasant spot  
 In which we two were wont to  
 meet,  
 The field, the chamber and the  
 street,  
 For all is dark where thou art not.

Yet as that other, wandering there  
 In those deserted walks, may find  
 A flower beat with rain and wind,  
 Which once she foster'd up with care ;

So seems it in my deep regret,  
 O my forsaken heart, with thee  
 And this poor flower of poesy  
 Which little cared for fades not yet.

But since it pleased a vanish'd eye,  
 I go to plant it on his tomb,  
 That if it can it there may bloom,  
 Or dying, there at least may die.

## IX.

Fair ship, that from the Italian shore  
 Sail'st the placid ocean-plains  
 With my lost Arthur's loved re-  
 mains,  
 Spread thy full wings, and waft him  
 o'er.

So draw him home to those that  
 mourn  
 In vain ; a favorable speed  
 Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead  
 Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex  
 Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor,  
 bright

As our pure love, thro' early light  
 Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above ;  
 Sleep, gentle heavens, before the  
 prow ;  
 Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps  
 now,

My friend, the brother of my love ;

My Arthur, whom I shall not see  
 Till all my widow'd race be run ;  
 Dear as the mother to the son,  
 More than my brothers are to me.

## X.

I hear the noise about thy keel ;  
 I hear the bell struck in the night :  
 I see the cabin-window bright ;  
 I see the sailor at the wheel.

Thou bring'st the sailor to his wife,  
 And travell'd men from foreign  
 lands ;  
 And letters unto trembling hands ;  
 And, thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.

So bring him : we have idle dreams :  
 This look of quiet flatters thus  
 Our home-bred fancies : O to us,  
 The fools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover sod,  
 That takes the sunshine and the  
 rains,  
 Or where the kneeling hamlet  
 drains

The chalice of the grapes of God ;

Than if with thee the roaring wells  
 Should gulf him fathom-deep in  
 brine ;  
 And hands so often clasp'd in  
 mine,  
 Should toss with tangle and with  
 shells.

## XI.

Calm is the morn without a sound,  
 Calm as to suit a calmer grief,  
 And only thro' the faded leaf  
 The chestnut pattering to the ground :

Calm and deep peace on this high  
 wold,  
 And on these dews that drench  
 the furze,  
 And all the silvery gossamers  
 That twinkle into green and gold :

Calm and still light on yon great plain  
 That sweeps with all its autumn  
 bowers,  
 And crowded farms and lessening  
 towers,  
 To mingle with the bounding main :

Calm and deep peace in this wide  
air,  
These leaves that redden to the  
fall;  
And in my heart, if calm at all,  
If any calm, a calm despair:

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,  
And waves that sway themselves  
in rest,  
And dead calm in that noble  
breast  
Which heaves but with the heaving  
deep.

## XII.

Lo, as a dove when up she springs  
To bear thro' Heaven a tale of  
woe,  
Some dolorous message knit be-  
low  
The wild pulsation of her wings;

Like her I go; I cannot stay;  
I leave this mortal ark behind,  
A weight of nerves without a  
mind,  
And leave the cliffs, and haste away

O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large,  
And reach the glow of southern  
skies,  
And see the sails at distance rise,  
And linger weeping on the marge,

And saying; 'Comes he thus, my  
friend?  
Is this the end of all my care?'  
And circle moaning in the air:  
'Is this the end? Is this the end?'

And forward dart again, and play  
About the prow, and back return  
To where the body sits, and learn  
That I have been an hour away.

## XIII.

Tears of the widower, when he sees  
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,  
And moves his doubtful arms,  
and feels  
Her place is empty, fall like these;

Which weep a loss forever new,  
A void where heart on heart re-  
posed;  
And, where warm hands have  
prest and closed,  
Silence, till I be silent too.

Which weep the comrade of my  
choice,  
An awful thought, a life removed,  
The human-hearted man I loved,  
A Spirit, not a breathing voice.

Come Time, and teach me, many  
years,  
I do not suffer in a dream;  
For now so strange do these  
things seem,  
Mine eyes have leisure for their tears;

My fancies time to rise on wing,  
And glance about the approach-  
ing sails,  
As tho' they brought but mer-  
chants' bales,  
And not the burthen that they bring.

## XIV.

If one should bring me this report,  
That thou hadst touch'd the land  
to-day,  
And I went down unto the quay,  
And found thee lying in the port;

And standing, muffled round with woe,  
Should see thy passengers in rank  
Come stepping lightly down the  
plank,  
And beckoning unto those they know;

And if along with these should come  
The man I held as half-divine;  
Should strike a sudden hand in  
mine,  
And ask a thousand things of home;

And I should tell him all my pain,  
And how my life had droop'd of  
late,  
And he should sorrow o'er my  
state  
And marvel what possess'd my brain;

And I perceived no touch of change,  
No hint of death in all his frame,  
But found him all in all the same,  
I should not feel it to be strange.

## xv.

To-night the winds begin to rise  
And roar from yonder dropping  
day:

The last red leaf is whirl'd away,  
The rooks are blown about the skies;

The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,  
The cattle huddled on the lea;  
And wildly dash'd on tower and  
tree

The sunbeam strikes along the world:

And but for fancies, which aver  
That all thy motions gently pass  
Athwart a plane of molten glass,  
I scarce could brook the strain and  
stir

That makes the barren branches loud;  
And but for fear it is not so,  
The wild unrest that lives in woe  
Would dote and pore on yonder cloud

That rises upward always higher,  
And onward drags a laboring  
breast,  
And topples round the dreary west,  
A looming bastion fringed with fire.

## xvi.

What words are these have fall'n  
from me?  
Can calm despair and wild un-  
rest

Be tenants of a single breast,  
Or sorrow such a changeling be?

Or doth she only seem to take  
The touch of change in calm or  
storm;

But knows no more of transient  
form  
In her deep self, than some dead lake

That holds the shadow of a lark  
Hung in the shadow of a heaven?

Or has the shock, so harshly given,  
Confused me like the unhappy bark

That strikes by night a craggy shelf,  
And staggers blindly ere she sink?  
And stunn'd me from my power  
to think

And all my knowledge of myself;

And made me that delirious man  
Whose fancy fuses old and new,  
And flashes into false and true,  
And mingles all without a plan?

## xvii.

Thou comest, much wept for: such a  
breeze  
Compell'd thy canvas, and my  
prayer  
Was as the whisper of an air  
To breathe thee over lonely seas.

For I in spirit saw thee move  
Thro' circles of the bounding sky,  
Week after week: the days go  
by:  
Come quick, thou bringest all I love.

Henceforth, wherever thou may'st  
roam,  
My blessing, like a line of light,  
Is on the waters day and night,  
And like a beacon guards thee home.

So may whatever tempest mars  
Mid-ocean, spare thee, sacred  
bark;  
And balmy drops in summer dark  
Slide from the bosom of the stars.

So kind an office hath been done,  
Such precious relics brought by  
thee;  
The dust of him I shall not see  
Till all my widow'd race be run.

## xviii.

'Tis well; 'tis something; we may  
stand  
Where he in English earth is laid,  
And from his ashes may be made  
The violet of his native land.



'Tis little ; but it looks in truth  
As if the quiet bones were blest  
Among familiar names to rest  
And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and bear the  
head  
That sleeps or wears the mask  
of sleep,  
And come, whatever loves to  
weep,  
And hear the ritual of the dead.

Ah yet, ev'n yet, if this might be,  
I, falling on his faithful heart,  
Would breathing thro' his lips  
impart  
The life that almost dies in me ;

That dies not, but endures with pain,  
And slowly forms the firmer  
mind,  
Treasuring the look it cannot  
find,  
The words that are not heard again.

XIX.

The Danube to the Severn gave  
The darken'd heart that beat no  
more ;  
They laid him by the pleasant  
shore,  
And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills ;  
The salt sea-water passes by,  
And hushes half the babbling  
Wye,  
And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,  
And hush'd my deepest grief of  
all,  
When fill'd with tears that can-  
not fall,  
I brim with sorrow drowning song

The tide flows down, the wave again  
Is vocal in its wooded walls ;  
My deeper anguish also falls,  
And I can speak a little then.

XX.

The lesser griefs that may be said,  
That breathe a thousand tender  
vows,  
Are but as servants in a house  
Where lies the master newly dead ;

Who speak their feeling as it is,  
And weep the 'fainness from the  
mind :  
'It will be hard,' they say, 'to find  
Another service such as this.'

My lighter moods are like to these,  
That out of words a comfort win ;  
But there are other griefs within,  
And tears that at their fountain  
freeze ;

For by the hearth the children sit  
Cold in that atmosphere of Death,  
And scarce endure to draw the  
breath,  
Or like to noiseless phantoms flit :

But open converse is there none,  
So much the vital spirits sink  
To see the vacant chair, and  
think,  
'How good! how kind! and he is  
gone.'

XXI.

I sing to him that rests below,  
And, since the grasses round me  
wave,  
I take the grasses of the grave,  
And make them pipes whereon to  
blow.

The traveller hears me now and then,  
And sometimes harshly will he  
speak :  
'This fellow would make weak-  
ness weak,  
And melt the waxen hearts of men.'

Another answers, 'Let him be,  
He loves to make parade of pain,  
That with his piping he may  
gain  
The praise that comes to constancy.'

A third is wroth : ' Is this an hour  
For private sorrow's barren song,  
When more and more the people  
through  
The chairs and thrones of civil  
power ?

' A time to sicken and to swoon,  
When Science reaches forth her  
arms  
To feel from world to world, and  
charms  
Her secret from the latest moon ? '

Behold, ye speak an idle thing :  
Ye never knew the sacred dust :  
I do but sing because I must,  
And pipe but as the linnets sing :

And one is glad ; her note is gay,  
For now her little ones have  
ranged ;  
And one is sad ; her note is  
changed,  
Because her brood is stol'n away.

## XXII.

The path by which we twain did go,  
Which led by tracts that pleased  
us well,  
Thro' four sweet years arose and  
fell,  
From flower to flower, from snow to  
snow :

And we with singing cheer'd the way,  
And, crown'd with all the season  
lent,  
From April on to April went,  
And glad at heart from May to May :

But where the path we walk'd began  
To slant the fifth autumnal slope,  
As we descended following Hope,  
There sat the Shadow fear'd of man ;

Who broke our fair companionship,  
And spread his mantle dark and  
cold,  
And wrapt thee formless in the  
fold,  
And dull'd the murmur on thy lip,

And bore thee where I could not see  
Nor follow, tho' I walk in haste,  
And think, that somewhere in  
the waste  
The Shadow sits and waits for me.

## XXIII.

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,  
Or breaking into song by fits,  
Alone, alone, to where he sits,  
The Shadow cloak'd from head to foot,

Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,  
I wander, often falling lame,  
And looking back to whence I  
came,  
Or on to where the pathway leads ;

And crying, How changed from  
where it ran  
Thro' lands where not a leaf was  
dumb ;  
But all the lavish hills would hum  
The murmur of a happy Pan :

When each by turns was guide to  
each,  
And Fancy light from Fancy  
caught,  
And Thought leapt out to wed with  
Thought  
Ere Thought could wed itself with  
Speech ;

And all we met was fair and good,  
And all was good that Time  
could bring,  
And all the secret of the Spring  
Moved in the chambers of the blood ;

And many an old philosophy  
On Argive heights divinely sang,  
And round us all the thicket rang  
To many a flute of Arcady.

## XXIV.

And was the day of my delight  
As pure and perfect as I say ?  
The very source and fount of  
Day  
Is dash'd with wandering isles of  
night.

If all was good and fair we met,  
This earth had been the Paradise  
It never look'd to human eyes  
Since our first Sun arose and set.

And is it that the haze of grief  
Makes former gladness loom so  
great?

The lowness of the present state,  
That sets the past in this relief?

Or that the past will always win  
A glory from its being far;  
And orb into the perfect star  
We saw not, when we moved therein?

## XXV.

I know that this was Life,—the track  
Whereon with equal feet we  
fared;  
And then, as now, the day pre-  
pared  
The daily burden for the back.

But this it was that made me move  
As light as carrier-birds in air;  
I love the weight I had to bear,  
Because it needed help of Love:

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,  
When mighty Love would cleave  
in twain  
The lading of a single pain,  
And part it, giving half to him.

## XXVI.

Still onward winds the dreary way;  
I with it; for I long to prove  
No lapse of moons can canker  
Love,

Whatever fickle tongues may say.

And if that eye which watches guilt  
And godness, and hath power to  
see

Within the green the moulder'd  
tree,  
And towers fall'n as soon as built—

Oh, if indeed that eye foresee  
Or see (in Him is no before)  
In more of life true life no more  
And Love the indifference to be,

Then might I find, ere yet the morn  
Breaks hither over Indian seas,  
That Shadow waiting with the  
keys,  
To shroud me from my proper scorn.

## XXVII.

I envy not in any moods  
The captive void of noble rage,  
The linnet born within the cage,  
That never knew the summer woods:

I envy not the beast that takes  
His license in the field of time,  
Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,  
To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,  
The heart that never plighted  
troth  
But stagnates in the weeds of  
sloth;  
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;  
I feel it, when I sorrow most;  
'Tis better to have loved and lost  
Than never to have loved at all.

## XXVIII.

The time draws near the birth of  
Christ:  
The moon is hid; the night is  
still;

The Christmas bells from hill to hill  
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,  
From far and near, on mead and  
moor,  
Swell out and fail, as if a door  
Were shut between me and the  
sound:

Each voice four changes on the wind,  
That now dilate, and now decrease,  
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and  
peace,  
Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,  
I almost wish'd no more to wake,

And that my hold on life would  
break  
Before I heard those bells again :

But they my troubled spirit rule,  
For they controll'd me when a  
boy ;

They bring me sorrow touch'd  
with joy,  
The merry merry bells of Yule.

## XXIX.

With such compelling cause to grieve  
As daily vexes household peace,  
And chains regret to his decease,  
How dare we keep our Christmas-eve ;

Which brings no more a welcome  
guest  
To enrich the threshold of the  
night  
With shower'd largess of delight  
In dance and song and game and  
jest ?

Yet go, and while the holly boughs  
Entwine the cold baptismal font,  
Make one wreath more for Use  
and Wont,  
That guard the portals of the house ;

Old sisters of a day gone by,  
Gray nurses, loving nothing new ;  
Why should they miss their  
yearly due  
Before their time ? They too will  
die.

## XXX.

With trembling fingers did we weave  
The holly round the Christmas  
hearth ;  
A rainy cloud possess'd the  
earth,  
And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall  
We gambol'd, making vain  
pretence  
Of gladness, with an awful sense  
Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused : the winds were in the  
beech :

We heard them sweep the winter  
land ;  
And in a circle hand-in-hand  
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang ;  
We sung, tho' every eye was dim,  
A merry song we sang with him  
Last year : impetuously we sang :

We ceased : a gentler feeling crept  
Upon us : surely rest is meet :  
'They rest,' we said, 'their sleep  
is sweet,'  
And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range ;  
Once more we sang : 'They do  
not die  
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,  
Nor change to us, although they  
change ;

'Rapt from the fickle and the frail  
With gather'd power, yet the  
same,  
Pierces the keen seraphic flame  
From orb to orb, from veil to veil.'

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,  
Draw forth the cheerful day from  
night :  
O Father, touch the east, and  
light  
The light that shone when Hope was  
born.

## XXXI.

When Lazarus left his charnel-cave,  
And home to Mary's house  
return'd,  
Was this demanded—if he  
yearn'd  
To hear her weeping by his grave ?

'Where wert thou, brother, those  
four days ?'  
There lives nore cord of reply,  
Which telling what it is to die  
Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbors met,  
The streets were fill'd with  
joyful sound,  
A solemn gladness even crown'd  
The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!  
The rest remaineth unreveal'd;  
He told it not; or something  
seal'd  
The lips of that Evangelist.

## XXXII.

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,  
Nor other thought her mind  
admits  
But, he was dead, and there he  
sits,  
And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede  
All other, when her ardent gaze  
Roves from the living brother's  
face,  
And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,  
Borne down by gladness so com-  
plete,  
She bows, she bathes the Sa-  
viour's feet  
With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful  
prayers,  
Whose loves in higher love  
endure;  
What souls possess themselves  
so pure,  
Or is there blessedness like theirs?

## XXXIII.

O thou that after toil and storm  
Mayst seem to have reach'd a  
purer air,  
Whose faith has centre every-  
where,  
Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,  
Her early Heaven, her happy  
views;

Nor thou with shadow'd hint  
confuse  
A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,  
Her hands are quicker unto good:  
Oh, sacred be the flesh and  
blood  
To which she links a truth divine!

See thou, that countest reason ripe  
In holding by the law within,  
Thou fail not in a world of sin,  
And ev'n for want of such a type.

## XXXIV.

My own dim life should teach me this,  
That life shall live for evermore,  
Else earth is darkness at the  
core,  
And dust and ashes all that is;

This round of green, this orb of  
flame,  
Fantastic beauty; such as lurks  
In some wild Poet, when he  
works  
Without a conscience or an aim.

What then were God to such as I?  
'Twere hardly worth my while to  
choose  
Of things all mortal, or to use  
A little patience ere I die;

'Twere best at once to sink to peace,  
Like birds the charming serpent  
draws,  
To drop head-foremost in the  
jaws  
Of vacant darkness and to cease.

## XXXV.

Yet if some voice that man could trust  
Should murmur from the narrow  
house,  
'The cheeks drop in; the body  
bows;  
Man dies: nor is there hope in dust:'

Might I not say? 'Yet even here,  
But for one hour, O Love, I strive

To keep so sweet a thing alive :  
But I should turn mine ears and hear

The moanings of the homeless sea,  
The sound of streams that swift  
or slow  
Draw down Æonian hills, and sow  
The dust of continents to be ;

And Love would answer with a sigh,  
'The sound of that forgetful shore  
Will change my sweetness more  
and more,  
Half-dead to know that I shall die.'

O me, what profits it to put  
An idle case ? If Death were seen  
At first as Death, Love had not  
been,  
Or been in narrowest working shut,

Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,  
Or in his coarsest Satyr-shape  
Had bruised the herb and crush'd  
the grape,  
And bask'd and batten'd in the woods.

## XXXVI.

Tho' truths in manhood darkly join,  
Deep-seated in our mystic frame,  
We yield all blessing to the name  
Of Him that made them current coin ;

For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,  
Where truth in closest words  
shall fail,  
When truth embodied in a tale  
Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and  
wrought  
With human hands the creed of  
creeds  
In loveliness of perfect deeds,  
More strong than all poetic thought ;

Which he may read that binds the  
sheaf,  
Or builds the house, or digs the  
grave,  
And those wild eyes that watch  
the wave  
In roarings round the coral reef.

## XXXVII.

Urania speaks with darken'd brow :  
'Thou pratest here where thou  
art least ;  
This faith has many a purer priest,  
And many an abler voice than thou.

'Go down beside thy native rill,  
On thy Parnassus set thy feet,  
And hear thy laurel whisper sweet  
About the ledges of the hill.'

And my Melpomene replies,  
A touch of shame upon her cheek :  
'I am not worthy ev'n to speak  
Of thy prevailing mysteries ;

'For I am but an earthly Muse,  
And owing but a little art  
To lull with song an aching heart,  
And render human love his dues ;

'But brooding on the dear one dead,  
And all he said of things divine,  
(And dear to me as sacred wine  
To dying lips is all he said),

'I murmur'd, as I came along,  
Of comfort clasp'd in truth re-  
veal'd ;  
And loiter'd in the master's field,  
And darken'd sanctities with song.'

## XXXVIII.

With weary steps I loiter on,  
Tho' always under alter'd skies  
The purple from the distance dies,  
My prospect and horizon gone.

No joy the blowing season gives,  
The herald melodies of spring,  
But in the songs I love to sing  
A doubtful gleam of solace lives.

If any care for what is here  
Survive in spirits render'd free,  
Then are these songs I sing of thee  
Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

## XXXIX.

Old warder of these buried bones,  
And answering now my random  
stroke

With fruitful cloud and living  
smoke,  
Dark yew, that graspest at the stones

And dippest toward the dreamless  
head,  
To thee too comes the golden  
hour  
When flower is feeling after  
flower;  
But Sorrow—fixt upon the dead,

And darkening the dark graves of  
men,—  
What whisper'd from her lying  
lips?  
Thy gloom is kindled at the tips,  
And passes into gloom again.

## XL.

Could we forget the widow'd hour  
And look on Spirits breathed  
away,  
As on a maiden in the day  
When first she wears her orange-  
flower!

When crown'd with blessing she doth  
rise  
To take her latest leave of home,  
And hopes and light regrets that  
come  
Make April of her tender eyes;

And doubtful joys the father move,  
And tears are on the mother's  
face,  
As parting with a long embrace  
She enters other realms of love;

Her office there to rear, to teach,  
Becoming as is meet and fit  
A link among the days, to knit  
The generations each with each;

And, doubtless, unto thee is given  
A life that bears immortal fruit  
In those great offices that suit  
The full-grown energies of heaven.

Ay me, the difference I discern!  
How often shall her old fireside

Be cheer'd with tidings of the  
bride,  
How often she herself return,

And tell them all they would have told,  
And bring her babe, and make her  
boast,  
Till even those that miss'd her  
most  
Shall count new things as dear as old:

But thou and I have shaken hands,  
Till growing winters lay me low;  
My paths are in the fields I know,  
And thine in undiscover'd lands.

## XLI.

Thy spirit ere our fatal loss  
Did ever rise from high to higher;  
As mounts the heavenward altar-  
fire,  
As flies the lighter thro' the gross.

But thou art turn'd to something  
strange,  
And I have lost the links that  
bound  
Thy changes; here upon the  
ground,  
No more partaker of thy change.

Deep folly! yet that this could be—  
That I could wing my will with  
might  
To leap the grades of life and  
light,  
And flash at once, my friend, to thee.

For tho' my nature rarely yields  
To that vague fear implied in  
death;  
Nor shudders at the gulfs beneath,  
The howlings from forgotten fields;

Yet oft when sundown skirts the moor  
An inner trouble I behold,  
A spectral doubt which makes me  
cold,  
That I shall be thy mate no more,

Tho' following with an upward mind  
The wonders that have come to  
thee,

Thro' all the secular to-be,  
But evermore a life behind.

## XLII.

I vex my heart with fancies dim :  
He still outstript me in the race ;  
It was but unity of place  
That made me dream I rank'd with  
him.

And so may Place retain us still,  
And he the much-beloved again,  
A lord of large experience, train  
To riper growth the mind and will :

And what delights can equal those  
That stir the spirit's inner deeps,  
When one that loves but knows  
not, reaps  
A truth from one that loves and  
knows ?

## XLIII.

If Sleep and Death be truly one,  
And every spirit's folded bloom  
Thro' all its intertival gloom  
In some long trance should slumber  
on ;

Unconscious of the sliding hour,  
Bare of the body, might it last,  
And silent traces of the past  
Be all the color of the flower :

So then were nothing lost to man ;  
So that still garden of the souls  
In many a figured leaf enrolls  
The total world since life began ;

And love will last as pure and whole  
As when he loved me here in  
Time,  
And at the spiritual prime  
Rewaken with the dawning soul.

## XLIV.

How fares it with the happy dead ?  
For here the man is more and  
more ;  
But he forgets the days before  
God shut the doorways of his head.

The days have vanish'd, tone and tint,  
And yet perhaps the hoarding  
sense  
Gives out at times (he knows not  
whence)  
A little flash, a mystic hint ;

And in the long harmonious years  
(If Death so taste Lethean  
springs),  
May some dim touch of earthly  
things  
Surprise thee ranging with thy peers.

If such a dreamy touch should fall,  
O turn thee round, resolve the  
doubt ;  
My guardian angel will speak out  
In that high place, and tell thee all.

## XLV.

The baby new to earth and sky,  
What time his tender palm is  
prest  
Against the circle of the breast,  
Has never thought that 'this is I :'

But as he grows he gathers much,  
And learns the use of 'I,' and  
'me,'  
And finds 'I am not what I see,  
And other than the things I touch.'

So rounds he to a separate mind  
From whence clear memory may  
begin,  
As thro' the frame that binds him  
in  
His isolation grows defined.

This use may lie in blood and breath,  
Which else were fruitless of their  
due,  
Had man to learn himself anew  
Beyond the second birth of Death.

## XLVI.

We ranging down this lower track,  
The path we came by, thorn and  
flower,  
Is shadow'd by the growing hour,  
Lest life should fail in looking back.





"I WITH MINE AFFIANCED."—Page 52.



So be it: there no shade can last  
In that deep dawn behind the  
tomb,  
But clear from marge to marge  
shall bloom  
The eternal landscape of the past;

A lifelong tract of time reveal'd;  
The fruitful hours of still in-  
crease;  
Days order'd in a wealthy peace,  
And those five years its richest field.

O Love, thy province were not large,  
A bounded field, nor stretching  
far;  
Look also, Love, a brooding star,  
A rosy warmth from marge to marge.

## XLVII.

That each, who seems a separate  
whole,  
Should move his rounds, and  
fusing all  
The skirts of self again, should  
fall  
Remerging in the general Soul,

Is faith as vague as all unsweet:  
Eternal form shall still divide  
The eternal soul from all beside;  
And I shall know him when we meet:

And we shall sit at endless feast,  
Enjoying each the other's good:  
What vaster dream can hit the  
mood  
Of Love on earth? He seeks at least

Upon the last and sharpest height,  
Before the spirits fade away,  
Some landing-place, to clasp and  
say,  
'Farewell! We lose ourselves in light.'

## XLVIII.

If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,  
Were taken to be such as closed  
Grave doubts and answers here  
proposed,  
Then these were such as men might  
scorn:

Her care is not to part and prove;  
She takes, when harsher moods  
remit,  
What slender shade of doubt  
may flit,  
And makes it vassal unto love:

And hence, indeed, she sports with  
words,  
But better serves a wholesome  
law,  
And holds it sin and shame to  
draw  
The deepest measure from the chords:  
Nor dare she trust a larger lay,  
But rather loosens from the lip  
Short swallow-flights of song,  
that dip  
Their wings in tears, and skim away.

## XLIX.

From art, from nature, from the  
schools,  
Let random influences glance,  
Like light in many a shiver'd  
lance  
That breaks about the dappled pools:

The lightest wave of thought shall lisp,  
The fancy's tenderest eddy  
wreath,  
The slightest air of song shall  
breathe  
To make the sullen surface crisp.

And look thy look, and go thy way,  
But blame not thou the winds  
that make  
The seeming-wanton ripple break,  
The tender-pencil'd shadow play.

Beneath all fancied hopes and fears  
Ay me, the sorrow deepens down,  
Whose muffled motions blindly  
drown  
The bases of my life in tears.

## L.

Be near me when my light is low,  
When the blood creeps, and the  
nerves prick

And tingle; and the heart is sick,  
And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame  
Is rack'd with pangs that conquer  
trust;  
And Time, a maniac scattering  
dust,  
And Life, a Fury slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,  
And men the flies of latter spring,  
That lay their eggs, and sting  
and sing  
And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,  
To point the term of human strife,  
And on the low dark verge of life  
The twilight of eternal day.

## LI.

Do we indeed desire the dead  
Should still be near us at our  
side?

Is there no baseness we would  
hide?

No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,  
I had such reverence for his  
blame,  
See with clear eye some hidden  
shame  
And I be lessen'd in his love?

I wrong the grave with fears untrue;  
Shall love be blamed for want of  
faith?

There must be wisdom with great  
Death:

The dead shall look me thro' and thro'.

Be near us when we climb or fall:

Ye watch, like God, the rolling  
hours

With larger other eyes than ours,  
To make allowance for us all.

## LII.

I cannot love thee as I ought,  
For love reflects the thing be-  
loved;

My words are only words, and  
moved  
Upon the topmost froth of thought.

'Yet blame not thou thy plaintive  
song,'

The Spirit of true love replied;  
'Thou canst not move me from  
thy side,

Nor human frailty do me wrong.

'What keeps a spirit wholly true  
To that ideal which he bears?  
What record? not the sinless  
years

That breathed beneath the Syrian  
blue:

'So fret not, like an idle girl,  
That life is dash'd with flecks of  
sin,

Abide: thy wealth is gather'd in,  
When Time hath sunder'd shell from  
pearl.'

## LIII.

How many a father have I seen,  
A sober man, among his boys,  
Whose youth was full of foolish  
noise,  
Who wears his manhood hale and  
green:

And dare we to this fancy give,  
That had the wild oat not been  
sown,

The soil, left barren, scarce had  
grown  
The grain by which a man may live?

Or, if we held the doctrine sound  
For life outliving heats of youth,  
Yet who would preach it as a  
truth

To those that eddy round and round?

Hold thou the good: define it well:  
For fear divine Philosophy  
Should push beyond her mark,  
and be

Procuress to the Lords of Hell.

LIV.

Oh yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill,  
To pangs of nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;  
That not one life shall be de-  
stroy'd,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
When God hath made the pile com-  
plete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;  
That not a moth with vain desire  
Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,  
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;  
I can but trust that good shall fall  
At last—far off—at last, to all,  
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream: but what am I?  
An infant crying in the night:  
An infant crying for the light:  
And with no language but a cry.

LV.

The wish, that of the living whole  
No life may fall beyond the grave,  
Derives it not from what we have  
The likest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,  
That Nature lends such evil  
dreams?  
So careful of the type she seems,  
So careless of the single life;

That I, considering everywhere  
Her secret meaning in her deeds,  
And finding that of fifty seeds  
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,  
And falling with my weight of  
cares

Upon the great world's altar-stairs  
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and  
grope,

And gather dust and chaff, and call  
To what I feel is Lord of all,  
And faintly trust the larger hope.

LVI.

'So careful of the type?' but no.  
From scarp'd cliff and quarried  
stone  
She cries, 'A thousand types are  
gone:  
I care for nothing, all shall go.

'Thou makest thine appeal to me:  
I bring to life, I bring to death:  
The spirit does but mean the  
breath:  
I know no more.' And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,  
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,  
Who roll'd the psalm to wintry  
skies,

Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,  
Who trusted God was love indeed  
And love Creation's final law—  
Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw  
With ravine, shriek'd against his  
creed—

Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills  
Who battled for the True, the Just,  
Be blown about the desert dust,  
Or seal'd within the iron hills?

No more? A monster then, a dream,  
A discord. Dragons of the prime,  
That tare each other in their  
slime,  
Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail!  
O for thy voice to soothe and  
bless!  
What hope of answer, or redress?  
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

LVII.

Peace; come away: the song of woe  
Is after all an earthly song:  
Peace; come away: we do him  
wrong,  
To sing so wildly: let us go.

Come; let us go: your cheeks are  
pale;  
But half my life I leave behind:  
Methinks my friend is richly  
shrined;  
But I shall pass; my work will fail.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,  
One set slow bell will seem to toll  
The passing of the sweetest soul  
That ever look'd with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,  
Eternal greetings to the dead;  
And 'Ave, Ave, Ave,' said,  
'Adieu, adieu' for evermore.

## LVIII.

In those sad words I took farewell:  
Like echoes in sepulchral halls,  
As drop by drop the water falls  
In vaults and catacombs, they fell;

And, falling, idly broke the peace  
Of hearts that beat from day to  
day,  
Half-conscious of their dying clay,  
And those old crypts where they shall  
cease.

The high Muse answer'd: 'Wherefore  
grieve  
Thy brethren with a fruitless tear?  
Abide a little longer here,  
And thou shalt take a nobler leave.'

## LIX.

Sorrow, wilt thou live with me  
No casual mistress, but a wife,  
My bosom-friend and half of life;  
As I confess it needs must be;

O Sorrow, wilt thou rule my blood,  
Be sometimes lovely like a bride,  
And put thy harsher moods aside,  
If thou wilt have me wise and good.

My centred passion cannot move,  
Nor will it lesson from to-day  
But I'll have leave at times to play  
As with the creature of my love;

And set thee forth, for thou art mine,  
With so much hope for years to  
come,  
That, howso'er I know thee, some  
Could hardly tell what name were  
thine.

## LX.

He past; a soul of nobler tone  
My spirit loved and loves him yet,  
Like some poor girl whose heart  
is set  
On one whose rank exceeds her own.

He mixing with his proper sphere,  
She finds the baseness of her lot,  
Half jealous of she knows not  
what,  
And envying all that meet him there.

The little village looks forlorn;  
She sighs amid her narrow days,  
Moving about the household ways,  
In that dark house where she was born.

The foolish neighbors come and go,  
And tease her till the day draws  
by:  
At night she weeps, 'How vain  
am I!  
How should he love a thing so low?'

## LXI.

If, in thy second state sublime,  
Thy ransom'd reason change re-  
plies  
With all the circle of the wise,  
The perfect flower of human time;

And if thou cast thine eyes below,  
How dimly character'd and slight,  
How dwarf'd a growth of cold  
and night,  
How blanch'd with darkness must I  
grow!

Yet turn thee to the doubtful shore,  
Where thy first form was made a  
man;  
I loved thee, Spirit, and love, nor  
can  
The soul of Shakspeare love thee more.

LXII.

Tho' if an eye that's downward cast  
 Could make thee somewhat  
 blench or fail,  
 Then be my love an idle tale,  
 And fading legend of the past ;

And thou, as one that once declined,  
 When he was little more than  
 boy,  
 On some unworthy heart with  
 joy,  
 But lives to wed an equal mind ;

And breathes a novel world, the while  
 His other passion wholly dies,  
 Or in the light of deeper eyes  
 Is matter for a flying smile.

LXIII.

Yet pity for a horse o'er-driven,  
 And love in which my hound has  
 part,  
 Can hang no weight upon my  
 heart  
 In its assumptions up to heaven ;

And I am so much more than these,  
 As thou, perchance, art more  
 than I,  
 And yet I spare them sympathy,  
 And I would set their pains at ease.

So mayst thou watch me where I  
 weep,  
 As, unto vaster motions bound,  
 The circuits of thine orbit round  
 A higher height, a deeper deep.

LXIV.

Dost thou look back on what hath  
 been,  
 As some divinely gifted man,  
 Whose life in low estate began  
 And on a simple village green ;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,  
 And grasps the skirts of happy  
 chance,  
 And breasts the blows of circum-  
 stance,  
 And grapples with his evil star ;

Who makes by force his merit known  
 And lives to clutch the golden  
 keys,  
 To mould a mighty state's  
 decrees,  
 And shape the whisper of the throne ;

And moving up from high to higher,  
 Becomes on Fortune's crowning  
 slope  
 The pillar of a people's hope,  
 The centre of a world's desire ;

Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,  
 When all his active powers are  
 still,  
 A distant dearness in the hill,  
 A secret sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,  
 While yet beside its vocal springs  
 He play'd at counsellors and  
 kings,  
 With one that was his earliest mate ;

Who ploughs with pain his native lea  
 And reaps the labor of his  
 hands,  
 Or in the furrow musing stands ;  
 ' Does my old friend remember me ? '

LXV.

Sweet soul, do with me as thou wilt ;  
 I lull a fancy trouble-tost  
 With ' Love's too precious to be  
 lost,  
 A little grain shall not be spilt. '

And in that solace can I sing,  
 Till out of painful phases  
 wrought  
 There flutters up a happy  
 thought,  
 Self-balanced on a lightsome wing :

Since we deserved the name of  
 friends,  
 And thine effect so lives in me,  
 A part of mine may live in thee  
 And move thee on to noble ends.

## LXVI.

You thought my heart too far dis-  
eased;  
You wonder when my fancies  
play  
To find me gay among the gay,  
Like one with any trifle pleased.

The shade by which my life was crost,  
Which makes a desert in the  
mind,  
Has made me kindly with my  
kind,  
And like to him whose sight is lost;

Whose feet are guided thro' the land,  
Whose jest among his friends is  
free,  
Who takes the children on his  
knee,  
And winds their curls about his hand:

He plays with threads, he beats his  
chair  
For pastime, dreaming of the  
sky;  
His inner day can never die,  
His night of loss is always there.

## LXVII.

When on my bed the moonlight falls,  
I know that in thy place of rest  
By that broad water of the west,  
There comes a glory on the walls:

Thy marble bright in dark appears,  
As slowly steals a silver flame  
Along the letters of thy name,  
And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away;  
From off my bed the moonlight  
dies;  
And closing eaves of wearied  
eyes  
I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray:

And then I know the mist is drawn  
A lucid veil from coast to coast,  
And in the dark church like a  
ghost  
Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

## LXVIII.

When in the down I sink my head,  
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times  
my breath;  
Sleep, Death's twin-brother,  
knows not Death,  
Nor can I dream of thee as dead:

I walk as ere I walk'd forlorn,  
When all our path was fresh with  
dew,  
And all the bugle breezes blew  
Reveillée to the breaking morn.

But what is this? I turn about,  
I find a trouble in thine eye,  
Which makes me sad I know not  
why,  
Nor can my dream resolve the doubt:

But ere the lark hath left the lea  
I wake, and I discern the truth;  
It is the trouble of my youth  
That foolish sleep transfers to thee.

## LXIX.

I dream'd there would be Spring no  
more,  
That Nature's ancient power was  
lost:  
The streets were black with  
smoke and frost,  
They chatter'd trifles at the door:

I wander'd from the noisy town,  
I found a wood with thorny  
boughs:  
I took the thorns to bind my  
brows,  
I wore them like a civic crown:

I met with scoffs, I met with scorns  
From youth and babe and hoary  
hairs:  
They call'd me in the public  
squares  
The fool that wears a crown of  
thorns:

They call'd me fool, they call'd me  
child:  
I found an angel of the night;



The voice was low, the look was  
bright;  
He look'd upon my crown and smiled:  
He reach'd the glory of a hand,  
That seem'd to touch it into leaf:  
The voice was not the voice of  
grief,  
The words were hard to understand.

LXX.

I cannot see the features right,  
When on the gloom I strive to  
paint  
The face I know; the hues are  
faint  
And mix with hollow masks of night;  
Cloud-towers by ghostly masons  
wrought,  
A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,  
A hand that points, and palled  
shapes  
In shadowy thoroughfares of  
thought;

And crowds that stream from yawning  
doors,  
And shoals of pucker'd faces  
drive;  
Dark bulks that tumble half alive,  
And lazy lengths on boundless shores;

Till all at once beyond the will  
I hear a wizard music roll,  
And thro' a lattice on the soul  
Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

LXXI.

Sleep, kinsman thou to death and  
trance  
And madness, thou hast forged at  
last  
A night-long Present of the Past  
In which we went thro' summer  
France.

Hadst thou such credit with the soul?  
Then bring an opiate trebly strong,  
Drug down the blindfold sense of  
wrong  
That so my pleasure may be whole;

While now we talk as once we talk'd  
Of men and minds, the dust of  
change,  
The days that grow to something  
strange,  
In walking as of old we walk'd

Beside the river's wooded reach,  
The fortress, and the mountain  
ridge,  
The cataract flashing from the  
bridge,  
The breaker breaking on the beach.

LXXII.

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,  
And howlest, issuing out of night,  
With blasts that blow the poplar  
white,  
And lash with storm the streaming  
pane?

Day, when my crown'd estate begun  
To pine in that reverse of doom,  
Which sicken'd every living  
bloom,  
And blur'd the splendor of the sun;

Who usherest in the dolorous hour  
With thy quick tears that make  
the rose  
Pull sideways, and the daisy close  
Her crimson fringes to the shower;

Who might'st have heaved a windless  
flame  
Up the deep East, or, whispering,  
play'd  
A chequer-work of beam and  
shade  
Along the hills, yet look'd the same.

As wan, as chill, as wild as now;  
Day, mark'd as with some hideous  
crime,  
When the dark hand struck down  
thro' time,  
And cancell'd nature's best: but thou,

Lift as thou may'st thy burthen'd brows  
Thro' clouds that drench the  
morning star,

And whirl the ungarner'd sheaf  
afar,  
And sow the sky with flying boughs,  
And up thy vault with roaring sound  
Climb thy thick noon, disastrous  
day;  
Touch thy dull goal of joyless  
gray,  
And hide thy shame beneath the  
ground.

## LXXIII.

So many worlds, so much to do,  
So little done, such things to be,  
How know I what had need of  
thee,  
For thou wert strong as thou wert  
true?

The fame is quench'd that I foresaw,  
The head hath miss'd an earthly  
wreath:  
I curse not nature, no, nor death;  
For nothing is that errs from law.

We pass; the path that each man  
trod  
Is dim, or will be dim, with  
weeds:  
What fame is left for human  
deeds  
In endless age? It rests with God.

O hollow wraith of dying fame,  
Fade wholly, while the soul exults,  
And self-infolds the large results  
Of force that would have forged a  
name.

## LXXIV.

As sometimes in a dead man's face,  
To those that watch it more and  
more,  
A likeness, hardly seen before,  
Comes out—to some one of his race:  
So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,  
I see thee what thou art, and  
know  
Thy likeness to the wise below,  
Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,  
And what I see I leave unsaid,  
Nor speak it, knowing Death has  
made  
His darkness beautiful with thee.

## LXXV.

I leave thy praises unexpress'd  
In verse that brings myself relief,  
And by the measure of my grief  
I leave thy greatness to be guess'd;

What practice howsoe'er expert  
In fitting aptest words to things,  
Or voice the richest-toned that  
sings,  
Hath power to give thee as thou wert?

I care not in these fading days  
To raise a cry that lasts not long,  
And round thee with the breeze of  
song  
To stir a little dust of praise.

Thy leaf has perish'd in the green,  
And, while we breathe beneath  
the sun,  
The world which credits what is  
done  
Is cold to all that might have been.

So here shall silence guard thy fame;  
But somewhere, out of human  
view,  
Whate'er thy hands are set to do  
Is wrought with tumult of acclaim.

## LXXVI.

Take wings of fancy, and ascend,  
And in a moment set thy face  
Where all the starry heavens of  
space  
Are sharpen'd to a needle's end;

Take wings of foresight; lighten thro'  
The secular abyss to come,  
And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb  
Before the mouldering of a yew;

And if the matin songs, that woke  
The darkness of our planet, last,

Thine own shall wither in the  
vast,  
Ere half the lifetime of an oak.

Ere these have clothed their branchy  
bowers  
With fifty Mays, thy songs are  
vain;  
And what are they when these  
remain  
The ruin'd shells of hollow towers?

## LXXVII.

What hope is here for modern rhyme  
To him, who turns a musing eye  
On songs, and deeds, and lives,  
that lie  
Foreshorten'd in the tract of time?

These mortal lullabies of pain  
May bind a book, may line a box,  
May serve to curl a maiden's  
locks;  
Or when a thousand moons shall wane

A man upon a stall may find,  
And, passing, turn the page that  
tells  
A grief, then changed to some-  
thing else,  
Sung by a long-forgotten mind.

But what of that? My darken'd ways  
Shall ring with music all the  
same;  
To breathe my loss is more than  
fame,  
To utter love more sweet than praise.

## LXXVIII.

Again at Christmas did we weave  
The holly round the Christmas  
hearth;  
The silent snow possess'd the  
earth,  
And calmly fell our Christmas-eve:

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,  
No wing of wind the region swept,  
But over all things brooding slept  
The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,  
Again our ancient games had  
place,  
The mimic picture's breathing  
grace,  
And dance and song and hoodman-  
blind.

Who show'd a token of distress?  
No single tear, no mark of pain:  
O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?  
O grief, can grief be changed to less?

O last regret, regret can die!  
No—mixt with all this mystic  
frame,  
Her deep relations are the same,  
But with long use her tears are dry.

## LXXIX.

'More than my brothers are to me,'—  
Let this not vex thee, noble  
heart!  
I know thee of what force thou  
art  
To hold the costliest love in fee.

But thou and I are one in kind,  
As moulded like in Nature's  
mint;  
And hill and wood and field did  
print  
The same sweet forms in either mind.

For us the same cold streamlet curl'd  
Thro' all his eddying coves; the  
same  
All winds that roam the twilight  
came  
In whispers of the beauteous world.

At one dear knee we proffer'd vows,  
One lesson from one book we  
learn'd,  
Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet  
turn'd  
To black and brown on kindred  
brows.

And so my wealth resembles thine,  
But he was rich where I was  
poor,

And he supplied my want the  
more  
As his unlikeness fitted mine.

## LXXX.

If any vague desire should rise,  
That holy Death ere Arthur died  
Had moved me kindly from his  
side,  
And dropt the dust on tearless eyes ;  
Then fancy shapes, as fancy can,  
The grief my loss in him had  
wrought,  
A grief as deep as life or thought,  
But stay'd in peace with God and man.

I made a picture in the brain ;  
I hear the sentence that he  
speaks ;  
He bears the burthen of the  
weeks  
But turns his burthen into gain.

His credit thus shall set me free ;  
And, influence-rich to soothe and  
save,  
Unused example from the grave  
Reach out dead hands to comfort me.

## LXXXI.

Could I have said while he was here,  
'My love shall now no further  
range ;  
There cannot come a mellow  
change,  
For now is love mature in ear.'

Love, then, had hope of richer store :  
What end is here to my com-  
plaint ?  
This haunting whisper makes me  
faint,  
'More years had made me love thee  
more.'

But Death returns an answer sweet :  
'My sudden frost was sudden  
gain,  
And gave all ripeness to the  
grain,  
It might have drawn from after-heat.'

## LXXXII.

I wage not any feud with Death  
For changes wrought on form  
and face ;  
No lower life that earth's  
embrace  
May breed with him, can fright my  
faith.

Eternal process moving on,  
From state to state the spirit  
walks ;  
And these are but the shatter'd  
stalks,  
Or ruin'd chrysalis of one.

Nor blame I Death, because he bare  
The use of virtue out of earth :  
I know transplanted human  
worth  
Will bloom to profit, elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak  
The wrath that garners in my  
heart ;  
He put our lives so far apart  
We cannot hear each other speak.

## LXXXIII.

Dip down upon the northern shore,  
O sweet new-year delaying long :  
Thou doest expectant nature  
wrong ;  
Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded  
noons,  
Thy sweetness from its proper  
place ?  
Can trouble live with April days,  
Or sadness in the summer moons ?

Bring orchis. bring the foxglove spire,  
The little speedwell's darling blue,  
Deep tulips dash'd with fiery  
dew,  
Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,  
Delayest the sorrow in my blood,  
That longs to burst a frozen bud  
And flood a fresher throat with song.

LXXXIV.

When I contemplate all alone  
The life that had been thine  
below,  
And fix my thoughts on all the  
glow  
To which thy crescent would have  
grown;

I see thee sitting crown'd with good,  
A central warmth diffusing bliss  
In glance and smile, and clasp  
and kiss,  
On all the branches of thy blood;

Thy blood, my friend, and partly  
mine;  
For now the day was drawing on,  
When thou should'st link thy life  
with one  
Of mine own house, and boys of thine

Had babbled 'Uncle' on my knee;  
But that remorseless iron hour  
Made cypress of her orange  
flower,  
Despair of Hope, and earth of thee.

I seem to meet their least desire,  
To clap their checks, to call them  
mine.  
I see their unborn faces shine  
Beside the never-lighted fire.

I see myself an honor'd guest,  
Thy partner in the flowery walk  
Of letters, genial table-talk,  
Or deep dispute, and graceful jest;

While now thy prosperous labor fills  
The lips of men with honest  
praise,  
And sun by sun the happy days  
Descend below the golden hills

With promise of a morn as fair;  
And all the train of bounteous  
hours  
Conduct by paths of growing  
powers,  
To reverence and the silver hair;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,  
Her lavish mission richly  
wrought,  
Leaving great legacies of thought,  
Thy spirit should fall from off the  
globe;

What time mine own might also flee,  
As link'd with thine in love and  
fate,  
And, hovering o'er the dolorous  
strait  
To the other shore, involved in thee,

Arrive at last the blessed goal,  
And He that died in Holy Land  
Would reach us out the shining  
hand,  
And take us as a single soul.

What reed was that on which I leant?  
Ah, backward fancy, wherefore  
wake  
The old bitterness again, and  
break  
The low beginnings of content.

LXXXV.

This truth came borne with bier and  
pall,  
I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,  
'Tis better to have loved and lost,  
Than never to have loved at all—

O true in word, and tried in deed,  
Demanding, so to bring relief  
To this which is our common  
grief,  
What kind of life is that I lead;

And whether trust in things above  
Be dimm'd of sorrow, or sus-  
tain'd;  
And whether love for him have  
drain'd  
My capabilities of love;

Your words have virtue such as  
draws  
A faithful answer from the  
breast,

Thro' light reproaches, half  
 exprest,  
 And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,  
 Till on mine ear this message  
 falls,  
 That in Vienna's fatal walls  
 God's finger touch'd him, and he  
 slept.

The great Intelligences fair  
 That range above our mortal  
 state,  
 In circle round the blessed gate,  
 Received and gave him welcome there;

And led him thro' the blissful climes,  
 And show'd him in the fountain  
 fresh  
 All knowledge that the sons of  
 flesh  
 Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remain'd, whose hopes were  
 dim,  
 Whose life, whose thoughts were  
 little worth,  
 To wander on a darken'd earth,  
 Where all things round me breathed  
 of him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,  
 O heart, with kindest motion  
 warm,  
 O sacred essence, other form,  
 O solemn ghost, O crowned soul!

Yet none could better know than I,  
 How much of act at human hands  
 The sense of human will demands  
 By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,  
 I felt and feel, tho' left alone,  
 His being working in mine own,  
 The footsteps of his life in mine;

A life that all the Muses deck'd  
 With gifts of grace, that might  
 express  
 All-comprehensive tenderness,  
 All-subtilizing intellect:

And so my passion hath not swerved  
 To works of weakness, but I find  
 An image comforting the mind,  
 And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,  
 That loved to handle spiritual  
 strife,  
 Diffused the shock thro' all my  
 life,  
 But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again  
 For other friends that once I met;  
 Nor can it suit me to forget  
 The mighty hopes that make us men.

I woo your love: I count it crime  
 To mourn for any overmuch;  
 I, the divided half of such  
 A friendship as had master'd Time;

Which masters Time indeed, and is  
 Eternal, separate from fears:  
 The all-assuming months and  
 years  
 Can take no part away from this:

But Summer on the steaming floods,  
 And Spring that swells the narrow  
 brooks,  
 And Autumn, with a noise of  
 rooks,  
 That gather in the waning woods,

And every pulse of wind and wave  
 Recalls, in change of light or  
 gloom,  
 My old affection of the tomb,  
 And my prime passion in the grave:

My old affection of the tomb,  
 A part of stillness, yearns to  
 speak:  
 'Arise, and get thee forth and  
 seek  
 A friendship for the years to come.

'I watch thee from the quiet shore;  
 Thy spirit up to mine can reach;  
 But in dear words of human  
 speech  
 We two communicate no more.'

And I, 'Can clouds of nature stain  
The starry clearness of the free?  
How is it? Canst thou feel for  
me  
Some painless sympathy with pain?'

And lightly does the whisper fall;  
'Tis hard for thee to fathom  
this:  
I triumph in conclusive bliss,  
And that serene result of all.'

So hold I commerce with the dead;  
Or so methinks the dead would  
say;  
Or so shall grief with symbols  
play  
And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,  
That these things pass, and I  
shall prove  
A meeting somewhere, love with  
love,  
I crave your pardon, O my friend;

If not so fresh, with love as true,  
I, clasping brother-hands, aver  
I could not, if I would, transfer  
The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart  
The promise of the golden hours?  
First love, first friendship, equal  
powers,  
That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine, that cannot but deplore,  
That beats within a lonely place,  
That yet remembers his embrace,  
But at his footstep leaps no more,

My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest  
Quite in the love of what is gone,  
But seeks to beat in time with one  
That warms another living breast.

Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,  
Knowing the primrose yet is dear,  
The primrose of the later year,  
As not unlike to that of Spring.

## LXXXVI.

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,  
That rollest from the gorgeous  
gloom  
Of evening over brake and bloom  
And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below  
Thro' all the dewy-tassel'd wood,  
And shadowing down the horned  
flood  
In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh  
The full new life that feeds thy  
breath  
Throughout my frame, till Doubt  
and Death,  
Ill brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas  
On leagues of odor streaming far,  
To where in yonder orient star  
A hundred spirits whisper 'Peace.'

## LXXXVII.

I past beside the reverend walls  
In which of old I wore the gown;  
I roved at random thro' the town,  
And saw the tumult of the halls;

And heard once more in college fanes  
The storm their high-built organs  
make,  
And thunder-music, rolling, shake  
The prophet blazon'd on the panes;

And caught once more the distant  
shout,  
The measured pulse of racing oars  
Among the willows; paced the  
shores  
And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt  
The same, but not the same; and  
last  
Up that long walk of limes I past  
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door:  
I linger'd; all within was noise

Of songs, and clapping hands, and  
boys  
That crash'd the glass and beat the  
floor;

Where once we held debate, a band  
Of youthful friends, on mind and  
art,  
And labor, and the changing mart,  
And all the framework of the land;

When one would aim an arrow fair,  
But send it slackly from the  
string;  
And one would pierce an outer  
ring,  
And one an inner, here and there;

And last the master-bowman, he,  
Would cleave the mark. A will-  
ing ear  
We lent him. Who, but hung to  
hear  
The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point, with power and  
grace  
And music in the bounds of law,  
To those conclusions when we saw  
The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow  
In azure orbits heavenly-wise;  
And over those ethereal eyes  
The bar of Michael Angelo.

## LXXXVIII.

Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,  
Rings Eden thro' the budded  
quicks,  
O tell me where the senses mix,  
O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate: fierce extremes em-  
ploy  
Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,  
And in the midmost heart of grief  
Thy passion clasps a secret joy:

And I—my harp would prelude woe—  
I cannot all command the strings;  
The glory of the sum of things  
Will flash along the cords and go.

## LXXXIX.

Witch-elms that counterchange the  
floor  
Of this flat lawn with dusk and  
bright;  
And thou, with all thy breadth and  
height  
Of foliage, towering sycamore;

How often, hither wander'ng down,  
My Arthur found your shadows  
fair,  
And shook to all the liberal air  
The dust and din and steam of town:

He brought an eye for all he saw;  
He mixt in all our simple sports;  
They pleased him, fresh from  
brawling courts  
And dusty purlieus of the law.

O joy to him in this retreat,  
Immantled in ambrosial dark,  
To drink the cooler air, and mark  
The landscape winking thro' the heat:

O sound to rout the brood of cares,  
The sweep of scythe in morning  
dew,  
The gust that round the garden  
flew,  
And tumbled half the mellowing pears!

O bliss, when all in circle drawn  
About him, heart and ear were fed  
To hear him, as he lay and read  
The Tuscan poets on the lawn:

Or in the all-golden afternoon  
A guest, or happy sister, sung,  
Or here she brought the harp and  
flung  
A ballad to the brightening moon:

Nor less it pleased in livelier moods,  
Beyond the bounding hill to stray,  
And break the livelong summer  
day

With banquet in the distant woods;

Whereat we glanced from theme to  
theme,



Discuss'd the books to love or hate,  
Or touch'd the changes of the state,  
Or threaded some Socratic dream;

But if I praised the busy town,  
He loved to rail against it still,  
For 'ground in yonder social mill  
We rub each other's angles down,

'And merge' he said 'in form and  
gloss

The picturesque of man and man.'  
We talk'd: the stream beneath  
us ran,

The wine-flask lying couch'd in moss,

Or cool'd within the glooming wave;  
And last, returning from afar,  
Before the crimson-circled star  
Had fall'n into her father's grave,

And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,  
We heard behind the woodbine  
veil

The milk that bubbled in the pail,  
And buzzings of the honied hours.

## XC.

He tasted love with half his mind,  
Nor ever drank the inviolate  
spring

Where nighest heaven, who first  
could fling

This bitter seed among mankind;

That could the dead, whose dying eyes  
Were closed with wail, resume  
their life,

They would but find in child and  
wife

An iron welcome when they rise :

'Twas well, indeed, when warm with  
wine,  
To pledge them with a kindly tear,  
To talk them o'er, to wish them  
here,

To count their memories half divine ;

But if they came who past away,  
Behold their brides in other  
hands ;

The hard heir strides about their  
lands,  
And will not yield them for a day.

Yea, tho' their sons were none of these,  
Not less the yet-loved sire would  
make  
Confusion worse than death, and  
shake

The pillars of domestic peace.

Ah dear, but come thou back to me :  
Whatever change the years have  
wrought,

I find not yet one lonely thought  
That cries against my wish for thee.

## XCI.

When rosy plumelets tuft the larch,  
And rarely pipes the mounted  
thrush;

Or underneath the barren bush  
Flits by the sea-blue bird of March ;

Come, wear the form by which I know  
Thy spirit in time among thy  
peers ;

The hope of unaccomplish'd years  
Be large and lucid round thy brow.

When summer's hourly-mellowing  
change

May breathe, with many roses  
sweet,

Upon the thousand waves of  
wheat,

That ripple round the lonely grange ;

Come : not in watches of the night,  
But where the sunbeam broodeth  
warm,

Come, bauteous in thine after  
form,

And like a finer light in light.

## XCII.

If any vision should reveal  
Thy likeness, I might count it vain  
As but the canker of the brain ;  
Yea, tho' it spake and made appeal

To chances where our lots were cast  
Together in the days behind,

I might but say, I hear a wind  
Of memory murmuring the past.

Yea, tho' it spake and bared to view  
A fact within the coming year ;  
And tho' the months, revolving  
near,  
Should prove the phantom-warning  
true,

They might not seem thy prophecies,  
But spiritual presentiments,  
And such refraction of events  
As often rises ere they rise.

## XCIII.

I shall not see thee. Dare I say  
No spirit ever brake the band  
That stays him from the native  
land  
Where first he walk'd when claspt in  
clay ?

No visual shade of some one lost.  
But he, the Spirit himself, may  
come  
Where all the nerve of sense is  
numb ;  
Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.

O, therefore from thy sightless range  
With gods in un conjectured bliss,  
O, from the distance of the abyss  
Of tenfold-complicated change,

Descend, and touch, and enter ; hear  
The wish too strong for words to  
name ;  
That in this blindness of the frame  
My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

## XCIV.

How pure at heart and sound in head,  
With what divine affections bold  
Should be the man whose thought  
would hold  
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call  
The spirits from their golden day,  
Except, like them, thou too canst  
say,  
My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,  
Imaginations calm and fair,  
The memory like a cloudless air,  
The conscience as a sea at rest'

But when the heart is full of din,  
And doubt beside the portal waits,  
They can but listen at the gates,  
And hear the household jar within.

## XCV.

By night we linger'd on the lawn,  
For underfoot the herb was dry ;  
And genial warmth ; and o'er the  
sky  
The silvery haze of summer drawn ;

And calm that let the tapers burn  
Unwavering : not a cricket chirr'd :  
The brook alone far-off was heard,  
And on the board the fluttering urn :

And bats went round in fragrant skies,  
And wheel'd or lit the filmy shapes  
That haunt the dusk, with crimine  
capes  
And woolly breasts and beaded eyes ;

While now we sang old songs that  
peal'd  
From knoll to knoll, where,  
couch'd at ease,  
The white kine glimmer'd, and  
the trees  
Laid their dark arms about the field.

But when those others, one by one,  
Withdrew themselves from me  
and night,  
And in the house light after light  
Went out, and I was all alone,

A hunger seized my heart ; I read  
Of that glad year which once had  
been,  
In those fall'n leaves which kept  
their green,  
The noble letters of the dead :

And strangely on the silence broke  
The silent-speaking words, and  
strange

Was love's dumb cry defying  
change  
To test his worth; and strangely  
spoke

The faith, the vigor, bold to dwell  
On doubts that drive the coward  
back,  
And keen thro' wordy snares to  
track  
Suggestion to her inmost cell.

So word by word, and line by line,  
The dead man touch'd me from  
the past,  
And all at once it seem'd at last  
The living soul was flash'd on mine,

And mine in this was wound, and  
whirl'd  
About empyreal heights of  
thought,  
And came on that which is, and  
caught  
The deep pulsations of the world,

Æonian music measuring out  
The steps of Time—the shocks  
of Chance—  
The blows of Death. At length  
my trance  
Was cancell'd, stricken thro' with  
doubt.

Vague words! but ah, how hard to  
frame  
In matter-moulded forms of  
speech,  
Or ev'n for intellect to reach  
Thro' memory that which I became:

Till now the doubtful dusk reveal'd  
The knolls once more where,  
couch'd at ease,  
The white kine glimmer'd, and the  
trees  
Laid their dark arms about the field:

And suck'd from out the distant gloom  
A breeze began to tremble o'er  
The large leaves of the sycamore,  
And fluctuate all the still perfume

And gathering fresher overhead,  
Rock'd the full-foliaged elms, and  
swung  
The heavy-folded rose, and flung  
The lilies to and fro, and said

'The dawn, the dawn,' and died  
away;  
And East and West, without a  
breath,  
Mixt their dim lights, like life  
and death,  
To broaden into boundless day.

XCVI.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,  
Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-  
blue eyes  
Are tender over drowning flies,  
You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew  
In many a subtle question versed,  
Who touch'd a jarring lyre at  
first,  
But ever strove to make it true:

Perplex in faith, but pure in deeds,  
At last he beat his music out.  
There lives more faith in honest  
doubt,  
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd  
strength,  
He would not make his judgment  
blind,  
He faced the spectres of the mind  
And laid them: thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own;  
And Power was with him in the  
night,  
Which makes the darkness and  
the light,  
And dwells not in the light alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,  
As over Sinai's peaks of old,  
While Israel made their gods of  
gold,  
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

## XCVII.

My love has talk'd with rocks and  
trees;  
He finds on misty mountain-  
ground  
His own vast shadow glory-  
crown'd;  
He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life—  
I look'd on these and thought of  
thee  
In vastness and in mystery,  
And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two—they dwelt with eye on  
eye,  
Their hearts of old have beat in  
tune,  
Their meetings made December  
June,  
Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away;  
The days she never can forget  
Are earnest that he loves her yet,  
Whate'er the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart,  
He loves her yet, she will not  
weep,  
Tho' rapt in matters dark and  
deep  
He seems to slight her simple heart.

He thrids the labyrinth of the mind,  
He reads the secret of the star,  
He seems so near and yet so far,  
He looks so cold: she thinks him  
kind.

She keeps the gift of years before,  
A wither'd violet is her bliss:  
She knows not what his greatness  
is,

For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings  
Of early faith and plighted vows;  
She knows but matters of the  
house,  
And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixt and cannot move,  
She darkly feels him great and  
wise,  
She dwells on him with faithful  
eyes,  
'I cannot understand: I love.'

## XCVIII.

You leave us: you will see the Rhine,  
And those fair hills I sail'd below,  
When I was there with him; and  
go  
By summer belts of wheat and vine

To where he breathed his latest  
breath,  
That City. All her splendor  
seems  
No livelier than the wisp that  
gleams  
On Lethe in the eyes of Death.

Let her great Danube rolling fair  
Enwind her isles, unmark'd of  
me:  
I have not seen. I will not see  
Vienna; rather dream that there,

A treble darkness, Evil haunts  
The birth, the bridal; friend from  
friend  
Is oftener parted, fathers bend  
Above more graves, a thousand wants

Gnarr at the heels of men, and pray  
By each cold hearth, and sadness  
flings  
Her shadow on the blaze of  
kings:  
And yet myself have heard him say,

That not in any mother town  
With statelier progress to and fro  
The double tides of chariots flow  
By park and suburb under brown

Of lustier leaves; nor more content,  
He told me, lives in any crowd,  
When all is gay with lamps, and  
loud  
With sport and song, in booth and  
tent,

Imperial halls, or open plain;  
And wheels the circled dance,  
and breaks  
The rocket molten into flakes  
Of crimson or in emerald rain.

## XCIX.

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,  
So loud with voices of the birds,  
So thick with lowings of the  
herds,  
Day, when I lost the flower of men;

Who tremblest thro' thy darkling red  
On yon swoll'n brook that bub-  
bles fast  
By meadows breathing of the  
past,  
And woodlands holy to the dead;

Who murmurest in the foliaged eaves  
A song that slights the coming  
care,  
And Autumn laying here and  
there  
A fiery finger on the leaves;

Who wakenest with thy balmy breath  
To myriads on the genial earth,  
Memories of bridal, or of birth,  
And unto myriads more, of death.

O wheresoever those may be,  
Betwixt the slumber of the poles,  
To-day they count as kindred  
souls;  
They know me not, but mourn with  
me.

## C.

I climb the hill: from end to end  
Of all the landscape underneath,  
I find no place that does not  
breathe  
Some gracious memory of my friend;

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,  
Or low morass and whispering  
reed,  
Or simple stile from mead to  
mead.  
Or sheepwalk up the windy wold;

Nor hoary knoll of ash and haw  
That hears the latest linnet trill,  
Nor quarry trench'd along the  
hill  
And haunted by the wrangling daw;

Nor runlet tinkling from the rock;  
Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves  
To left and right thro' meadowy  
curves,  
That feed the mothers of the flock;

But each has pleased a kindred eye,  
And each reflects a kindlier day;  
And, leaving these, to pass away,  
I think once more he seems to die.

## CI.

Unwatch'd, the garden bough shall  
sway,  
The tender blossom flutter down,  
Unloved, that beech will gather  
brown,  
This maple burn itself away;

Unloved, the sun-flower, shining fair,  
Ray round with flames her disk of  
seed,  
And many a rose-carnation feed  
With summer spice the humming air;

Unloved, by many a sandy bar,  
The brook shall babble down the  
plain,  
At noon or when the lesser wain  
Is twisting round the polar star;

Uncared for, gird the windy grove,  
And flood the haunts of hern and  
crake;  
Or into silver arrows break  
The sailing moon in creek and cove;

Till from the garden and the wild  
A fresh association blow,  
And year by year the landscape  
grow  
Familiar to the stranger's child;

As year by year the laborer tills  
His wonted glebe, or lops the  
glades;

And year by year our memory  
fades  
From all the circle of the hills.

## CII.

We leave the well-beloved place  
Where first we gazed upon the  
sky ;  
The roofs, that heard our earliest  
cry,  
Will shelter one of stranger race.

We go, but ere we go from home,  
As down the garden-walks I  
move,  
Two spirits of a diverse love  
Contend for loving masterdom.

One whispers, 'Here thy boyhood  
sung  
Long since its matin song, and  
heard  
The low love-language of the  
bird  
In native hazels tassel-hung.'

The other answers, 'Yea, but here  
Thy feet have stray'd in after  
hours  
With thy lost friend among the  
bowers,  
And this hath made them trebly dear.'

These two have striven half the day,  
And each prefers his separate  
claim,  
Poor rivals in a losing game,  
That will not yield each other way.

I turn to go: my feet are set  
To leave the pleasant fields and  
farms;  
They mix in one another's arms  
To one pure image of regret.

## CIII.

On that last night before we went  
From out the doors where I was  
bred,  
I dream'd a vision of the dead,  
Which left my after-morn content.

Methought I dwelt within a hall,  
And maidens with me: distant  
hills  
From hidden summits fed with  
rills  
A river sliding by the wall.

The hall with harp and carol rang,  
They sang of what is wise and  
good  
And graceful. In the centre  
stood  
A statue veil'd, to which they sang ;

And which, tho' veil'd, was known to  
me,  
The shape of him I loved, and  
love  
For ever: then flew in a dove  
And brought a summons from the sea :

And when they learnt that I must go  
They wept and wail'd, but led the  
way  
To where a little shallop lay  
At anchor in the flood below ;

And on by many a level mead,  
And shadowing bluff that made  
the banks,  
We glided winding under ranks  
Of iris, and the golden reed ;

And still as vaster grew the shore  
And roll'd the floods in grander  
space,  
The maidens gather'd strength  
and grace  
And presence, lordlier than before ;

And I myself, who sat apart  
And watch'd them, wax'd in  
every limb;  
I felt the thews of Anakim,  
The pulses of a Titan's heart ;

As one would sing the death of war,  
And one would chant the history  
Of that great race, which is to be,  
And one the shaping of a star ;

Until the forward-creeping tides  
Began to foam, and we to draw

From deep to deep, to where we  
saw  
 A great ship lift her shining sides.

The man we loved was there on deck  
 But thrice as large as man he bent  
 To greet us. Up the side I went,  
 And fell in silence on his neck.

Whereat those maidens with one mind  
 Bewail'd their lot; I did them  
 wrong:  
 'We served thee here,' they said,  
 'so long,  
 And wilt thou leave us now behind?'

So rapt I was, they could not win  
 An answer from my lips, but he  
 Replying, 'Enter likewise ye  
 And go with us:' they enter'd in.

And while the wind began to sweep  
 A music out of sheet and shroud,  
 We steer'd her toward a crimson  
 cloud  
 That landlike slept along the deep.

CIV.

The time draws near the birt' of  
 Christ;  
 The moon is hid, the night is still;  
 A single church below the hill  
 Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below,  
 That wakens at this hour of rest  
 A single murmur in the breast,  
 That these are not the bells I know.

Like strangers' voices here they sound  
 In lands where not a memory  
 strays,  
 Nor landmark breathes of other  
 days,  
 But all is new unhallow'd ground.

CV.

To-night ungather'd let us leave  
 This laurel, let this holly stand:  
 We live within the stranger's  
 land,  
 And strangely falls our Christmas-eve.

Our father's dust is left alone  
 And silent under other snows:  
 There in due time the woodbine  
 blows,  
 The violet comes, but we are gone.

No more shall wayward grief abuse  
 The genial hour with mask and  
 mime:  
 For change of place, like growth  
 of time,  
 Has broke the bond of dying use.

Let cares that petty shadows cast,  
 By which our lives are chiefly  
 proved,  
 A little spare the night I loved,  
 And hold it solemn to the past

But let no footstep beat the floor,  
 Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm;  
 For who would keep an ancient  
 form  
 Thro' which the spirit breathes no  
 more?

Be neither song, nor game, nor feast;  
 Nor harp be touch'd, nor flute be  
 blown;  
 No dance, no motion, save alone  
 What lightens in the lucid east

Of rising worlds by yonder wood.  
 Long sleeps the summer in the  
 seed;  
 Run out your measured arcs, and  
 lead  
 The closing cycle rich in good.

CVI

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
 The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
 The year is dying in the night;  
 Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
 Ring, happy bells, across the  
 snow:  
 The year is going, let him go;  
 Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
 For those that here we see no  
 more;  
 Ring out the feud of rich and  
 poor,  
 Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
 And ancient forms of party strife;  
 Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
 With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
 The faithless coldness of the  
 times;  
 Ring out, ring out my mournful  
 rhymes,  
 But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and  
 blood,  
 The civic slander and the spite;  
 Ring in the love of truth and right,  
 Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;  
 Ring out the narrowing lust of  
 gold;  
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
 The larger heart, the kindlier  
 hand;  
 Ring out the darkness of the land,  
 Ring in the Christ that is to be

## CVII.

It is the day when he was born,  
 A bitter day that early sank  
 Behind a purple frosty bank  
 Of vapor, leaving night forlorn.

The time admits not flowers or leaves  
 To deck the banquet. Fiercely  
 flies  
 The blast of North and East, and  
 ice

Makes daggers at the sharpen'd eaves,

And bristles all the brakes and thorns  
 To yon hard crescent, as she  
 haugs

Above the wood which grides  
 and clangs  
 Its leafless ribs and iron horns

Together, in the drifts that pass  
 To darken on the rolling brine  
 That breaks the coast. But fetch  
 the wine,  
 Arrange the board and brim the glass;

Bring in great logs and let them lie,  
 To make a solid core of heat;  
 Be cheerful-minded, talk and  
 treat  
 Of all things ev'n as he were by;

We keep the day. With festal cheer,  
 With books and music, surely we  
 Will drink to him, whate'er he be,  
 And sing the songs he loved to hear.

## CVIII.

I will not shut me from my kind,  
 And, lest I stiffen into stone,  
 I will not eat my heart alone,  
 Nor feed with sighs a passing wind:

What profit lies in barren faith,  
 And vacant yearning, tho' with  
 might  
 To scale the heaven's highest  
 height,  
 Or dive below the wells of Death?

What find I in the highest place,  
 But mine own phantom chanting  
 hymns?  
 And on the depths of death there  
 swims  
 The reflex of a human face.

I'll rather take what fruit may be  
 Of sorrow under human skies:  
 'Tis held that sorrow makes us  
 wise,  
 Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

## CIX.

Heart-affluence in discursive talk  
 From household fountains never  
 dry;



The critic clearness of an eye,  
That saw thro' all the Muses' walk ;

Seraphic intellect and force  
To seize and throw the doubts of  
man ;

Impassion'd logic, which outran  
The hearer in its fiery course ;

High nature amorous of the good,  
But touch'd with no ascetic gloom ;  
And passion pure in snowy bloom  
Thro' all the years of April blood ;

A love of freedom rarely felt,  
Of freedom in her regal seat  
Of England ; not the schoolboy  
heat,  
The blind hysterics of the Celt ;

And manhood fused with female  
grace  
In such a sort, the child would  
twine  
A trustful hand, unask'd, in thine,  
And find his comfort in thy face ;

All these have been, and thee mine  
eyes  
Have look'd on : if they look'd  
in vain,  
My shame is greater who remain,  
Nor let thy wisdom make me wise.

CX.

Thy converse drew us with delight,  
The men of rathe and riper years :  
The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,  
Forgot his weakness in thy sight.

On thee the loyal-hearted hung,  
The proud was half disarm'd of  
pride,  
Nor cared the serpent at thy side  
To flicker with his double tongue.

The stern were mild when thou wert  
by.  
The flippant put himself to school  
And heard thee, and the brazen  
fool  
Was soften'd, and he knew not why ;

While I, thy nearest, sat apart,  
And felt thy triumph was as mine ;  
And loved them more, that they  
were thine,  
The graceful tact, the Christian art ;

Nor mine the sweetness or the skill,  
But mine the love that will not  
tire,  
And, born of love, the vague  
desire  
That spurs an imitative will.

CXI.

The churl in spirit, up or down  
Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,  
To him who grasps a golden ball,  
By blood a king, at heart a clown ;

The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil  
His want in forms for fashion's  
sake,  
Will let his coltish nature break  
At seasons thro' the gilded pale :

For who can always act? but he,  
To whom a thousand memories  
call,  
Not being less but more than all  
The gentleness he seem'd to be,

Best seem'd the thing he was, and  
join'd  
Each office of the social hour  
To noble manners, as the flower  
And native growth of noble mind ;

Nor ever narrowness or spite,  
Or villain fancy fleeting by,  
Drew in the expression of an eye,  
Where God and Nature met in light ;

And thus he bore without abuse  
The grand old name of gentle-  
man,  
Defamed by every charlatan,  
And soil'd with all ignoble use.

CXII.

High wisdom holds my wisdom less,  
That I, who gaze with temperate  
eyes

On glorious insufficiencies,  
Set light by narrower perfectness.

But thou, that fillest all the room  
Of all my love, art reason why  
I seem to cast a careless eye  
On souls, the lesser lords of doom.

For what wert thou? some novel  
power  
Sprang up for ever at a touch,  
And hope could never hope too  
much,  
In watching thee from hour to hour,

Large elements in order brought,  
And tracts of calm from tempest  
made,  
And world-wide fluctuation sway'd  
In vassal tides that follow'd thought.

## CXIII.

'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise ;  
Yet how much wisdom sleeps  
with thee  
Which not alone had guided me,  
But served the seasons that may rise ;

For can I doubt, who knew thee keen  
In intellect, with force and skill  
To strive, to fashion, to fulfil—  
I doubt not what thou wouldst have  
been :

A life in civic action warm,  
A soul on highest mission sent,  
A potent voice of Parliament,  
A pillar steadfast in the storm,

Should licensed boldness gather force,  
Becoming, when the time has  
birth,  
A lever to uplift the earth  
And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and  
go,  
With agonies, with energies,  
With overthrowings, and with  
cries,  
And undulations to and fro.

## CXIV.

Who loves not Knowledge? Who  
shall rail  
Against her beauty? May she  
mix  
With men and prosper! Who  
shall fix  
Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire :  
She sets her forward countenance  
And leaps into the future chance,  
Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain—  
She cannot fight the fear of death.  
What is she, cut from love and  
faith,  
But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of Demons? fiery-hot to burst  
All barriers in her onward race  
For power. Let her know her  
place ;  
She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,  
If all be not in vain ; and guide  
Her footsteps, moving side by  
side  
With wisdom, like the younger child :

For she is earthly of the mind,  
But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.  
O, friend, who camest to thy goal  
So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew like  
thee,  
Who grewest not alone in power  
And knowledge, but by year and  
hour  
In reverence and in charity.

## CXV.

Now fades the last long streak of  
snow,  
Now burgeons every maze of  
quick  
About the flowering squares, and  
thick  
By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and  
 long,  
 The distance takes a lovelier  
 hue,  
 And down'd in yonder living  
 blue  
 The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,  
 The flocks are whiter down the  
 vale,  
 And milkier every milky sail  
 On winding stream or distant sea ;

Where now the seamew pipes, or  
 dives  
 In yonder greening gleam, and  
 fly  
 The happy birds, that change  
 their sky  
 To build and brood ; that live their  
 lives

From land to land ; and in my breast  
 Spring wakens too ; and my  
 regret  
 Becomes an April violet,  
 And buds and blossoms like the rest.

## CXVI.

Is it, then, regret for buried time  
 That keenlier in sweet April  
 wakes,  
 And meets the year, and gives  
 and takes  
 The colors of the crescent prime ?

Not all : the songs, the stirring air,  
 The life re-orient out of dust,  
 Cry thro' the sense to hearten  
 trust  
 In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret : the face will shine  
 Upon me, while I muse alone ;  
 And that dear voice, I once have  
 known,  
 Still speak to me of me and mine :

Yet less of sorrow lives in me  
 For days of happy commune  
 dead ;

Less yearning for the friendship  
 fled,  
 Than some strong bond which is to be.

## CXVII.

O days and hours, your work is this  
 To hold me from my proper  
 place,  
 A little while from his embrace,  
 For fuller gain of after bliss :

That out of distance might ensue  
 Desire of nearness doubly sweet ;  
 And unto meeting when we meet,  
 Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,  
 And every span of shade that  
 steals,  
 And every kiss of toothed wheels,  
 And all the courses of the suns.

## CXVIII.

Contemplate all this work of Time,  
 The giant laboring in his youth ;  
 Nor dream of human love and  
 truth,  
 As dying Nature's earth and lime ;

But trust that those we call the dead  
 Are breathers of an ampler day  
 For ever nobler ends. They say,  
 The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,  
 And grew to seeming-random  
 forms,  
 The seeming prey of cyclic storms,  
 Till at the last arose the man ;

Who throve and branch'd from clime  
 to clime,  
 The herald of a higher race,  
 And of himself in higher place,  
 If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more ;  
 Or, crown'd with attributes of  
 woe  
 Like glories, move his course,  
 and show  
 That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,  
And heated hot with burning  
fears,  
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,  
And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly  
The reeling Faun, the sensual  
feast;  
Move upward, working out the  
beast,  
And let the ape and tiger die.

## CXX.

Doors, where my heart was used to  
beat  
So quickly, not as one that weeps  
I come once more; the city  
sleeps;  
I smell the meadow in the street;

I hear a chirp of birds; I see  
Betwixt the black fronts long-  
withdrawn  
A light-blue lane of early dawn,  
And think of early days and thee,

And bless thee, for thy lips are bland,  
And bright the friendship of thine  
eye;  
And in my thoughts with scarce  
a sigh  
I take the pressure of thine hand.

## CXX.

I trust I have not wasted breath:  
I think we are not wholly brain,  
Magnetic mockeries; not in vain,  
Like Paul with beasts, I fought with  
Death;

Not only cunning casts in clay:  
Let Science prove we are, and  
then  
What matters Science unto men,  
At least to me? I would not stay.

Let him, the wiser man who springs  
Hereafter, up from childhood  
shape  
His action like the greater ape,  
But I was *born* to other things.

## CXXI.

Sad Hesper o'er the buried sun  
And ready, thou, to die with him,  
Thou watchest all things ever dim  
And dimmer, and a glory done.

The team is loosen'd from the wain,  
The boat is drawn upon the  
shore;  
Thou listenest to the closing door,  
And life is darken'd in the brain.

Bright Phosphor, fresher for the night,  
By thee the world's great work is  
heard  
Beginning, and the wakeful bird;  
Behind thee comes the greater light:

The market boat is on the stream,  
And voices hail it from the brink;  
Thou hear'st the village hammer  
clink,  
And see'st the moving of the team.

Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name  
For what is one, the first, the last,  
Thou, like my present and my  
past,  
Thy place is changed; thou art the  
same.

## CXXII.

Oh, wast thou with me, dearest, then,  
While I rose up against my doom,  
And yearn'd to burst the folded  
gloom,  
To bare the eternal Heavens again,

To feel once more, in placid awe,  
The strong imagination roll  
A sphere of stars about my soul,  
In all her motion one with law;

If thou wert with me, and the grave  
Divide us not, be with me now,  
And enter in at breast and brow,  
Till all my blood, a fuller wave,

Be quicken'd with a livelier breath,  
And like an inconsiderate boy,  
As in the former flash of joy,  
I slip the thoughts of life and death;

And all the breeze of Fancy blows,  
 And every dew-drop paints a bow,  
 The wizard lightnings deeply glow,  
 And every thought breaks out a rose.

## CXXIII.

There rolls the deep where grew the  
 tree.  
 O earth, what changes hast thou  
 seen!  
 There where the long street roars,  
 hath been  
 The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow  
 From form to form, and nothing  
 stands;  
 They melt like mist, the solid  
 lands,  
 Like clouds they shape themselves  
 and go.

But in my spirit will I dwell,  
 And dream my dream, and hold  
 it true;  
 For tho' my lips may breathe  
 adieu,  
 I cannot think the thing farewell.

## CXXIV.

That which we dare invoke to bless;  
 Our dearest faith; our ghastliest  
 doubt;  
 He, They, One, All; within, with-  
 out;  
 The Power in darkness whom we  
 guess;

I found Him not in world or sun,  
 Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye;  
 Nor thro' the questions men may  
 try,  
 The petty cobwebs we have spun:

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,  
 I heard a voice 'believe no more'  
 And heard an ever-breaking shore  
 That tumbled in the Godless deep;

A warmth within the breast would  
 melt  
 The freezing reason's colder part,

And like a man in wrath the heart  
 Stood up and answer'd 'I have felt.'

No, like a child in doubt and fear:  
 But that blind clamor made me  
 wise;  
 Then was I as a child that cries,  
 But, crying, knows his father near;

And what I am beheld again  
 What is, and no man understands;  
 And out of darkness came the  
 hands  
 That reach thro' nature, moulding men.

## CXXV.

Whatever I have said or sung,  
 Some bitter notes my heart would  
 give,  
 Yea, tho' there often seem'd to  
 live  
 A contradiction on the tongue,

Yet Hope had never lost her youth:  
 She did but look through dimmer  
 eyes;  
 Or Love but play'd with gracious  
 lies,  
 Because he felt so fix'd in truth:

And if the song were full of care,  
 He breathed the spirit of the song;  
 And if the words were sweet and  
 strong  
 He set his royal signet there;

Abiding with me till I sail  
 To seek thee on the mystic deeps,  
 And this electric force, that keeps  
 A thousand pulses dancing, fail.

## CXXVI.

Love is and was my Lord and King,  
 And in his presence I attend  
 To hear the tidings of my friend,  
 Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my King and Lord,  
 And will be, tho' as yet I keep  
 Within his court on earth, and  
 sleep  
 Encompass'd by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel  
 Who moves about from place to  
 place,  
 And whispers to the' worlds of  
 space,  
 In the deep night, that all is well.

## CXXVII.

And all is well, tho' faith and form  
 Be sunder'd in the night of fear;  
 Well roars the storm to those  
 that hear  
 A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,  
 And justice, ev'n tho' thrice again  
 The red fool-fury of the Seine  
 Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,  
 And him, the lazar, in his rags :  
 They tremble, the sustaining  
 crags ;  
 The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood ;  
 The fortress crashes from on high,  
 The brute earth lightens to the  
 sky,  
 And the great Æon sinks in blood,

And compass'd by the fires of Hell ;  
 While thou, dear spirit, happy  
 star,  
 O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,  
 And smilest, knowing all is well.

## CXXVIII.

The love that rose on stronger wings,  
 Unpalsied when he met with  
 Death,  
 Is comrade of the lesser faith  
 That sees the course of human things.

No doubt vast eddies in the flood  
 Of onward time shall yet be made,  
 And throned races may degrade ;  
 Yet O ye mysteries of good,

Wild Hours that fly with Hope and  
 Fear,  
 If all your office had to do

With old results that look like  
 new ;  
 If this were all your mission here,

To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,  
 To fool the crowd with glorious  
 lies,  
 To cleave a creed in sects and  
 cries,  
 To change the bearing of a word,

To shift an arbitrary power,  
 To cramp the student at his desk,  
 To make old bareness picturesque  
 And tuft with grass a feudal tower ;

Why then my scorn might well descend  
 On you and yours. I see in part  
 That all, as in some piece of art,  
 Is toil coöperant to an end.

## CXXIX.

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,  
 So far, so near in woe and weal ;  
 O loved the most, when most I  
 feel  
 There is a lower and a higher ;

Known and unknown ; human, divine ;  
 Sweet human hand and lips and  
 eye ;  
 Dear heavenly friend that canst  
 not die,  
 Mine, mine, for ever, ev'èr mine ;

Strange friend, past, present, and to  
 be ;  
 Loved deeplier, darklier under-  
 stood ;  
 Behold, I dream a dream of good,  
 And mingle all the world with thee.

## CXXX.

Thy voice is on the rolling air ;  
 I hear thee where the waters run ;  
 Thou standest in the rising sun,  
 And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;  
 But tho' I seem in star and flower  
 To feel thee some diffusive power,  
 I do not therefore love thee less :

My love involves the love before ;  
My love is vaster passion now ;  
Tho' mix'd with God and Nature  
thou,  
I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;  
I have thee still, and I rejoice ;  
I prosper, circled with thy voice ;  
I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

## CXXXI.

O living will that shalt endure  
When all that seems shall suffer  
shock,  
Rise in the spiritual rock,  
Flow thro' our deeds and make them  
pure,

That we may lift from out of dust  
A voice as unto him that hears,  
A cry above the conquer'd years  
To one that with us works, and trust,

With faith that comes of self-control,  
The truths that never can be  
proved  
Until we close with all we loved,  
And all we flow from, soul in soul.

O true and tried, so well and long,  
Demand not thou a marriage lay ;  
In that it is thy marriage day  
Is music more than any song.

Nor have I felt so much of bliss  
Since first he told me that he  
loved  
A daughter of our house ; nor  
proved  
Since that dark day a day like this ;

Tho' I since then have number'd o'er  
Some thrice three years : they  
went and came,  
Remade the blood and changed  
the frame,  
And yet is love not less, but more ;

No longer caring to embalm  
In dying songs a dead regret,

But like a statue solid-set,  
And moulded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more  
Than in the summers that are  
flown,  
For I myself with these have  
grown  
To something greater than before ;

Which makes appear the songs I  
made  
As echoes out of weaker times,  
As half but idle brawling rhymes,  
The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridal flower,  
That must be made a wife ere  
noon ?  
She enters, glowing like the moon  
Of Eden on its bridal bower :

On me she bends her blissful eyes  
And then on thee ; they meet thy  
look  
And brighten like the star that  
shook  
Betwixt the palms of paradise.

O when her life was yet in bud,  
He too foretold the perfect rose.  
For thee she grew, for thee she  
grows  
For ever, and as fair as good.

And thou art worthy ; full of power ;  
As gentle ; liberal-minded, great,  
Consistent ; wearing all that  
weight  
Of learning lightly like a flower.

But now set out : the noon is near,  
And I must give away the bride ;  
She fears not, or with thee beside  
And me behind her, will not fear.

For I that danced her on my knee,  
That watch'd her on her nurse's  
arm,  
That shielded all her life from  
harm  
At last must part with her to thee ;

Now waiting to be made a wife,  
 Her feet, my darling, on the  
 dead;  
 Their pensive tablets round her  
 head,  
 And the most living words of life

Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,  
 The 'wilt thou' answer'd, and  
 again  
 The 'wilt thou' ask'd, till out of  
 twain  
 Her sweet 'I will' has made you one.

Now sign your names, which shall be  
 read,  
 Mute symbols of a joyful morn,  
 By village eyes as yet unborn;  
 The names are sign'd, and overhead

Begins the clash and clang that tells  
 The joy to every wandering  
 breeze;  
 The blind wall rocks, and on the  
 trees  
 The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours  
 Await them. Many a merry face  
 Salutes them—maidens of the  
 place,  
 That pelt us in the porch with  
 flowers.

O happy hour, behold the bride  
 With him to whom her hand I  
 gave.  
 They leave the porch, they pass  
 the grave  
 That has to-day its sunny side.

To-day the grave is bright for me,  
 For them the light of life in-  
 creased,  
 Who stayed to share the morning  
 feast,  
 Who rests to-night beside the sea.

Let all my genial spirits advance  
 To meet and greet a whiter sun;  
 My drooping memory will not  
 shun  
 The foaming grape of eastern France.

It circles round, and fancy plays,  
 And hearts are warm'd and faces  
 bloom,  
 As drinking health to bride and  
 groom  
 We wish them store of happy days.

Nor count me all to blame if I  
 Conjecture of a stiller guest,  
 Perchance, perchance, among the  
 rest,  
 And, tho' in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,  
 And those white-favor'd horses  
 wait;  
 They rise, but linger; it is late;  
 Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark  
 From little cloudlets on the grass,  
 But sweeps away as out we pass  
 To range the woods, to roam the park,

Discussing how their courtship grew,  
 And talk of others that are wed,  
 And how she look'd, and what he  
 said,  
 And back we come at fall of dew.

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,  
 The shade of passing thought,  
 the wealth  
 Of words and wit, the double  
 health,  
 The crowning cup, the three-times-  
 three,

And last the dance;—till I retire:  
 Dumb is that tower which spake  
 so loud,  
 And high in heaven the stream-  
 ing cloud,  
 And on the downs a rising fire:

And rise, O moon, from yonder down,  
 Till over down and over dale  
 All night the shining vapor sail  
 And pass the silent-lighted town,

The white-faced halls, the glancing  
 rills,  
 And catch at every mountain head,



And o'er the friths that branch  
and spread  
Their sleeping silver thro' the hills ;

And touch . . . n shade the bridal  
doors,  
With tender gloom the roof, the  
wall ;  
And breaking let the splendour  
fall  
To spangle all the happy shores

By which they rest, and ocean sounds,  
And, star and system rolling  
past,  
A soul shall draw from out the  
vast  
And strike his being into bounds,

And, moved thro' life of lower phase,  
Result in man, be born and think,  
And act and love, a closer link  
Betwixt us and the crowning race

Of those that, eye to eye, shall look  
On knowledge ; under whose  
command  
Is Earth and Earth's, and in their  
hand  
Is Nature like an open book ;

No longer half-akin to brute,  
For all we thought and loved and  
did,  
And hoped, and suffer'd, is but  
seed  
Of what in them is flower and fruit ;

Whereof the man, that with me trod  
This planet, was a noble type  
Appearing ere the times were ripe,  
That friend of mine who lives in God,

That God, which ever lives and loves,  
One God, one law, one element,  
And one far-off divine event,  
To which the whole creation moves.

IDYLLS OF THE KING.

IN TWELVE BOOKS.

'*Flos Regum Arthurus.*'—JOSEPH OF EXETER.

DEDICATION.

THESE to His Memory—since he  
held them dear,  
Perchance as finding there uncon-  
sciously  
Some image of himself—I dedicate,  
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears—  
These Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me  
Scarce other than my king's ideal  
knight,  
Who revered his conscience as  
his king ;  
Whose glory was, redressing human  
wrong ;  
Who spake no slander, no, nor  
listen'd to it ;  
Who loved one only and who clave  
to her—  
Her—over all whose realms to their  
last isle,

Commingled with the gloom of im-  
minent war,  
The shadow of His loss drew like  
eclipse,  
Darkening the world. We have lost  
him : he is gone :  
We know him now : all narrow jeal-  
ousies  
Are silent ; and we see him as he  
moved,  
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd,  
wise,  
With what sublime repression of him-  
self.  
And in what limits, and how tenderly :  
Not swaying to this faction or to  
that ;  
Not making his high place the lawless  
perch  
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-  
ground

For pleasure; but thro' all this tract  
 of years  
 Wearing the white flower of a blame-  
 less life,  
 Before a thousand peering littlenesses,  
 In that fierce light which beats upon a  
 throne,  
 And blackens every blot: for where  
 is he,  
 Who dares foreshadow for an only son  
 A lovelier life, a more unstain'd,  
 than his?  
 Or how should England dreaming of  
*his* sons  
 Hope more for these than some in-  
 heritance  
 Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,  
 Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,  
 Laborious for her people and her  
 poor—  
 Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler  
 day—  
 Far-sighted summoner of War and  
 Waste  
 To fruitful strifes and rivalries of  
 peace—  
 Sweet nature gilded by the gracious  
 gleam  
 Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,

Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince  
 indeed,  
 Beyond all titles, and a household  
 name,  
 Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the  
 Good.

Break not, O woman's-heart, but  
 still endure;  
 Break not, for thou art Royal, but  
 endure,  
 Remembering all the beauty of that  
 star  
 Which shone so close beside Thee  
 that ye made  
 One light together, but has past and  
 leaves  
 The Crown a lonely splendor.  
 May all love,  
 His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow  
 Thee,  
 The love of all Thy sons encompass  
 Thee,  
 The love of all Thy daughters cherish  
 Thee,  
 The love of all Thy people comfort  
 Thee,  
 Till God's love set Thee at his side  
 again!

#### THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

LEODOGRAN, the King of Cameliard,  
 Had one fair daughter, and none other  
 child;  
 And she was fairest of all flesh on  
 earth,  
 Guinevere, and in her his one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur  
 came  
 Ruled in this isle, and ever waging  
 war  
 Each upon other, wasted all the land;  
 And still from time to time the heathen  
 host  
 Swarm'd overseas, and harried what  
 was left.  
 And so there grew great tracts of  
 wilderness,  
 Wherein the beast was ever more and  
 more,

But man was less and less, till Arthur  
 came.  
 For first Aurelius lived and fought  
 and died,  
 And after him King Uther fought and  
 died,  
 But either fail'd to make the kingdom  
 one.  
 And after these King Arthur for a space,  
 And thro' the puissance of his Table  
 Round,  
 Drew all their petty princedom under  
 him,  
 Their king and head, and made a  
 realm, and reign'd.

And thus the land of Cameliard was  
 waste,  
 Thick with wet woods, and many a  
 beast therein,

And none or few to scare or chase the  
beast;  
So that wild dog, and wolf and boar  
and bear  
Came night and day, and rooted in  
the fields,  
And wallow'd in the gardens of the  
King.  
And ever and anon the wolf would steal  
The children and devour, but now  
and then,  
Her own brood lost or dead, lent her  
fierce teat  
To human sucklings; and the chil-  
dren, housed  
In her foul den, there at their meat  
would growl,  
And mock their foster-mother on four  
feet,  
Till, straighten'd, they grew up to wolf-  
like men,  
Worse than the wolves. And King  
Leodogran  
Groan'd for the Roman legions here  
again,  
And Cæsar's eagle: then his brother  
king,  
Urien, assail'd him: last a heathen  
horde,  
Reddening the sun with smoke and  
earth with blood,  
And on the spike that split the  
mother's heart  
Spitting the ehild, brake on him, till,  
amazed,  
He knew not whither he should turn  
for aid.

But—for he heard of Arthur newly  
crown'd,  
Tho' not without an uproar made by  
those  
Who cried, 'He is not Uther's son'—  
the King  
Sent to him, saying, 'Arise, and help  
us thou!  
For here between the man and beast  
we die.'

And Arthur yet had done no deed  
of arms,  
But heard the call, and came: and  
Guinevere

Stood by the castle walls to watch  
him pass;  
But since he neither wore on helm or  
shield  
The golden symbol of his kinglihood,  
But rode a simple knight among his  
knights,  
And many of these in richer arms than  
he,  
She saw him not, or mark'd not, if  
she saw,  
One among many, tho' his face was  
bare.  
But Arthur, looking downward as he  
past,  
Felt the light of her eyes into his life  
Smite on the sudden, yet rode on, and  
pitch'd  
His tents beside the forest. Then he  
drave  
The heathen; after, slew the beast,  
and fell'd  
The forest, letting in the sun, and made  
Broad pathways for the hunter and  
the knight  
And so return'd.

For while he linger'd there,  
A doubt that ever smoulder'd in the  
hearts  
Of those great Lords and Barons of  
his realm  
Flash'd forth and into war: for most  
of these,  
Colleaguung with a score of petty kings,  
Made head against him, crying, 'Who  
is he  
That he should rule us? who hath  
proven him  
King Uther's son? for lo! we look at  
him,  
And find nor face nor bearing, limbs  
nor voice,  
Are like to those of Uther whom we  
knew.  
This is the son of Gorlois, not the  
King;  
This is the son of Anton, not the King.'

And Arthur, passing thence to  
battle, felt  
Travail, and throes and agonies of the  
life,

Desiring to be join'd with Guinevere ;  
And thinking as he rode, 'Her father  
said

That there between the man and beast  
they die.

Shall I not lift her from this land of  
beasts

Up to my throne, and side by side  
with me ?

What happiness to reign a lonely king,  
Vext—O ye stars that shudder over  
me,

O earth that soundest hollow under  
me,

Vext with waste dreams? for saving I  
be join'd

To her that is the fairest under heaven,  
I seem as nothing in the mighty world,  
And cannot will my will, nor work my  
work

Wholly, nor make myself in mine  
own realm

Victor and lord. But were I join'd  
with her,

Then might we live together as one  
life,

And reigning with one will in every-  
thing

Have power on this dark land to  
lighten it,

And power on this dead world to  
make it live.'

Thereafter—as he speaks who tells  
the tale—

When Arthur reach'd a field-of-battle  
bright

With pitch'd pavilions of his foe, the  
world

Was all so clear about him, that he  
saw

The smallest rock far on the faintest  
hill,

And even in high day the morning  
star.

So when the King had set his banner  
broad,

At once from either side, with trump-  
et-blast,

And shouts, and clarions shrilling  
unto blood,

The long-lanced battle let their horses  
run.

And now the Barons and the kings  
prevail'd,

And now the King, as here and there  
that war

Went swaying; but the Powers who  
walk the world

Made lightnings and great thunders  
over him,

And dazed all eyes, till Arthur by  
main might,

And mightier of his hands with every  
blow,

And leading all his knighthood threw  
the kings

Carados, Urien, Cradlefont of  
Wales,

Claudias, and Clariance of Northum-  
berland,

The King Brandagoras of Latangor,  
With Anguisant of Erin, Morgan-  
ore,

And Lot of Orkney. Then, before a  
voice

As dreadful as the shout of one who  
sees

To one who sins, and deems himself  
alone

And all the world asleep, they swerved.  
and brake

Flying, and Arthur call'd to stay the  
brands

That hack'd among the flyers, 'Ho!  
they yield!'

So like a painted battle the war stood  
Silenced, the living quiet as the dead,  
And in the heart of Arthur joy was  
lord.

He laugh'd upon his warrior whom he  
loved

And honor'd most. 'Thou dost not  
doubt me King,

So well thine arm hath wrought for  
me to-day.'

'Sir and my liege,' he cried, 'the fire  
of God

Descends upon thee in the battle-  
field:

I know thee for my King!' Whereat  
the two,

For each had warded either in the  
fight,

Swore on the field of death a death-  
less love.

And Arthur said, 'Man's word is  
God in man:  
Let chance what will, I trust thee to  
the death.'

Then quickly from the foughthen  
field he sent  
Ulfus, and Brastias, and Bedivere.  
His new-made knights, to King  
Leodogran,  
Saying, 'If I in aught have served  
thee well,  
Give me thy daughter Guinevere to  
wife.'

Whom when he heard, Leodogran  
in heart  
Debating—'How should I that am a  
king,  
However much he help me at my need,  
Give my one daughter saving to a king,  
And a king's son?'—lifted his voice,  
and call'd  
A hoary man, his chamberlain, to  
whom  
He trusted all things, and of him  
required  
His counsel: 'Knowest thou aught  
of Arthur's birth?'

Then spake the hoary chamberlain  
and said,  
'Sir King, there be but two old men  
that know:  
And each is twice as old as I; and  
one  
Is Merlin, the wise man that ever  
served  
King Uther thro' his magic art; and  
one  
Is Merlin's master (so they call him)  
Bleys,  
Who taught him magic; but the  
scholar ran  
Before the master, and so far, that  
Bleys,  
Laid magic by, and sat him down,  
and wrote  
All things and whatsoever Merlin did  
In one great annal-book, where after  
years  
Will learn the secret of our Arthur's  
birth.'

To whom the King Leodogran  
replied,  
'O friend, had I been holpen half as  
well  
By this King Arthur as by thee to-  
day,  
Then beast and man had had their  
share of me:  
But summon here before us yet once  
more  
Ulfus, and Brastias, and Bedivere.'

Then, when they came before him,  
the King said,  
'I have seen the cuckoo chased by  
lesser fowl,  
And reason in the chase: but where-  
fore now  
Do these your lords stir up the heat  
of war,  
Some calling Arthur born of Gorlois,  
Others of Anton? Tell me, ye your-  
selves,  
Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's  
son?'

And Ulfus and Brastias answer'd,  
'Ay.'  
Then Bedivere, the first of all his  
knights  
Knighted by Arthur at his crowning,  
spake—  
For bold in heart and act and word  
was he,  
Whenever slander breathed against  
the King—

'Sir, there be many rumors on this  
head:  
For there be those who hate him in  
their hearts,  
Call him baseborn, and since his ways  
are sweet,  
And theirs are bestial, hold him less  
than man:  
And there be those who deem him  
more than man,  
And dream he dropt from heaven: but  
my belief  
In all this matter—so ye care to  
learn—  
Sir, for ye know that in King Uther's  
time

The prince and warrior Gorlois, he  
 that held  
 Tintagil castle by the Cornish sea,  
 Was wedded with a winsome wife,  
 Ygerne:  
 And daughters had she borne him,—  
 onc whereof,  
 Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney,  
 Bellicent,  
 Hath ever like a loyal sister cleaved  
 To Arthur,—but a son she had not  
 borne.  
 And Uther cast upon her eyes of love:  
 But she, a stainless wife to Gorlois,  
 So loathed the bright dishonor of his  
 love,  
 That Gorlois and King Uther went to  
 war:  
 And overthrown was Gorlois and  
 slain.  
 Then Uther in his wrath and heat  
 besieged  
 Ygerne within Tintagil, where her  
 men,  
 Seeing the mighty swarm about their  
 walls,  
 Left her and fled, and Uther enter'd  
 in,  
 And there was none to call to but  
 himself.  
 So, compass'd by the power of the  
 King,  
 Enforced she was to wed him in her  
 tears,  
 And with a shameful swiftness: after-  
 ward,  
 Not many moons, King Uther died  
 himself,  
 Moaning and wailing for an heir to  
 rule  
 After him, lest the realm should go to  
 wrack.  
 And that same night, the night of the  
 new year,  
 By reason of the bitterness and grief  
 That vext his mother, all before his  
 time  
 Was Arthur born, and all as soon as  
 born  
 Deliver'd at a secret postern-gate  
 To Merlin, to be holden far apart  
 Until his hour should come; because  
 the lords

Of that fierce day were as the lords of  
 this,  
 Wild beasts, and surely would have  
 torn the child  
 Piecemeal among them, had they  
 known; for each  
 But sought to rule for his own self  
 and hand,  
 And many hated Uther for the sake  
 Of Gorlois. Wherefore Merlin took  
 the child,  
 And gave him to Sir Anton, an old  
 knight  
 And ancient friend of Uther; and his  
 wife  
 Nursed the young prince, and rear'd  
 him with her own;  
 And no man knew. And ever since  
 the lords  
 Have foughten like wild beasts among  
 themselves,  
 So that the realm has gone to wrack:  
 but now,  
 This year, when Merlin (for his hour  
 had come)  
 Brought Arthur forth, and set him in  
 the hall,  
 Proclaiming, "Here is Uther's heir,  
 your king,"  
 A hundred voices cried, "Away with  
 him!  
 No kings of ours! a son of Gorlois  
 he,  
 Or else the child of Anton, and no  
 king,  
 Or else baseborn." Yet Merlin thro'  
 his craft,  
 And while the people clamor'd for a  
 king,  
 Had Arthur crown'd; but after, the  
 great lords  
 Banded, and so brake out in open war.

Then while the King debated with  
 himself  
 If Arthur were the child of shameful-  
 ness,  
 Or born the son of Gorlois, after  
 death,  
 Or Uther's son, and born before his  
 time,  
 Or whether there were truth in any-  
 thing

Said by these three, there came to  
Cameliard,  
With Gawain and young Modred, her  
two sons,  
Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney,  
Bellicent;  
Whom as he could, not as he would,  
the King  
Made feast for, saying, as they sat at  
meat,  
'A doubtful throne is ice on sum-  
mer seas.  
Ye come from Arthur's court. Victor  
his men  
Report him! Yea, but ye—think ye  
this king—  
So many those that hate him, and so  
strong,  
So few his knights, however brave  
they be—  
Hath body enow to hold his foemen  
down?'

'O King,' she cried, 'and I will tell  
thee: few,  
Few, but all brave, all of one mind  
with him;  
For I was near him when the savage  
yells  
Of Uther's peerage died, and Arthur  
sat  
Crown'd on the dais, and his warriors  
cried,  
"Be thou the king, and we will work  
thy will  
Who love thee." Then the King in  
low deep tones,  
And simple words of great authority,  
Bound them by so strait vows to his  
own self,  
That when they rose, knighted from  
kneeling, some  
Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,  
Some flush'd, and others dazed, as one  
who wakes  
Half-blinded at the coming of a light.

'But when he spake and cheer'd his  
Table Round  
With large, divine, and comfortable  
words,  
Beyond my tongue to tell thee—I  
beheld

From eye to eye thro' all their Order  
flash  
A momentary likeness of the King:  
And ere it left their faces, thro' the  
cross  
And those around it and the Crucified,  
Down from the casement over Arthur,  
smote  
Flame-color, vert and azure, in three  
rays,  
One falling upon each of three fair  
queens,  
Who stood in silence near his throne,  
the friends  
Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with  
bright  
Sweet faces, who will help him at his  
need.

'And there I saw mage Merlin,  
whose vast wit  
And hundred winters are but as the  
hands  
Of loyal vassals toiling for their liege.

'And near him stood the Lady of  
the Lake,  
Who knows a subtler magic than his  
own—  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful.  
She gave the King his huge cross-  
hilted sword,  
Whereby to drive the heathen out:  
a mist  
Of incense curl'd about her, and her  
face  
Wellnigh was hidden in the minster  
gloom;  
But there was heard among the holy  
hymns  
A voice as of the waters, for she  
dwells  
Down in a deep; calm, whatsoever  
storms  
May sink the world, and when the  
surface rolls,  
Hath power to walk the waters like  
our Lord.

'There likewise I beheld Excalibur  
Before him at his crowning borne, the  
sword

That rose from out the bosom of the lake,  
 And Arthur row'd across and took it—rich  
 With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,  
 Bewildering heart and eye—the blade so bright  
 That men are blinded by it—on one side,  
 Graven in the oldest tongue of all this world,  
 "Take me," but turn the blade and ye shall see,  
 And written in the speech ye speak yourself,  
 "Cast me away!" And sad was Arthur's face  
 Taking it, but old Merlin counsell'd him,  
 "Take thou and strike! the time to cast away  
 Is yet far-off." So this great brand the king  
 Took, and by this will beat his foemen down.'

Thereat Leodogran rejoiced, but thought  
 To sift his doubtings to the last, and ask'd,  
 Fixing full eyes of question on her face,  
 'The swallow and the swift are near akin,  
 But thou art closer to this noble prince,  
 Being his own dear sister;' and she said,  
 'Daughter of Gorlois and Ygerne am I;  
 'And therefore Arthur's sister?' ask'd the King.  
 She answer'd, 'These be secret things,' and sign'd  
 To those two sons to pass, and let them be.  
 And Gawain went, and breaking into song  
 Sprang out, and follow'd by his flying hair  
 Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he saw:  
 But Modred laid his ear beside the doors,

And there half-heard; the same that afterward  
 Struck for the throne, and striking found his doom.

And then the Queen made answer,  
 'What know I?  
 For dark my mother was in eyes and hair,  
 And dark in hair and eyes am I; and dark  
 Was Gorlois, yea and dark was Uther too,  
 Wellnigh to blackness; but this King is fair  
 Beyond the race of Britons and of men.  
 Moreover, always in my mind I hear  
 A cry from out the dawning of my life,  
 A mother weeping, and I hear her say,  
 "O that ye had some brother, pretty one,  
 To guard thee on the rough ways of the world."

'Ay,' said the King, 'and hear ye such a cry?  
 But when did Arthur chance upon thee first?'

'O King!' she cried, 'and I will tell thee true:  
 He found me first when yet a little maid:  
 Beaten I had been for a little fault  
 Whereof I was not guilty; and out I ran  
 And flung myself down on a bank of heath,  
 And hated this fair world and all therein,  
 And wept, and wish'd that I were dead; and he—  
 I know not whether of himself he came,  
 Or brought by Merlin, who, they say, can walk  
 Unseen at pleasure—he was at my side,  
 And spake sweet words, and comforted my heart,



And dried my tears, being a child  
with me.  
And many a time he came, and ever-  
more  
As I grew greater grew with me; and  
sad  
At times he seem'd, and sad with him  
was I,  
Stern too at times, and then I loved  
him not,  
But sweet again, and then I loved  
him well.  
And now of late I see him less and  
less,  
But those first days had golden hours  
for me,  
For then I surely thought he would be  
king.

‘ But let me tell thee now another  
tale :  
For Bleys, our Merlin’s master, as  
they say,  
Died but of late, and sent his cry to  
me,  
To hear him speak before he left his  
life.  
Shrunk like a fairy changeling lay the  
mage ;  
And when I enter’d told me that him-  
self  
And Merlin ever served about the  
King,  
Uther, before he died; and on the  
night  
When Uther in Tintagil past away  
Moaning and wailing for an heir, the  
two  
Left the still King, and passing forth  
to breathe,  
Then from the castle gateway by the  
chasm  
Descending thro’ the dismal night—a  
night  
In which the bounds of heaven and  
earth were lost—  
Beheld, so high upon the dreary deeps  
It seem’d in heaven, a ship, the shape  
thereof  
A dragon wing’d, and all from stem  
to stern  
Bright with a shining people on the  
decks,

And gone as soon as seen. And then  
the two  
Dropt to the cove, and watch’d the  
great sea fall,  
Wave after wave, each mightier than  
the last,  
Till last, a ninth one, gathering half  
the deep  
And full of voices, slowly rose and  
plunged  
Roaring, and all the wave was in a  
flame :  
And down the wave and in the flame  
was borne  
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin’s  
feet,  
Who stooped and caught the babe, and  
cried “ The King !  
Here is an heir for Uther ! ” And the  
fringe  
Of that great breaker, sweeping up  
the strand,  
Lash’d at the wizard as he spake the  
word,  
And all at once all round him rose in  
fire,  
So that the child and he were clothed  
in fire.  
And presently thereafter follow’d calm,  
Free sky and stars : “ And this same  
child,” he said,  
“ Is he who reigns; nor could I part  
in peace  
Till this were told.” And saying this  
the seer  
Went thro’ the strait and dreadful pass  
of death,  
Not ever to be question’d any more  
Save on the further side; but when I  
met  
Merlin, and ask’d him if these things  
were truth—  
The shining dragon and the naked  
child  
Descending in the glory of the seas—  
He laugh’d as is his wont, and an-  
swer’d me  
In riddling triplets of old time, and  
said :

“ Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow  
in the sky!  
A young man will be wiser by and by;

An old man's wit may wander ere he die.

Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the lea!

And truth is this to me, and that to thee;

And truth or clothed or naked let it be.

Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom blows:

Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who knows?

From the great deep to the great deep he goes."

' So Merlin riddling anger'd me; but thou

Fear not to give this King thine only child,

Guinevere: so great bards of him will sing

Hereafter; and dark sayings from of old

Ranging and ringing thro' the minds of men,

And echo'd by old folk beside their fires For comfort after their wage-work is done,

Speak of the King; and Merlin in our time

Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn

Tho' men may wound him that he will not die,

But pass, again to come; and then or now

Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,

Till these and all men hail him for their king.'

She spake and King Leodogran rejoiced.

But musing 'Shall I answer yea or nay?'

Doubted, and drowsed, nodded and slept, and saw,

Dreaming, a slope of land that ever grew,

Field after field, up to a height, the peak

Haze-hidden, and thereon a phantom king,

Now looming, and now lost; and on the slope

The sword rose, the hind fell, the herd was driven,

Fire glimpsed; and all the land from roof and rick,

In drifts of smoke before a rolling wind,

Stream'd to the peak, and mingled with the haze

And made it thicker; while the phantom king

Sent out at times a voice; and here or there

Stood one who pointed toward the voice, the rest

Slew on and burnt, crying, 'No king of ours,

No son of Uther, and no king of ours;'

Till with a wink his dream was changed, the haze

Descended, and the solid earth became As nothing, but the King stood out in heaven,

Crown'd. And Leodogran awoke, and sent

Ulfius, and Brastias and Bedivere,

Back to the court of Arthur answering yea.

Then Arthur charged his warrior whom he loved

And honor'd most, Sir Lancelot, to ride forth

And bring the Queen;—and watch'd him from the gates:

And Lancelot past away among the flowers.

(For then was latter April) and return'd

Among the flowers, in May, with Guinevere.

To whom arrived, by Dubric the high saint,

Chief of the church in Britain, and before

The stateliest of her altar-shrines, the King

That morn was married, while in stainless white,

The fair beginners of a nobler time,

And glorying in their vows and him, his knights

Stood round him, and rejoicing in his joy.



"THEY PUSH'D US, DOWN THE STEPS, AND THRO' THE COURT,"— *Page 62.*



Far shone the fields of May thro' open  
door,  
The sacred altar blossom'd white with  
May,  
The Sun of May descended on their  
King,  
They gazed on all earth's beauty in  
their Queen,  
Roll'd incense, and there past along  
the hyrns  
A voice as of the waters, while the two  
Sware at the shrine of Christ a death-  
less love :  
And Arthur said, ' Behold, thy doom is  
mine.  
Let chance what will, I love thee to  
the death !'  
To whom the Queen replied with  
drooping eyes,  
' King and my lord, I love thee to the  
death !'  
And holy Dubric spread his hands and  
spake,  
' Reign ye, and live and love, and make  
the world  
Other, and may thy Queen be one with  
thee,  
And all this Order of thy Table Round  
Fulfil the boundless purpose of their  
King !'

So Dubric said ; but when they left  
the shrine  
Great Lords from Rome before the  
portal stood,  
In scornful stillness gazing as they  
past ;  
Then while they paced a city all on  
fire  
With sun and cloth of gold, the trum-  
pets blew,  
And Arthur's knighthood sang before  
the King :—

' Blow trumpet, for the world is  
white with May ;  
Blow trumpet, the long night hath  
roll'd away !  
Blow thro' the living world—" Let the  
King reign."

' Shall Rome or Heathen rule in  
Arthur's realm ?

Flash brand and lance, fall battleaxe  
upon helm,  
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand ! Let  
the King reign.

' Strike for the King and live ! his  
knights have heard  
That God hath told the King a secret  
word.  
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand ! Let  
the King reign.

' Blow trumpet ! he will lift us from  
the dust.  
Blow trumpet ! live the strength and  
die the lust !  
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand !  
Let the King reign.

' Strike for the King and die ! and  
if thou diest,  
The King is King, and ever wills the  
highest.  
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand !  
Let the King reign.

' Blow, for our Sun is mighty in his  
May !  
Blow, for our Sun is mightier day by  
day !  
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand !  
Let the King reign.

' The King will follow Christ, and  
we the King  
In whom high God hath breathed a  
secret thing.  
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand ! Let  
the King reign.'

So sang the knighthood, moving to  
their hall.  
There at the banquet those great  
Lords from Rome,  
The slowly-fading mistress of the  
world,  
Strode in, and claim'd their tribute as  
of yore.  
But Arthur spake, ' Behold, for these  
have sworn  
To wage my wars, and worship me  
their King ;

The old order changeth, yielding  
place to new;  
And we that fight for our fair father  
Christ,  
Secing that ye be grown too weak and  
old  
To drive the heathen from your  
Roman wall,  
No tribute will we pay: ' so those  
great lords  
Drew back in wrath, and Arthur  
strove with Rome.

And Arthur and his knight hood for  
a space  
Were all one will, and thro' that  
strength the King  
Drew in the petty pryncedoms under  
him,  
Fought, and in twelve great battles  
overcame  
The heathen hordes and made a realm  
and reign'd.

## THE ROUND TABLE.

GARETH AND LYNETTE.  
THE MARRIAGE OF GERAINTE.  
GERAINTE AND ENID.  
BALIN AND BALAN.  
MEELIN AND VIVIEN.

LANCELOT AND ELAINE.  
THE HOLY GRAIL.  
PELLEAS AND ETTARRE.  
THE LAST TOURNAMENT.  
GUINEVERE.

## GARETH AND LYNETTE.

THE last tall son of Lot and Belli-  
cent,  
And tallest, Gareth, in a showerful  
spring  
Stared at the spate. A slender-  
shafted Pine  
Lost footing, fell, and so was whirl'd  
away.  
'How he went down,' said Gareth,  
'as a false knight  
Or evil king before my lance if lance  
Were mine to use—O senseless cata-  
ract,  
Bearing all down in thy precipitancy—  
And yet thou art but swollen with  
cold snows  
And mine is living blood: thou dost  
His will,  
The Maker's, and not knowest, and I  
that know,  
Have strength and wit, in my good  
mother's hall  
Linger with vacillating obedience,  
Prison'd, and kept and coax'd and  
whistled to—  
Since the good mother holds me still  
a child!  
Good mother is bad mother unto me!  
A worse were better; yet no worse  
would I.

Heaven yield her for it, but in me put  
force  
To weary her ears with one continu-  
ous prayer,  
Until she let me fly discaiged to sweep  
In ever-highering eagle-circles up  
To the great Sun of Glory, and thence  
swoop  
Down upon all things base, and dash  
them dead,  
A knight of Arthur, working out his  
will,  
To cleanse the world. Why, Gawain,  
when he came  
With Modred hither in the summer-  
time,  
Ask'd me to tilt with him, the proven  
knight.  
Modred for want of worthier was the  
judge.  
Then I so shook him in the saddle,  
he said,  
"Thou hast half prevail'd against  
me," said so—he—  
Tho' Modred biting his thin lips was  
mute,  
For he is always sullen: what care I?'

And Gareth went, and hovering  
round her chair  
Ask'd, 'Mother, tho' ye count me  
still the child,

Sweet mother, do ye love the child?'  
 She laugh'd,  
 'Thou art but a wild-goose to ques-  
 tion it.'  
 'Then, mother, an ye love the child,'  
 he said,  
 'Being a goose and rather tame than  
 wild,  
 Hear the child's story.' 'Yea, my  
 well-beloved,  
 An 'twere but of the goose and golden  
 eggs.'

And Gareth answer'd her with  
 kindling eyes,  
 'Nay, nay, good mother, but this egg  
 of mine  
 Was finer gold than any goose can  
 lay;  
 For this an Eagle, a royal Eagle, laid  
 Almost beyond eye-reach, on such a  
 palm  
 As glitters gilded in thy Book of  
 Hours.  
 And there was ever haunting round  
 the palm  
 A lusty youth, but poor, who often  
 saw  
 The splendor sparkling from aloft,  
 and thought  
 "An I could climb and lay my hand  
 upon it,  
 Then were I wealthier than a leash of  
 kings."  
 But ever when he reach'd a hand to  
 climb,  
 One, that had loved him from his  
 childhood, caught  
 And stay'd him, "Climb not lest  
 thou break thy neck,  
 I charge thee by my love," and so the  
 boy,  
 Sweet mother, neither clomb, nor  
 brake his neck,  
 But brake his very heart in pining for  
 it,  
 And past away.'

To whom the mother said,  
 'True love, sweet son, had risk'd him-  
 self and climb'd,  
 And handed down the golden treasure  
 to him.'

And Gareth answer'd her with kind-  
 ling eyes,  
 'Gold? said I gold?—ay then, why  
 he, or she,  
 Or whose'er it was, or half the world  
 Had ventured—*had* the thing I spake  
 of been  
 Mere gold—but this was all of that  
 true steel,  
 Whereof they forged the brand  
 Excalibur,  
 And lightnings play'd about it in the  
 storm,  
 And all the little fowl were flurried at it,  
 And there were cries and clashing in  
 the nest,  
 That sent him from his senses: let  
 me go.'

Then Bellicent bemoan'd herself  
 and said,  
 'Hast thou no pity upon my loneli-  
 ness?  
 Lo, where thy father Lot beside the  
 hearth  
 Lies like a log, and all but smoulder'd  
 out!  
 For ever since when traitor to the  
 King  
 He fought against him in the Barons'  
 war,  
 And Arthur gave him back his terri-  
 tory,  
 His age hath slowly droopt, and now  
 lies there  
 A yet-warm corpse, and yet unbur-  
 able,  
 No more; nor sees, nor hears, nor  
 speaks, nor knows.  
 And both thy brethren are in Arthur's  
 hall,  
 Albeit neither loved with that full love  
 I feel for thee, nor worthy such a love:  
 Stay therefore thou; red berries  
 charm the bird,  
 And thee, mine innocent, the jousts,  
 the wars,  
 Who, never knewest finger-ache, nor  
 pang  
 Of wench'd or broken limb—an often  
 chance  
 In those brain-stunning shocks, and  
 tourney-falls,

Frights to my heart; but stay: follow  
 the deer  
 By these tall firs and our fast-falling  
 burns;  
 So make thy manhood mightier day  
 by day;  
 Sweet is the chase: and I will seek  
 thee out  
 Some comfortable bride and fair, to  
 grace  
 Thy climbing life, and cherish my  
 prone year,  
 Till falling into Lot's forgetfulness  
 I know not thee, myself, nor anything.  
 Stay, my best son! ye are yet more  
 boy than man.<sup>2</sup>

Then Gareth, 'An ye hold me yet  
 for child,  
 Hear yet once more the story of the  
 child.  
 For, mother, there was once a King,  
 like ours.  
 The prince his heir, when tall and  
 marriageable,  
 Ask'd for a bride; and thereupon the  
 King  
 Set two before him. One was fair,  
 strong, arm'd—  
 But to be won by force—and many  
 men  
 Desired her; one, good lack, no man  
 desired.  
 And these were the conditions of the  
 King:  
 That save he won the first by force, he  
 needs  
 Must wed that other, whom no man  
 desired,  
 A red-faced bride who knew herself so  
 vile,  
 That evermore she long'd to hide her-  
 self,  
 Nor fronted man or woman, eye to  
 eye—  
 Yea—some she cleaved to, but they  
 died of her.  
 And one—they call'd her Fame; and  
 one,—O Mother,  
 How can ye keep me tether'd to you—  
 Shame.  
 Man am I grown, a man's work must  
 I do.

Follow the deer? follow the Christ,  
 the King,  
 Live pure, speak true, right wrong,  
 follow the King—  
 Else, wherefore born?<sup>3</sup>

To whom the mother said,  
 'Sweet son, for there be many who  
 deem him not,  
 Or will not deem him, wholly proven  
 King—  
 Albeit in mine own heart I knew him  
 King,  
 When I was frequent with him in my  
 youth,  
 And heard him Kingly speak, and  
 doubted him  
 No more than he, himself; but felt  
 him mine,  
 Of closest kin to me: yet—wilt thou  
 leave  
 Thine careful bidding here, and risk  
 thine all,  
 Life, limbs, for one that is not proven  
 King?  
 Stay, till the cloud that settles round  
 his birth  
 Hath lifted but a little. Stay, sweet  
 son.'

And Gareth answer'd quickly, 'Not  
 an hour,  
 So that ye yield me—I will walk thro'  
 fire,  
 Mother, to gain it—your full leave to  
 go.  
 Not proven, who swept the dust of  
 ruin'd Rome  
 From off the threshold of the realm,  
 and crush'd  
 The idolaters, and made the people  
 free?  
 Who should be King save him who  
 makes us free?<sup>3</sup>

So when the Queen, who long had  
 sought in vain  
 To break him from the intent to  
 which he grew,  
 Found her son's will unwaveringly  
 one,  
 She answer'd craftily, 'Will ye walk  
 thro' fire?



Who walks thro' fire will hardly heed  
the smoke.  
Ay, go then, an ye must: only one  
proof,  
Before thou ask the King to make  
thee knight,  
Of thine obedience and thy love to  
me,  
Thy mother,—I demand.'

And Gareth cried,  
'A hard one, or a hundred, so I go.  
Nay—quick! the proof to prove me to  
the quick!'

But slowly spake the mother looking  
at him,  
'Prince, thou shalt go disguised to  
Arthur's hall,  
And hire thyself to serve for meats  
and drinks  
Among the scullions and the kitchen-  
knaves,  
And those that hand the dish across  
the bar.  
Nor shalt thou tell thy name to any-  
one.  
And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth  
and a day.'

For so the Queen believed that  
when her son  
Beheld his only way to glory lead  
Low down thro' villain kitchen-  
vassalage,  
Her own true Gareth was too princely-  
proud  
To pass thereby; so should he rest  
with her,  
Closed in her castle from the sound  
of arms.

Silent awhile was Gareth, then  
replied,  
'The thrall in person may be free in  
soul,  
And I shall see the jousts. Thy son  
am I,  
And since thou art my mother, must  
obey.  
I therefore yield me freely to thy will;  
For hence will I, disguised, and hire  
myself

To serve with scullions and with  
kitchen-knives;  
Nor tell my name to any—no, not the  
King.'

Gareth awhile linger'd. The moth-  
er's eye  
Full of the wistful fear that he would go,  
And turning toward him wheresoe'er  
he turn'd,  
Perplex his outward purpose, till an  
hour,  
When waken'd by the wind which  
with full voice  
Swept bellowing thro' the darkness on  
to dawn,  
He rose, and out of slumber calling  
two  
That still had tended on him from his  
birth,  
Before the wakeful mother heard him,  
went.

The three were clad like tillers of  
the soil.  
Southward they set their faces. The  
birds made  
Melody on branch, and melody in mid  
air.  
The damp hill-slopes were quicken'd  
into green,  
And the live green had kindled into  
flowers,  
For it was past the time of Easterday.

So, when their feet were planted on  
the plain  
That broaden'd toward the base of  
Camelot,  
Far off they saw the silver-misty morn  
Rolling her smoke about the Royal  
mount,  
That rose between the forest and the  
field.  
At times the summit of the high city  
flash'd;  
At times the spires and turrets half-  
way down  
Prick'd thro' the mist; at times the  
great gate shone  
Only, that open'd on the field below:  
Anon, the whole fair city had disap-  
pear'd.

Then those who went with Gareth  
 were amazed,  
 One crying, 'Let us go no further, lord.  
 Here is a city of Enchanters, built  
 By fairy Kings.' The second echo'd  
 him,  
 'Lord, we have heard from our wise  
 man at home  
 To Northward, that this King is not  
 the King,  
 But only changeling out of Fairyland,  
 Who drave the heathen hence by  
 sorcery  
 And Merlin's glamour.' Then the first  
 again,  
 'Lord, there is no such city any-  
 where,  
 But all a vision.'

Gareth answer'd them  
 With laughter, swearing he had gla-  
 mour enow  
 In his own blood, his princedom,  
 youth and hopes,  
 To plunge old Merlin in the Arabian  
 sea ;  
 So push'd them all unwilling toward  
 the gate.  
 And there was no gate like it under  
 heaven.  
 For barefoot on the keystone, which  
 was lined  
 And rippled like an ever-fleeting wave,  
 The Lady of the Lake stood : all her  
 dress  
 Wept from her sides as water flowing  
 away ;  
 But like the cross her great and goodly  
 arms  
 Stretch'd under all the cornice and  
 upheld :  
 And drops of water fell from either  
 hand ;  
 And down from one a sword was hung,  
 from one  
 A censer, either worn with wind and  
 storm ;  
 And o'er her breast floated the sacred  
 fish ;  
 And in the space to left of her, and  
 right,  
 Were Arthur's wars in weird devices  
 done,

New things and old co-twisted, as if  
 Time  
 Were nothing, so inveterately, that  
 men  
 Were giddy gazing there ; and over all  
 High on the top were those three  
 Queens, the friends  
 Of Arthur, who should help him at his  
 need.

Then those with Gareth for so long  
 a space  
 Stared at the figures, that at last it  
 seem'd  
 The dragon-boughts and elvish em-  
 blemings  
 Egan to move, seethe, twine and  
 curl : they call'd  
 To Gareth, 'Lord, the gateway is alive.

And Gareth likewise on them fixt  
 his eyes  
 So long, that ev'n to him they seem'd  
 to move.  
 Out of the city a blast of music peal'd.  
 Back from the gate started the three,  
 to whom  
 From out thereunder came an ancient  
 man,  
 Long-bearded, saying, 'Who be ye, my  
 sons ?'

Then Gareth, 'We be tillers of the  
 soil,  
 Who leaving share in furrow come to  
 see  
 The glories of our King : but these, my  
 men,  
 (Your city moved so weirdly in the  
 mist)  
 Doubt if the King be King at all, or  
 come  
 From Fairyland ; and whether this be  
 built  
 By magic, and by fairy Kings and  
 Queens ;  
 Or whether there be any city at all,  
 Or all a vision : and this music now  
 Hath scared them both, but tell thou  
 these the truth.'

Then that old Seer made answer  
 playing on him

And saying, 'Son, I have seen the  
good ship sail  
Keel upward, and mast downward, in  
the heavens,

And solid turrets topsy-turvy in air :  
And here is truth ; but an it please  
thee not,

Take thou the truth as thou hast told  
it me.

For truly as thou sayest, a Fairy  
King

And Fairy Queens have built the city,  
son ;

They came from out a sacred moun-  
tain-cleft

Toward the sunrise, each with harp in  
hand,

And built it to the music of their  
harps.

And, as thou sayest, it is enchanted,  
son,

For there is nothing in it as it seems  
Saving the King ; tho' some there be  
that hold

The King a shadow, and the city real :  
Yet take thou heed of him, for, so thou  
pass

Beneath this archway, then wilt thou  
become

A thrall to his enchantments, for the  
King

Will bind thee by such vows, as is a  
shame

A man should not be bound by, yet the  
which

No man can keep ; but, so thou dread  
to swear,

Pass not beneath this gateway, but  
abide

Without, among the cattle of the field.  
For an ye heard a music, like enow

(They are building still, seeing the city  
is built

To music, therefore never built at all,  
And therefore built for ever.)

Gareth spake  
Anger'd, 'Old Master, reverence thine  
own beard

That looks as white as utter truth, and  
seems

Wellnigh as long as thou art statured  
tall !

Why mockest thou the stranger that  
hath been  
To thee fair-spoken ?'

But the Seer replied,  
' Know ye not then the Riddling of the  
Bards ?

" Confusion, and illusion, and relation,  
Elusion, and occasion, and evasion " ?  
I mock thee not but as thou mockest  
me,

And all that see thee, for thou art not  
who

Thou seemest, but I know thee who  
thou art.

And now thou goest up to mock the  
King,

Who cannot brook the shadow of any  
lie.'

Unmockingly the mocker ending  
here

Turn'd to the right, and past along the  
plain ;

Whom Gareth looking after said, ' My  
men,

Our one white lie sits like a little ghost  
Here on the threshold of our enter-  
prise.

Let love be blamed for it, not she,  
nor I :

Well, we will make amends.'

With all good cheer  
He spake and laugh'd, then enter'd  
with his twain

Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces  
And stately, rich in emblem and the  
work

Of ancient kings who did their days in  
stone ;

Which Merlin's hand, the Mage at  
Arthur's court,

Knowing all arts, had touch'd, and  
everywhere

At Arthur's ordinance, tipt with lessen-  
ing peak

And pinnacle, and had made it spire  
to heaven.

And ever and anon a knight would  
pass

Outward, or inward to the hall : his  
arms

Clash'd; and the sound was good to  
Gareth's ear.  
And out of bower and casement shyly  
glanced  
Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars  
of love;  
And all about a healthful people slept  
As in the presence of a gracious king.

Then into hall Gareth ascending  
heard  
A voice, the voice of Arthur, and be-  
held  
Far over heads in that long-vaulted  
hall  
The splendor of the presence of the  
King  
Throned, and delivering doom—and  
look'd no more—  
But felt his young heart hammering in  
his ears,  
And thought, 'For this half-shadow of  
a lie  
The truthful King will doom me when  
I speak.'  
Yet pressing on, tho' all in fear to find  
Sir Gawain or Sir Modred, saw nor  
one  
Nor other, but in all the listening eyes  
Of those tall knights, that ranged  
about the throne,  
Clear honor shining like the dewy  
star  
Of dawn, and faith in their great  
King, with pure  
Affection, and the light of victory,  
And glory gain'd, and evermore to  
gain.

Then came a widow crying to the  
King,  
'A boon, Sir King! Thy father,  
Uther, reft  
From my dead lord a field with vio-  
lence:  
For howsoe'er at first he proffer'd  
gold,  
Yet, for the field was pleasant in our  
eyes,  
We yielded not; and then he reft us  
of it  
Perforce, and left us neither gold nor  
field.'

Said Arthur, 'Whether would ye?  
gold or field?'  
To whom the woman weeping, Nay  
my lord,  
The field was pleasant in my husband's  
eye.'

And Arthur, 'Have thy pleasant  
field again,  
And thrice the gold for Uther's use  
thereof,  
According to the years. No boon is  
here,  
But justice, so thy say be proven true.  
Accursed, who from the wrongs his  
father did  
Would shape himself a right!'

And while she past,  
Came yet another widow crying to  
him,  
'A boon, Sir King! Thine enemy,  
King, am I.  
With thine own hand thou slewest my  
dear lord,  
A knight of Uther in the Barons'  
war,  
When Lot and many another rose and  
fought  
Against thee, saying thou wert basely  
born.  
I held with these, and loathe to ask  
thee aught.  
Yet lo! my husband's brother had my  
son  
Thrall'd in his castle, and hath  
starved him dead;  
And standeth seized of that inheri-  
tance  
Which thou that slewest the sire hast  
left the son.  
So tho' I scarce can ask it thee for  
hate,  
Grant me some knight to do the battle  
for me,  
Kill the foul thief, and wreak me for  
my son.'  
Then strode a good knight forward,  
crying to him,  
'A boon, Sir King! I am her kinsman,  
I.  
Give me to right her wrong, and slay  
the man.'

Then came Sir Kay, the seneschal,  
and cried,  
'A boon, Sir King! ev'n that thou  
grant her none,  
This railer, that hath mock'd thee in  
full hall—  
None; or the wholesome boon of gyve  
and gag.'

But Arthur, 'We sit King, to help  
the wrong'd  
Thro' all our realm. The woman  
loves her lord.  
Peace to thee, woman, with thy loves  
and hates!  
The kings of old had doom'd thee to  
the flames,  
Aurelius Emrys would have scourged  
thee dead,  
And Uther slit thy tongue: but get  
thee hence—  
Lest that rough humor of the kings  
of old  
Return upon me! Thou that art her  
kin,  
Go likewise; lay him low and slay  
him not,  
But bring him here, that I may judge  
the right,  
According to the justice of the King:  
Then, be he guilty, by that deathless  
King  
Who lived and died for men, the man  
shall die.'

Then came in hall the messenger of  
Mark,  
A name of evil savor in the land,  
The Cornish king. In either hand he  
bore  
What dazzled all, and shone far-off as  
shines  
A field of charlock in the sudden  
sun  
Between two showers, a cloth of palest  
gold,  
Which down he laid before the throne,  
and knelt,  
Delivering, that his lord, the vassal  
king,  
Was ev'n upon his way to Camelot;  
For having heard that Arthur of his  
grace

Had made his goodly cousin, Tristram,  
knight,  
And, for himself was of the greater  
state,  
Being a king, he trusted his liege-lord  
Would yield him this large honor all  
the more;  
So pray'd him well to accept this cloth  
of gold,  
In token of true heart and fealty.

Then Arthur cried to rend the  
cloth, to rend  
In pieces, and so cast it on the hearth.  
An oak-tree smoulder'd there. 'The  
goodly knight!  
What! shall the shield of Mark stand  
among these?'  
For, midway down the side of that  
long hall  
A stately pile,—whereof along the  
front,  
Some blazon'd, some but carven, and  
some blank,  
There ran a treble range of stony  
shields,—  
Rose, and high-arching overbrow'd  
the hearth.  
And under every shield a knight was  
named:  
For this was Arthur's custom in his  
hall;  
When some good knight had done one  
noble deed,  
His arms were carven only; but if  
twain  
His arms were blazon'd also; but if  
none,  
The shield was blank and bare with-  
out a sign  
Saving the name beneath; and Gareth  
saw  
The shield of Gawain blazon'd rich  
and bright,  
And Modred's blank as death; and  
Arthur cried  
To rend the cloth and cast it on the  
hearth.

'More like are we to reave him of  
his crown  
Than make him knight because men  
call him king.

The kings we found, ye know we stay'd  
 their hands  
 From war among themselves, but left  
 them kings;  
 Of whom were any bounteous, merci-  
 ful,  
 Truth-speaking, brave, good livers,  
 them we enroll'd  
 Among us, and they sit within our hall.  
 But Mark hath tarnish'd the great  
 name of king,  
 As Mark would sully the low state of  
 churl:  
 And, seeing he hath sent us cloth of  
 gold,  
 Return, and meet, and hold him from  
 our eyes,  
 Lest we should lap him up in cloth of  
 lead,  
 Silenced for ever—craven—a man of  
 plots,  
 Craft, poisonous counsels, wayside  
 ambushings—  
 No fault of thine: let Kay the seneschal  
 Look to thy wants, and send thee  
 satisfied—  
 Accused, who strikes nor lets the  
 hand be seen!

And many another suppliant crying  
 came  
 With noise of ravage wrought by beast  
 and man,  
 And evermore a knight would ride  
 away.

Last, Gareth leaning both hands  
 heavily  
 Down on the shoulders of the twain,  
 his men,  
 Approach'd between them toward the  
 King, and ask'd,  
 'A boon, Sir King (his voice was all  
 ashamed),  
 For see ye not how weak and hunger-  
 worn  
 I seem—leaning on these? grant me  
 to serve  
 For meat and drink among thy  
 kitchen-knaves  
 A twelvemonth and a day, nor seek  
 my name.  
 Hereafter I will fight.'

To him the King,  
 'A goodly youth and worth a goodlier  
 boon!  
 But so thou wilt no goodlier, then  
 must Kay,  
 The master of the meats and drinks,  
 be thine.'

He rose and past; then Kay, a man  
 of mien  
 Wan-sallow as the plant that feels it-  
 self  
 Root-bitten by white lichen,

'Lo ye now!  
 This fellow hath broken from some  
 Abbey, where,  
 God wot, he had not beef and brewis  
 enow,  
 However that might chance! but an  
 he work,  
 Like any pigeon will I cram his crop,  
 And sleeker shall he shine than any  
 hog.'

Then Lancelot standing near, 'Sir  
 Seneschal,  
 Sleuth-hound thou knowest, and gray,  
 and all the hounds;  
 A horse thou knowest, a man thou  
 dost not know:  
 Broad brows and fair, a fluent hair  
 and fine,  
 High nose, a nostril large and fine,  
 and hands  
 Large, fair and fine!—Some young  
 lad's mystery—  
 But, or from sheepecot or king's hall,  
 the boy  
 Is noble-natured. Treat him with all  
 grace,  
 Lest he should come to shame thy  
 judging of him.'

Then Kay, 'What murmurest thou  
 of mystery?  
 Think ye this fellow will poison the  
 King's dish?  
 Nay, for he spake too fool-like:  
 mystery!  
 Tut, an the lad were noble, he had ask'd  
 For horse and armor: fair and fine,  
 forsooth!

Sir Fine-face, Sir Fair-hands? but see  
 thou to it  
 That thine own fineness, Lancelot,  
 some fine day  
 Undo thee not—and leave my man to  
 me.'

So Gareth all for glory underwent  
 The sooty yoke of kitchen-vassal-  
 age;  
 Ate with young lads his portion by the  
 door,  
 And couch'd at night with grimy  
 kitchen-knaves.  
 And Lancelot ever spake him pleas-  
 antly,  
 But Kay the seneschal, who loved him  
 not,  
 Would hustle and harry him, and  
 labor him  
 Beyond his comrade of the hearth,  
 and set  
 To turn the broach, draw water, or  
 hew wood,  
 Or grosser tasks; and Gareth bow'd  
 himself  
 With all obedience to the King, and  
 wrought  
 All kind of service with a noble ease  
 That graced the lowliest act in doing  
 it.  
 And when the thralls had talk among  
 themselves,  
 And one would praise the love that  
 linkt the King  
 And Lancelot—how the King had  
 saved his life  
 In battle twice, and Lancelot once the  
 King's—  
 For Lancelot was the first in Tourna-  
 ment,  
 But Arthur mightiest on the battle-  
 field—  
 Gareth was glad. Or if some other  
 told,  
 How once the wandering forester at  
 dawn,  
 Far over the blue tarns and hazy seas,  
 On Caer-Eryri's highest found the  
 King,  
 A naked babe, of whom the Prophet  
 spake,  
 He passes to the Isle Avilion,

He passes and is heal'd and cannot  
 die—  
 Gareth was glad. But if their talk  
 were foul,  
 Then would he whistle rapid as any  
 lark,  
 Or carol some old roundelay, and so  
 loud  
 That first they mock'd, but, after,  
 revered him.  
 Or Gareth telling some prodigious tale  
 Of knights, who sliced a red life-  
 bubbling way  
 Thro' twenty folds of twisted dragon,  
 held  
 All in a gap-mouth'd circle his good  
 mates  
 Lying or sitting round him, idle hands,  
 Charm'd; till Sir Kay, the seneschal,  
 would come  
 Blustering upon them, like a sudden  
 wind  
 Among dead leaves, and drive them  
 all apart.  
 Or when the thralls had sport among  
 themselves,  
 So there were any trial of mastery,  
 He, by two yards in casting bar or  
 stone  
 Was counted best; and if there  
 chanced a joust,  
 So that Sir Kay nodded him leave to  
 go,  
 Would hurry thither, and when he  
 saw the knights  
 Clash like the coming and retiring  
 wave,  
 And the spear spring, and good horse  
 reel, the boy  
 Was half beyond himself for ecstasy.

So for a month he wrought among  
 the thralls;  
 But in the weeks that follow'd, the  
 good Queen,  
 Repentant of the word she made him  
 swear,  
 And saddening in her childless cas-  
 tle, sent,  
 Between the in-crescent and de-  
 crescent moon,  
 Arms for her son, and loosed him  
 from his vow.

This, Gareth hearing from a squire  
of Lot  
With whom he used to play at tour-  
ney once,  
When both were children, and in  
lonely haunts  
Would scratch a ragged oval on the  
sand,  
And each at either dash from either  
end—  
Shame never made girl redder than  
Gareth joy.  
He laugh'd; he sprang. 'Out of the  
smoke, at once  
I leap from Satan's foot to Peter's  
knee—  
These news be mine, none other's—  
nay, the King's—  
Descend into the city:' whereon he  
sought  
The King alone, and found, and told  
him all.

'I have stagger'd thy strong Gawain  
in a tilt  
For pastime; yea, he said it: joust  
can I.  
Make me thy knight—in secret! let  
my name  
Be hidd'n, and give me the first quest,  
I spring  
Like flame from ashes.'

Here the King's calm eye  
Fell on, and check'd, and made him  
flush, and bow  
Lowly, to kiss his hand, who answer'd  
him,  
'Son, the good mother let me know  
thee here,  
And sent her wish that I would yield  
thee thine.  
Make thee my knight? my knights are  
sworn to vows  
Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,  
And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,  
And uttermost obedience to the King.'

Then Gareth, lightly springing from  
his knees,  
'My King, for hardihood I can prom-  
ise thee.  
For uttermost obedience make demand

Of whom ye gave me to, the Seneschal,  
No mellow master of the meats and  
drinks!  
And as for love, God wot, I love not  
yet,  
But love I shall, God willing.'

And the King—  
'Make thee my knight in secret? yea,  
but he,  
Our noblest brother, and our truest  
man,  
And one with me in all, he needs  
must know.'

'Let Lancelot know, my King, let  
Lancelot know,  
Thy noblest and thy truest!'

And the King—  
'But wherefore would ye men should  
wonder at you?  
Nay, rather for the sake of me, their  
King,  
And the deed's sake my knighthood  
do the deed,  
Than to be noised of.'

Merrily Gareth ask'd,  
'Have I not earn'd my cake in baking  
of it?  
Let be my name until I make my  
name!  
My deeds will speak: it is but for a  
day.'  
So with a kindly hand on Gareth's  
arm  
Smiled the great King, and half-unwill-  
ingly  
Loving his lusty youthhood yielded to  
him.  
Then, after summoning Lancelot  
privily,  
'I have given him the first quest: he  
is not proven.  
Look therefore when he calls for this  
in hall,  
Thou get to horse and follow him far  
away.  
Cover the lions on thy shield, and  
see  
Far as thou mayest, he be nor ta'en  
nor slain.'



Then that same day there past into  
the hall  
A damsel of high lineage, and a brow  
May-blossom, and a cheek of apple-  
blossom,  
Hawk-eyes; and lightly was her slender  
nose  
Tip-tilted like the petal of a flower;  
She into hall past with her page and  
cried,

'O King, for thou hast driven the  
foe without,  
See to the foe within! bridge, ford,  
beset  
By bandits, everyone that owns a tower  
The Lord for half a league. Why sit  
ye there?  
Rest would I not, Sir King, an I were  
king,  
Till ev'n the lonest hold were all as  
free  
From cursed bloodshed, as thine altar-  
cloth  
From that best blood it is a sin to  
spill.'

'Comfort thyself,' said Arthur, 'I  
nor mine  
Rest: so my knighthood keep the  
vows they swore,  
The wastest moorland of our realm  
shall be  
Safe, damsel, as the centre of this hall.  
What is thy name? thy need?'

'My name?' she said—  
'Lynette my name; noble; my need, a  
knit  
To combat for my sister, Lyonors,  
A lady of high lineage, of great lands,  
And comely, yea, and comelier than  
myself.  
She lives in Castle Perilous: a river  
Runs in three loops about her living-  
place;  
And o'er it are three passings, and  
three knights  
Defend the passings, brethren, and a  
fourth  
And of that four the mightiest, holds  
her stay'd  
In her own castle, and so besieges her

To break her will, and make her wed  
with him:  
And but delays his purport till thou  
send  
To do the battle with him, thy chief  
man  
Sir Lancelot whom he trusts to over-  
throw,  
Then wed, with glory: but she will  
not wed  
Save whom she loveth, or a holy life.  
Now therefore have I come for Lancelot.'

Then Arthur mindful of Sir Gareth  
ask'd,  
'Damsel, ye know this Order lives to  
crush  
All wrongers of the Realm. But say,  
these four,  
Who be they? What the fashion of the  
men?'

'They be of foolish fashion, O Sir  
King,  
The fashion of that old knight-  
errantry  
Who ride abroad, and do but what  
they will;  
Courteous or bestial from the moment,  
such  
As have nor law nor king; and three  
of these  
Proud in their fantasy call themselves  
the Day,  
Morning-Star, and Noon-Sun, and  
Evening-Star,  
Being strong fools; and never a whit  
more wise  
The fourth, who always rideth arm'd in  
black,  
A huge man-beast of boundless sav-  
agery.  
He names himself the Night and  
oftener Death,  
And wears a helmet mounted with a  
skull,  
And bears a skeleton figured on his  
arms,  
To show that who may slay or scape  
the three,  
Slain by himself, shall enter endless  
night.

And all these four be fools, but mighty men,  
And therefore am I come for Lance-  
lot.'

Hereat Sir Gareth call'd from where  
he rose,  
A head with kindling eyes above the  
throng,  
'A boon, Sir King—this quest!' then  
—for he mark'd  
Kay near him groaning like a wounded  
bull—  
'Yea, King, thou knowest thy kitchen-  
knave am I,  
And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks  
am I,  
And I can topple over a hundred  
such.  
Thy promise, King,' and Arthur  
glancing at him,  
Brought down a momentary brow.  
'Rough, sudden,  
And pardonable, worthy to be  
knight—  
Go therefore,' and all hearers were  
amazed.

But on the damsel's forehead shame,  
pride, wrath  
Slew the May-white: she lifted either  
arm,  
'Fie on thee, King! I ask'd for thy  
chief knight,  
And thou hast given me but a kitchen-  
knave.'  
Then ere a man in hall could stay her,  
turn'd,  
Fled down the lane of access to the  
King,  
Took horse, descended the slope  
street, and past  
The weird white gate, and paused  
without, beside  
The field of tourney, murmuring  
'kitchen-knave.'

Now two great entries open'd from  
the hall,  
At one end one, that gave upon a  
range  
Of level pavement where the King  
would pace

At sunrise, gazing over plain and  
wood;  
And down from this a lordly stairway  
sloped  
Till lost in blowing trees and tops of  
towers;  
And out by this main doorway past  
the King,  
But one was counter to the hearth,  
and rose  
High that the highest-crested helm  
could ride  
Therethro' nor graze: and by this  
entry fled  
The damsel in her wrath, and on to  
this  
Sir Gareth strode, and saw without  
the door  
King Arthur's gift, the worth of half a  
town,  
A warhorse of the best, and near it  
stood  
The two that out of north had follow'd  
him:  
This bare a maiden shield, a casque;  
that held  
The horse, the spear; whereat Sir  
Gareth loosed  
A cloak that dropt from collar-bone  
to heel,  
A cloth of roughest web, and cast it  
down,  
And from it like a fuel-smother'd fire,  
That lookt half-dead, brake bright,  
and flash'd as those  
Dull-coated things, that making slide  
apart  
Their dusk wing-cases, all beneath  
there burns  
A jewell'd harness, ere they pass and  
fly.  
So Gareth ere he parted flash'd in  
arms.  
Then as he donn'd the helm, and took  
the shield  
And mounted horse and graspt a  
spear, of grain  
Storm-strengthen'd on a windy site,  
and tipt  
With trenchant steel, around him  
slowly prest  
The people, while from out of kitchen  
came

The thralls in throng, and seeing who  
had work'd  
Lustier than any, and whom they  
could but love,  
Mounted in arms, threw up their caps  
and cried,  
'God bless the King, and all his  
fellowship!'  
And on thro' lances of shouting Gareth  
rode  
Down the slope street, and past with-  
out the gate.

So Gareth past with joy; but as the  
cur  
Pluckt from the cur he fights with, ere  
his cause  
Be cool'd by fighting, follows, being  
named,  
His owner, but remembers all, and  
growls  
Remembering, so Sir Kay beside the  
door  
Mutter'd in scorn of Gareth whom he  
used  
To harry and hustle.

'Bound upon a quest  
With horse and arms—the King hath  
past his time—  
My scullion knave! Thralls to your  
work again,  
For an your fire be low ye kindle mine!  
Will there be dawn in West and eve  
in East?  
Begone!—my knave!—belike and like  
enow  
Some old head-blow not heeded in his  
youth  
So shook his wits they wander in his  
prime—  
Crazed! How the villain lifted up  
his voice,  
Nor shamed to bawl himself a kitchen-  
knave.  
Tut: he was tame and meek enow with  
me,  
Till peacock'd up with Lancelot's  
noticing.  
Well—I will after my loud knave, and  
learn  
Whether he know me for his master  
yet.

Out of the smoke he came, and so my  
lance  
Hold, by God's grace, he shall into the  
mire—  
Thence, if the King awoken from his  
craze,  
Into the smoke again.'

But Lancelot said,  
'Kay, wherefore wilt thou go against  
the King,  
For that did never he whereon ye rail,  
But ever meekly served the King in  
thee?  
Abide: take counsel; for this lad is  
great  
And lusty, and knowing both of lance  
and sword.'  
'Tut, tell not me,' said Kay, 'ye are  
overfine  
To mar stout knaves with foolish  
courtesies: '  
Then mounted, on thro' silent faces  
rode  
Down the slope city, and out beyond  
the gate.

But by the field of tourney lingering  
yet  
Mutter'd the damsel, 'Wherefore did  
the King  
Scorn me? for, were Sir Lancelot  
lackt, at least  
He might have yielded to me one of  
those  
Who tilt for lady's love and glory here,  
Rather than—O sweet heaven! O fie  
upon him—  
His kitchen-knave.'

To whom Sir Gareth drew  
(And there were none but few goodlier  
than he)  
Shining in arms, 'Damsel, the quest is  
mine.  
Lead, and I follow.' She thereat, as  
one  
That smells a foul-flesh'd agaric in the  
holt,  
And deems it carrion of some wood-  
land thing,  
Or shrew, or weasel, nipt her slender  
nose

With petulant thumb and finger, shrilling, 'Hence!  
 Avoid, thou smell'st all of kitchen-grease.  
 And look who comes behind,' for there was Kay.  
 'Knowest thou not me? thy master?  
 I am Kay.  
 We lack thee by the hearth.'

And Gareth to him,  
 'Master no more! too well I know thee, ay—  
 The most ungentle knight in Arthur's hall.'  
 'Have at thee then,' said Kay: they shock'd, and Kay  
 Fell shoulder-slipt, and Gareth cried again,  
 'Lead, and I follow,' and fast away she fled.

But after sod and shingle ceased to fly  
 Behind her, and the heart of her good horse  
 Was nigh to burst with violence of the beat,  
 Perforce she stay'd, and overtaken spoke.

'What doest thou, scullion, in my fellowship?  
 Deem'st thou that I accept thee aught the more  
 Or love thee better, that by some device  
 Full cowardly, or by mere unhappiness,  
 Thou hast overthrown and slain thy master—thou!—  
 Dish-washer and broach-turner, loon!  
 —to me  
 Thou smell'st all of kitchen as before.'

'Damsel,' Sir Gareth answer'd gently, 'say  
 Whate'er ye will, but whatsoe'er ye say,  
 I leave not till I finish this fair quest,  
 Or die therefore.'

'Ay, wilt thou finish it?  
 Sweet lord, how like a noble knight he talks!

The listening rogue hath caught the manner of it.  
 But, knave, anon thou shalt be met with, knave,  
 And then by such a one that thou for all  
 The kitchen brewis that was ever supt  
 Shalt not once dare to look him in the face.'

'I shall assay,' said Gareth with a smile  
 That madden'd her, and away she flash'd again  
 Down the long avenues of a boundless wood,  
 And Gareth, following was again beknaved.

'Sir Kitchen-knave, I have miss'd the only way  
 Where Arthur's men are set along the wood;  
 The wood is nigh as full of thieves as leaves:  
 If both be slain, I am rid of thee; but yet,  
 Sir Scullion, canst thou use that spit of thine?  
 Fight, an thou canst. I have miss'd the only way.'

So till the dusk that follow'd even-song  
 Rode on the two, reviler and reviled;  
 Then after one long slope was mounted, saw,  
 Bowl-shaped, thro' tops of many thousand pines  
 A gloomy-gladed hollow slowly sink  
 To westward—in the deeps whereof a mere,  
 Round as the red eye of an Eagle-owl,  
 Under the half-dead sunset glared;  
 and shouts  
 Ascended, and there brake a serving-man  
 Flying from out of the black wood, and crying,  
 'They have bound my lord to cast him in the mere.'  
 Then Gareth, 'Bound am I to right the wrong'd,

But straitlier bound am I to bide with thee.  
 And when the damsel spake contemptuously,  
 'Lead, and I follow,' Gareth cried again,  
 'Follow, I lead!' so down among the pines  
 He plunged; and there, blackshadow'd nigh the mere,  
 And mid-thigh-deep in bulrushes and reed,  
 Saw six tall men haling a seventh along,  
 A stone about his neck to drown him in it.  
 Three with good blows he quieted, but three  
 Fled thro' the pines; and Gareth loosed the stone  
 From off his neck, then in the mere beside  
 Tumbled it; oilily bubbled up the mere.  
 Last, Gareth loosed his bonds and on free feet  
 Set him, a stalwart Baron, Arthur's friend.

'Well that ye came, or else these caitiff rogues  
 Had wreak'd themselves on me; good cause is theirs  
 To hate me, for my wont hath ever been  
 To catch my thief, and then like vermin here  
 Drown him, and with a stone about his neck;  
 And under this wan water many of them  
 Lie rotting, but at night let go the stone,  
 And rise, and flickering in a grimly light  
 Dance on the mere. Good now, ye have saved a life  
 Worth somewhat as the cleanser of this wood.  
 And fain would I reward thee worshipfully.  
 What guerdon will ye?'

Gareth sharply spaké,  
 'None! for the deed's sake have I done the deed,  
 In uttermost obedience to the King.  
 But wilt thou yield this damsel harbor-age?'

Whereat the Baron saying, 'I well believe  
 You be of Arthur's Table,' a light laugh  
 Broke from Lynette, 'Ay, truly of a truth,  
 And in a sort, being Arthur's kitchen-knave!—  
 But deem not I accept thee aught the more,  
 Scullion, for running sharply with thy spit  
 Down on a rout of craven foresters.  
 A thresher with his flail had scatter'd them.  
 Nay—for thou smellst of the kitchen still.  
 But an this lord will yield us harbor-age,  
 Well.'

So she spake. A league beyond the wood,  
 All in a full-fair manor and a rich,  
 His towers where that day a feast had been  
 Held in high hall, and many a viand left,  
 And many a costly cate, received the three.  
 And there they placed a peacock in his pride  
 Before the damsel, and the Baron set  
 Gareth beside her, but at once she rose.

'Meseems, that here is much discourtesy,  
 Setting this knave, Lord Baron, at my side.  
 Hear me—this morn I stood in Arthur's hall,  
 And pray'd the King would grant me Lancelot  
 To fight the brotherhood of Day and Night—

The last a monster unsubduable  
Of any save of him for whom I call'd—  
Suddenly bawls this frontless kitchen-  
knave,

“The quest is mine; thy kitchen-  
knave am I,  
And mighty thro' thy meats and  
drinks am I.”  
Then Arthur all at once gone mad  
replies,  
“Go therefore,” and so gives the  
quest to him—  
Him—here—a villain fitter to stick  
swine  
Than ride abroad redressing women's  
wrong,  
Or sit beside a noble gentlewoman.'

Then half-ashamed and part amazed,  
the lord  
Now look'd at one and now at other,  
left  
The damsel by the peacock in his  
pride,  
And, seating Gareth at another board,  
Sat down beside him, ate and then  
began.

'Friend, whether thou be kitchen-  
knave, or not,  
Or whether it be the maiden's fantasy,  
And whether she be mad, or else the  
King,  
Or both or neither, or thyself be mad,  
I ask not: but thou strikest a strong  
stroke,  
For strong thou art and goodly there-  
withal,  
And savor of my life; and therefore  
now,  
For here be mighty men to joust with,  
weigh  
Whether thou wilt not with thy dam-  
sel back  
To crave again Sir Lancelot of the  
King.  
Thy pardon; I but speak for thine  
avail,  
The savor of my life.'

And Gareth said,  
'Full pardon, but I follow up the  
quest,

Despise of Day and Night and Death  
and Hell.'

So when, next morn, the lord whose  
life he saved  
Had, some brief space, convey'd them  
on their way  
And left them with God-speed, Sir  
Gareth spake,  
'Lead, and I follow.' Haughtily she  
replied,

'I fly no more: I allow thee for an  
hour.  
Lion and stoat have isled together,  
knave,  
In time of flood. Nay, furthermore,  
methinks  
Some ruth is mine for thee. Back  
wilt thou, fool?  
For hard by here is one will overthrow  
And slay thee: then will I to court  
again,  
And shame the King for only yielding  
me  
My champion from the ashes of his  
hearth.'

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd  
courteously,  
'Say thou thy say, and I will do my  
deed,  
Allow me for mine hour, and thou  
wilt find  
My fortunes all as fair as hers who lay  
Among the ashes and wedded the  
King's son.'

Then to the shore of one of those  
long loops  
Wherethro' the serpent river coil'd,  
they came.  
Rough-thicketed were the banks and  
steep; the stream  
Full, narrow; this a bridge of single  
arc  
Took at a leap; and on the further  
side  
Arose a silk pavilion, gay with gold  
In streaks and rays, and all Lent-lily  
in hue,  
Save that the dome was purple, and  
above,

Crimson, a slender banneret fluttering.  
 And therefore the lawless warrior  
 paced  
 Unarm'd, and calling, 'Damsel, is this  
 he,  
 The champion thou hast brought  
 from Arthur's hall?  
 For whom we let thee pass.' 'Nay,  
 nay,' she said,  
 'Sir Morning-Star. The King in  
 utter scorn  
 Of thee and thy much folly hath sent  
 thee here  
 His kitchen-knave: and look thou to  
 thyself:  
 See that he fall not on thee suddenly,  
 And slay thee unarm'd: he is not  
 knight but knave.'

Then at his call, 'O daughters of  
 the Dawn,  
 And servants of the Morning-Star,  
 approach,  
 Arm me,' from out the silken curtain-  
 folds  
 Bare-footed and bare-headed three  
 fair girls  
 In gilt and rosy raiment came: their  
 feet  
 In dewy grasses glisten'd; and the hair  
 All over glanced with dewdrop or  
 with gem  
 Like sparkles in the stone Avanturine.  
 These arm'd him in blue arms, and  
 gave a shield  
 Blue also, and thereon the morning  
 star.  
 And Gareth silent gazed upon the  
 knight,  
 Who stood a moment, ere his horse  
 was brought,  
 Glorying; and in the stream beneath  
 him, shone  
 Immingled with Heaven's azure  
 waveringly,  
 The gay pavilion and the naked feet,  
 His arms, the rosy raiment, and the  
 star.

Then she that watch'd him, 'Where-  
 fore stare ye so?  
 Thou shakest in thy fear: there yet is  
 time:

Flee down the valley before he get to  
 horse.  
 Who will cry shame? Thou art not  
 knight but knave.'

Said Gareth, 'Damsel, whether  
 knave or knight,  
 Far liefer had I fight a score of times  
 Than hear thee so missay me and  
 revile.  
 Fair words were best for him who  
 fights for thee;  
 But truly foul are better, for they send  
 That strength of anger thro' mine  
 arms, I know  
 That I shall overthrow him.'

And he that bore  
 The star, when mounted, cried from  
 o'er the bridge,  
 'A kitchen-knave, and sent in scorn  
 of me!  
 Such fight not I, but answer scorn  
 with scorn.  
 For this were shame to do him further  
 wrong  
 Than set him on his feet, and take his  
 horse  
 And arms, and so return him to the  
 King.  
 Come, therefore, leave thy lady lightly,  
 knave.  
 Avoid: for it beseemeth not a knave  
 To ride with such a lady.'

'Dog, thou liest.  
 I spring from loftier lineage than thine  
 own.'  
 He spake; and all at fiery speed the  
 two  
 Shock'd on the central bridge, and  
 either spear  
 Bent but not brake, and either knight  
 at once,  
 Hurl'd as a stone from out of a catapult  
 Beyond his horse's crupper and the  
 bridge,  
 Fell, as if dead; but quickly rose and  
 drew,  
 And Gareth lash'd so fiercely with his  
 brand  
 He drove his enemy backward down  
 the bridge,

The damsel crying, 'Well-stricken,  
kitchen-knave!'  
Till Gareth's shield was cloven; but  
one stroke  
Laid him that clove it grovelling on  
the ground.

Then cried the fall'n, 'Take not  
my life: I yield.'  
And Gareth, 'So this damsel ask it of  
me  
Good—I accord it easily as a grace.'  
She reddening, 'Insolent scullion: I  
of thee?  
I bound to thee for any favor ask'd!  
'Then shall he die.' And Gareth  
there unlaced  
His helmet as to slay him, but she  
shriek'd,  
'Be not so hardy, scullion, as to slay  
One nobler than thyself.' 'Damsel,  
thy charge  
Is an abounding pleasure to me.  
Knight,  
Thy life is thine at her command.  
Arise  
And quickly pass to Arthur's hall,  
and say  
His kitchen-knave hath sent thee.  
See thou crave  
His pardon for thy breaking of his  
laws.  
Myself, when I return, will plead for  
thee.  
Thy shield is mine—farewell; and,  
damsel, thou,  
Lead, and I follow.'

And fast away she fled.  
Then when he came upon her, spake,  
'Methought,  
Knave, when I watch'd thee striking  
on the bridge  
The savor of thy kitchen came upon  
me  
A little faintlier: but the wind hath  
changed:  
I scent it twenty-fold.' And then she  
sang,  
'"O morning star" (not that tall felon  
there  
Whom thou by sorcery or unhappi-  
ness

Or some device, hast foully over-  
thrown),  
"O morning star that smilest in the  
blue,  
O star, my morning dream hath proven  
true,  
Smile sweetly, thou! my love hath  
smiled on me."

'But thou begone, take counsel, and  
away,  
For hard by here is one that guards a  
ford—  
The second brother in their fool's  
parable—  
Will pay thee all thy wages, and to  
boot.  
Care not for shame: thou art not  
knight but knave.'

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd, laugh-  
ingly,  
'Parables? Hear a parable of the  
knave.  
When I was kitchen-knave among the  
rest  
Fierce was the hearth, and one of my  
co-mates  
Own'd a rough dog, to whom he cast  
his coat,  
"Guard it," and there was none to  
meddle with it.  
And such a coat art thou, and thee the  
King  
Gave me to guard, and such a dog am  
I,  
To worry, and not to flee—and—  
knight or knave—  
The knave that doth thee service as  
full knight  
Is all as good, meseems, as any knight  
Toward thy sister's freeing.'

'Ay, Sir Knave!  
Ay, knave, because thou strik'st as a  
knight,  
Being but knave, I hate thee all the  
more.'

'Fair damsel, you should worship  
me the more,  
That, being but knave, I throw thine  
enemies.'



'Ay, ay,' she said, 'but thou shalt meet thy match.'

So when they touch'd the second riverloop,  
Huge on a huge red horse, and all in mail  
Burnish'd to blinding, shone the Noon-day Sun  
Beyond a raging shallow. As if the flower,  
That blows a globe of after arrowlets,  
Ten thousand-fold had grown, flash'd the fierce shield,  
All sun; and Gareth's eyes had flying blots

Before them when he turn'd from watching him.  
He from beyond the roaring shallow roar'd,

'What doest thou, brother, in my marches here?'  
And she athwart the shallow shrill'd again,

'Here is a kitchen-knave from Arthur's hall  
Hath overthrown thy brother, and hath his arms.'

'Ugh!' cried the Sun, and visoring up a red  
And cipher face of rounded foolishness,

Push'd horse across the foamings of the ford,  
Whom Gareth met midstream: no room was there

For lance or tourney-skill: four strokes they struck  
With sword, and these were mighty; the new knight

Had fear he might be shamed; but as the Sun  
Heaved up a ponderous arm to strike the fifth,

The hoof of his horse slipt in the stream, the stream  
Descended, and the Sun was wash'd away.

Then Gareth laid his lance athwart the ford;  
So drew him home; but he that fought no more,

As being all bone-batter'd on the rock,  
Yielded; and Gareth sent him to the King.

'Myself when I return will plead for thee.'  
'Lead, and I follow.' Quietly she led.

'Hath not the good wind, damsel, changed again?'

'Nay, not a point: nor art thou victor here.

There lies a ridge of slate across the ford;

His horse thereon stumbled—ay, for I saw it.

"O Sun" (not this strong fool whom thou, Sir Knave,  
Hast overthrown thro' mere unhappiness),

"O Sun, that wakenest all to bliss or pain,

O moon, that layest all to sleep again,  
Shine sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'

'What knowest thou of lovesong or of love?

Nay, nay, God wot, so thou wert nobly born,

Thou hast a pleasant presence. Yea, perchance,—

"O dewy flowers that open to the sun,

O dewy flowers that close when day is done,

Blow sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me."

'What knowest thou of flowers, except, belike.

To garnish meats with? hath not our good King

Who lent me thee, the flower of kitchendom,

A foolish love for flowers? what stick ye round

The pasty? wherewithal deck the boar's head?

Flowers? nay, the boar hath rose-maries and bay.

"O birds, that warble to the morning sky,  
O birds that warble as the day goes by,  
Sing sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me."

'What knowest thou of birds, lark, mavis, merle,  
Linnet? what dream ye when they utter forth  
May-music growing with the growing light,  
Their sweet sun-worship? these be for the snare  
(So runs thy fancy) these be for the spit,  
Larding and basting. See thou have not now  
Larded thy last, except thou turn and fly.  
There stands the third fool of their allegory.'

For there beyond a bridge of treble bow,  
All in a rose-red from the west, and all  
Naked it seem'd, and glowing in the broad  
Deep-dimpled current underneath, the knight,  
That named himself the Star of Evening, stood.

And Gareth, 'Wherefore waits the madman there  
Naked in open dayshine?' 'Nay,' she cried,  
'Not naked, only wrapt in harden'd skins  
That fit him like his own; and so ye cleave  
His armor off him, these will turn the blade.'

Then the third brother shouted o'er the bridge,  
'O brother-star, why shine ye here so low?  
Thy ward is higher up: but have ye slain  
The damsel's champion?' and the damsel cried,

'No star of thine, but shot from Arthur's heaven  
With all disaster unto thine and thee!  
For both thy younger brethren have gone down  
Before this youth; and so wilt thou, Sir Star;  
Art thou not old?'

'Old, damsel, old and hard,  
Old, with the might and breath of twenty boys.'  
Said Gareth, 'Old, and over-bold in brag!  
But that same strength which threw the Morning Star  
Can throw the Evening.'

Then that other blew  
A hard and deadly note upon the horn.  
'Approach and arm me!' With slow steps from out  
An old storm-beaten, russet, many-stain'd  
Pavilion, forth a grizzled damsel came,  
And arm'd him in old arms, and brought a helm  
With but a drying evergreen for crest,  
And gave a shield whereon the Star of Even  
Half-tarnish'd and half-bright, his emblem, shone.  
But when it glitter'd o'er the saddle-bow,  
They madly hurl'd together on the bridge;  
And Gareth overthrew him, lighted, drew,  
There met him drawn, and overthrew him again,  
But up like fire he started: and as oft  
As Gareth brought him grovelling on his knees,  
So many a time he vaulted up again;  
Till Gareth panted hard, and his great heart,  
Foredooming all his trouble was in vain,

Labor'd within him, for he seem'd as  
one

That all in later, sadder age begins  
To war against ill uses of a life,  
But these from all his life arise, and  
cry,

'Thou hast made us lords, and canst  
not put us down!'  
He half despairs; so Gareth seem'd  
to strike

Vainly, the damsel clamoring all the  
while,

'Well done, knave-knight, well  
stricken, O good knight-knave—  
O knave, as noble as any of all the  
knights—

Shame me not, shame me not. I have  
prophesied—  
Strike, thou art worthy of the Table  
Round—

His arms are old, he trusts the  
harden'd skin—

Strike—strike—the wind will never  
change again.'

And Gareth hearing ever stronglier  
snote,

And hew'd great pieces of his armor  
off him,

But lash'd in vain against the harden'd  
skin,

And could not wholly bring him under,  
more

Than loud Southwesterns, rolling  
ridge on ridge,

The buoy that rides at sea, and dips  
and springs

For ever; till at length Sir Gareth's  
brand

Clash'd his, and brake it utterly to the  
hilt.

'I have thee now;' but forth that  
other sprang,

And, all unknighthlike, writhed his wiry  
arms

Around him, till he felt, despite his  
mail,

Strangled, but straining ev'n his utter-  
most

Cast, and so hur'd him headlong o'er  
the bridge

Down to the river, sink or swim, and  
cried,

'Lead, and I follow.'

But the damsel said,  
'I lead no longer; ride thou at my  
side;  
Thou art the kingliest of all kitchen-  
knaves.

"O trefoil, sparkling on the rainy  
plain,  
O rainbow with three colors after  
rain,  
Shine sweetly: thrice my love hath  
smiled on me."

'Sir,—and, good faith, I fain had  
added—Knight,  
But that I heard thee call thyself a  
knave,—  
Shamed am I that I so rebuked,  
reviled,  
Missaid thee; noble I am; and thought  
the King  
Scorn'd me and mine; and now thy  
pardon, friend,  
For thou hast ever answer'd court-  
eously,  
And wholly bold thou art, and meek  
withal  
As any of Arthur's best, but, being  
knave,  
Hast mazed my wit: I marvel what  
thou art.

'Damsel,' he said, 'you be not all to  
blame,  
Saving that you mistrusted our good  
King  
Would handle scorn, or yield you,  
asking, one  
Not fit to cope your quest. You said  
your say;  
Mine answer was my deed. Good  
sooth! I hold  
He scarce is knight, yea but half-man,  
nor meet  
To fight for gentle damsel, he, who  
lets  
His heart be stirr'd with any foolish  
heat  
At any gentle damsel's waywardness.  
Shamed? care not! thy foul sayings  
fought for me:  
And seeing now thy words are fair,  
methinks

There rides no knight, not Lancelot,  
his great self,  
Hath force to quell me.'

Nigh upon that hour  
When the lone hern forgets his melan-  
choly,  
Lets down his other leg, and stretching,  
dreams  
Of goodly supper in the distant pool,  
Then turn'd the noble damsel smiling  
at him,  
And told him of a cavern hard at  
hand,  
Where bread and baken meats and  
good red wine  
Of Southland, which the Lady Lyonors  
Had sent her coming champion, waited  
him.

Anon they past a narrow comb  
wherein  
Were slabs of rock with figures,  
knights on horse  
Sculptured, and deckt in slowly-waning  
hues.  
'Sir Knave, my knight, a hermit once  
was here,  
Whose holy hand hath fashion'd on  
the rock  
The war of Time against the soul of  
man.  
And yon four fools have suck'd their  
allegory  
From these damp walls, and taken but  
the form.  
Know ye not these?' and Gareth lookt  
and read—  
In letters like to those the vexillary  
Hath left crag-carven o'er the stream-  
ing Gelt—  
'PHOSPHORUS,' then 'MERIDES'—  
'HESPERUS'—  
'NOX'—'MORS,' beneath five figures,  
armed men,  
Slab after slab, their faces forward  
all,  
And running down the Soul, a Shape  
that fled  
With broken wings, torn raiment and  
loose hair,  
For help and shelter to the hermit's  
cave.

'Follow the faces, and we find it.  
Look,  
Who comes behind?'

For one—delay'd at first  
Thro' helping back the dislocated Kay  
To Camelot, then by what thereafter  
chanced,  
The damsel's headlong error thro' the  
wood—  
Sir Lancelot, having swum the river-  
loops—  
His blue shield-lions cover'd—softly  
drew  
Behind the twain, and when he saw  
the star  
Gleam, on Sir Gareth's turning to him,  
cried,  
'Stay, felon knight, I avenge me for  
'my friend.'  
And Gareth crying prick'd against the  
cry;  
But when they closed—in a moment—  
at one touch  
Of that skill'd spear, the wonder of  
the world—  
Went sliding down so easily, and fell,  
That when he found the grass within  
his hands  
He laugh'd; the laughter jarr'd upon  
Lynette:  
Harshly she ask'd him, 'Shamed and  
overthrown,  
And tumbled back into the kitchen-  
knave,  
Why laugh ye? that ye blew your boast  
in vain?'  
'Nay, noble damsel, but that I, the  
son  
Of old King Lot and good Queen Belli-  
cent,  
And victor of the bridges and the  
ford,  
And knight of Arthur, here lie thrown  
by whom  
I know not, all thro' mere unhappi-  
ness—  
Device and sorcery and unhappiness—  
Out, sword; we are thrown!' And  
Lancelot answer'd, 'Prince,  
O Gareth—thro' the mere unhappiness  
Of one who came to help thee, not to  
harm,

Lancelot, and all as glad to find thee  
whole,  
As on the day when Arthur knighted  
him.'

Then Gareth, 'Thou—Lancelot!—  
thine the hand  
That threw me? An some chance to  
mar the boast  
Thy brethren of thee make—which  
could not chance—  
Had sent thee down before a lesser  
spear,  
Shamed had I been, and sad—O Lance-  
lot—thou!'

Whereat the maiden, petulant,  
'Lancelot,  
Why came ye not, when call'd? and  
wherefore now  
Come ye, not call'd? I gloried in my  
knave,  
Who being still rebuked, would an-  
swer still  
Courteous as any knight—but now, if  
knight,  
The marvel dies, and leaves me fool'd  
and trick'd,  
And only wondering wherefore play'd  
upon:  
And doubtful whether I and mine be  
scorn'd.  
Where should be truth if not in  
Arthur's hall,  
In Arthur's presence? Knight, knave,  
prince and fool,  
I hate thee and forever.'

And Lancelot said,  
'Blessed be thou, Sir Gareth! knight  
art thou  
To the King's best wish. O damsel,  
be you wise  
To call him shamed, who is but over-  
thrown?  
Thrown have I been, nor once, but  
many a time.  
Victor from vanquish'd issues at the  
last,  
And overthrower from being over-  
thrown.  
With sword we have not striven; and  
thy good horse'

And thou are weary; yet not less I  
felt  
Thy manhood thro' that wearied lance  
of thine.  
Well hast thou done; for all the stream  
is freed,  
And thou hast wreak'd his justice on  
his foes,  
And when reviled, hast answer'd gra-  
ciously,  
And makest merry when overthrown.  
Prince, Knight,  
Hail, Knight and Prince, and of our  
Table Round!'

And then when turning to Lynette  
he told  
The tale of Gareth, petulantly she  
said,  
'Ay well—ay well—for worse than  
being fool'd  
Of others, is to fool one's self. A  
cave,  
Sir Lancelot, is hard by, with meats  
and drinks  
And forage for the horse, and flint for  
fire,  
But all about it flies a honeysuckle.  
Seek, till we find.' And when\*they  
sought and found,  
Sir Gareth drank and ate, and all his  
life  
Past into sleep; on whom the maiden  
gazed.  
'Sound sleep be thine! sound cause  
to sleep hast thou.  
Wake lusty! Seem I not as tender  
to him  
As any mother? Ay, but such a one  
As all day long hath rated at her  
child,  
And vext his day, but blesses him  
asleep—  
Good lord, how sweetly smells the  
honeysuckle  
In the hush'd night, as if the world  
were one  
Of utter peace, and love, and gentle-  
ness!  
O Lancelot, Lancelot!—and she clapt  
her hands—  
'Full merry am I to find my goodly  
knave

Is knight and noble. See now, sworn  
have I,  
Else you black felon had not let me  
pass,  
To bring thee back to do the battle  
with him.  
Thus and thou goest, he will fight thee  
first;  
Who doubts thee victor? so will my  
knight-knave  
Miss the full flower of this accom-  
plishment.'

Said Lancelot, 'Peradventure he,  
you name,  
May know my shield. Let Gareth,  
an he will,  
Change his for mine, and take my  
charger, fresh,  
Not to be spurr'd, loving the battle  
as well  
As he that rides him.' 'Lancelot-  
like,' she said,  
'Courteous in this, Lord Lancelot, as  
in all.'

And Gareth, wakening, fiercely  
clutch'd the shield;  
'Ramp ye lance-splintering lions, on  
whom all spears  
Are rotten sticks! ye seem agape to  
roar!  
Yea, ramp and roar at leaving of  
your lord—  
Care not, good beasts, so well I care  
for you.  
O noble Lancelot, from my hold on  
these  
Streams virtue—fire—thro' one that  
will not shame  
Even the shadow of Lancelot under  
shield.  
Hence: let us go.'

Silent the silent field  
They traversed. Arthur's harp tho'  
summer-wan,  
In counter motion to the clouds,  
allured  
The glance of Gareth dreaming on his  
liege.  
A star shot: 'Lo,' said Gareth, 'the  
foe falls!'

An owl whoopt: 'Hark the victor  
pealing there!  
Suddenly she that rode upon his left  
Clung to the shield that Lancelot  
lent him, crying,  
'Yield, yield him this again: 'tis he  
must fight:  
I curse the tongue that all thro' yes-  
terday  
Reviled thee, and hath wrought on  
Lancelot now  
To lend thee horse and shield: won-  
ders ye have done;  
Miracles ye cannot: here is glory  
enow  
In having flung the three: I see thee  
maim'd,  
Mangled: I swear thou canst not  
fling the fourth.'

'And wherefore, damsel? tell me  
all ye know.  
You cannot scare me; nor rough  
face, or voice,  
Brute bulk of limb, or boundless  
savagery  
Appal me from the quest.'

'Nay, Prince,' she cried,  
'God wot, I never look'd upon the  
face,  
Seeing he never rides abroad by  
day;  
But watch'd him have I like a phan-  
tom pass  
Chilling the night: nor have I heard  
the voice.  
Always he made his mouthpiece of a  
page  
Who came and went, and still re-  
ported him  
As closing in himself the strength of  
ten,  
And when his anger tare him, massa-  
cring  
Man, woman, lad and girl—yea, the  
soft babe!  
Some hold that he hath swallow'd  
infant flesh,  
Monster! O Prince, I went for Lance-  
lot first,  
The quest is Lancelot's: give him  
back the shield.'

Said Gareth laughing, 'An he fight  
for this,  
Belike he wins it as the better man ;  
Thus—and not else !'

But Lancelot on him urged  
All the devisings of their chivalry  
When one might meet a mightier  
than himself ;  
How best to manage horse, lance,  
sword and shield,  
And so fill up the gap where force  
might fail  
With skill and fineness. Instant  
were his words.

Then Gareth, 'Here be rules. I  
know but one—  
To dash against mine enemy and to  
win.  
Yet have I watch'd thee victor in the  
joust,  
And seen thy way.' 'Heaven help  
thee,' sigh'd Lynette.

Then for a space, and under cloud  
that grew  
To thunder-gloom palling all stars,  
they rode  
In converse till she made her palfrey  
halt,  
Lifted an arm, and softly whisper'd  
'There.'  
And all the three were silent seeing,  
pitch'd  
Beside the Castle Perilous on flat  
field,  
A huge pavilion like a mountain  
peak  
Sunder the glooming crimson on the  
marge,  
Black, with black banner, and a long  
black horn  
Beside it hanging ; which Sir Gareth  
graspt,  
And so, before the two could hinder  
him,  
Sent all his heart and breath thro' all  
the horn.  
Echo'd the walls ; a light twinkled ;  
anon  
Came lights and lights, and once  
again he blew ;

Whereon were hollow trappings up  
and down  
And muffled voices heard, and shad-  
ows past ;  
Till high above him, circled with her  
maids,  
The Lady Lyonors at a window stood,  
Beautiful among lights, and waving  
to him  
White hands, and courtesy ; but when  
the Prince  
Three times had blown—after long  
hush—at last—  
The huge pavilion slowly yielded up,  
Thro' those black foldings, that which  
housed therein.  
High on a nightblack horse, in night-  
black arms,  
With white breast-bone, and barren  
ribs of Death,  
And crown'd with fleshless laughter  
—some ten steps—  
In the half-light—thro' the dim dawn  
—advanced  
The monster, and then paused, and  
spake no word.

But Gareth spake and all indig-  
nantly,  
'Fool, for thou hast, men say, the  
strength of ten,  
Canst thou not trust the limbs thy  
God hath given,  
But must, to make the terror of thee  
more,  
Trick thyself out in ghastly imageries  
Of that which Life hath done with,  
and the clod,  
Less dull than thou, will hide with  
mantling flowers  
As if for pity ?' But he spake no word ;  
Which set the horror higher : a  
maiden swoon'd ;  
The Lady Lyonors wrung her hands  
and wept,  
As doom'd to be the bride of Night  
and Death ;  
Sir Gareth's head prickled beneath  
his helm ;  
And ev'n Sir Lancelot thro' his warm  
blood felt  
Ice strike, and all that mark'd him  
were aghast.

At once Sir Lancelot's charger  
fiercely neigh'd  
And Death's dark war-horse bounded  
forward with him.  
Then those that did not blink the  
terror, saw  
That Death was cast to ground, and  
slowly rose.  
But with one stroke Sir Gareth split  
the skull.  
Half fell to right and half to left and  
lay.  
Then with a stronger buffet he clove  
the helm  
As throughly as the skull; and out  
from this  
Issued the bright face of a blooming  
boy  
Fresh as a flower new-born, and cry-  
ing, 'Knight,  
Slay me not: my three brethren bad  
me do it,  
To make a horror all about the house,  
And stay the world from Lady Lyon-  
ors.  
They never dream'd the passes would  
be past.'  
Answer'd Sir Gareth graciously to  
one  
Not many a moon his younger, 'My  
fair child,  
What madness made thee challenge  
the chief knight  
Of Arthur's hall?' 'Fair Sir, they  
bad me do it.  
They hate the King, and Lancelot, the  
King's friend,  
They hoped to slay him somewhere  
on the stream,  
They never dream'd the passes could  
be past.'

Then sprang the happier day from  
underground;  
And Lady Lyonors and her house,  
with dance  
And revel and song, made merry over  
Death,  
As being after all their foolish fears  
And horrors only proven a blooming  
boy.  
So large mirth lived and Gareth won  
the quest.

And he that told the tale in older  
times  
Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyonors,  
But he, that told it later, says Lynette.

#### THE MARRIAGE OF GERAINT.

THE brave Geraint, a knight of  
Arthur's court,  
A tributary prince of Devon, one  
Of that great Order of the Table  
Round,  
Had married Enid, Yniol's only child,  
And loved her, as he loved the light  
of Heaven.  
And as the light of Heaven varies,  
now  
At sunrise, now at sunset, now by  
night  
With moon and trembling stars, so  
loved Geraint  
To make her beauty vary day by day,  
In crimsons and in purples and in  
gems.  
And Enid, but to please her husband's  
eye,  
Who first had found and loved her in  
a state  
Of broken fortunes, daily fronted him  
In some fresh splendor; and the  
Queen herself,  
Grateful to Prince Geraint for service  
done,  
Loved her, and often with her own  
white hands  
Array'd and deck'd her, as the loveli-  
est,  
Next after her own self, in all the  
court.  
And Enid loved the Queen, and with  
true heart  
Adored her, as the stateliest and the  
best  
And loveliest of all women upon  
earth.  
And seeing them so tender and so  
close,  
Long in their common love rejoiced  
Geraint.  
But when a rumor rose about the  
Queen,



Touching her guilty love for Lancelot,  
Tho' yet there lived no proof, nor yet  
was heard  
The world's loud whisper breaking  
into storm,  
Not less Geraint believed it; and  
there fell  
A horror on him, lest his gentle wife,  
Thro' that great tenderness for Guin-  
evere,  
Had suffer'd, or should suffer any  
taint  
In nature: wherefore going to the  
King,  
He made this pretext, that his prince-  
dom lay  
Close on the borders of a territory,  
Wherein were bandit earls, and catiff  
knights,  
Assassins, and all flyers from the hand  
Of justice, and whatever loathes a  
law:  
And therefore, till the King himself  
should please  
To cleanse this common sewer of all  
his realm,  
He craved a fair permission to depart,  
And there defend his marches; and  
the King  
Mused for a little on his plea, but,  
last,  
Allowing it, the Prince and Enid  
rode,  
And fifty knights rode with them, to  
the shores  
Of Severn, and they past to their own  
land;  
Where, thinking, that if ever yet was  
wife  
True to her lord, mine shall be so to  
me,  
He compass'd her with sweet observ-  
ances  
And worship, never leaving her, and  
grew  
Forgetful of his promise to the King,  
Forgetful of the falcon and the hunt,  
Forgetful of the tilt and tournament,  
Forgetful of his glory and his name,  
Forgetful of his principedom and its  
cares.  
And this forgetfulness was hateful to  
her.

And by and by the people, when they  
met  
In twos and threes, or fuller com-  
panies,  
Began to scoff and jeer and babble of  
him  
As of a prince whose manhood was  
all gone,  
And molten down in mere uxorious-  
ness.  
And this she gather'd from the peo-  
ple's eyes:  
This too the women who attired her  
head,  
To please her, dwelling on his bound-  
less love,  
Told Enid, and they sadden'd her the  
more:  
And day by day she thought to tell  
Geraint,  
But could not out of bashful delicacy;  
While he that watch'd her sadden,  
was the more  
Suspicious that her nature had a taint.

At last, it chanced that on a summer  
morn  
(They sleeping each by either) the  
new sun  
Beat thro' the blindless casement of  
the room,  
And heated the strong warrior in his  
dreams;  
Who, moving, cast the coverlet aside,  
And bared the knotted column of  
his throat,  
The massive square of his heroic  
breast,  
And arms on which the standing  
muscle sloped,  
As slopes a wild brook o'er a little  
stone,  
Running too vehemently to break  
upon it.  
And Enid woke and sat beside the  
couch,  
Admiring him, and thought within  
herself,  
Was ever man so grandly made as  
he?  
Then, like a shadow, past the people's  
talk  
And accusation of uxoriousness

Across her mind, and bowing over  
him,  
Low to her own heart piteously she  
said :

'O noble breast and all-puissant  
arms,  
Am I the cause, I the poor cause that  
men  
Reproach you, saying all your force  
is gone?  
I *am* the cause, because I dare not  
speak  
And tell him what I think and what  
they say.  
And yet I hate that he should linger  
here ;  
I cannot love my lord and not his  
name.  
Far liefer had I gird his harness on  
him,  
And ride with him to battle and stand  
by,  
And watch his mightful hand striking  
great blows  
At caitiffs and at wrongers of the  
world.  
Far better were I laid in the dark  
earth,  
Not hearing any more his noble voice,  
Not to be folded more in these dear  
arms,  
And darken'd from the high light in  
his eyes,  
Than that my lord thro' me should  
suffer shame.  
Am I so bold, and could I so stand  
by,  
And see my dear lord wounded in the  
strife,  
Or maybe pierced to death before  
mine eyes,  
And yet not dare to tell him what I  
think,  
And how men slur him, saying all his  
force  
Is melted into mere effeminacy?  
O me, I fear that I am no true wife.'

Half inwardly, half audibly she  
spoke,  
And the strong passion in her made  
her weep

True tears upon his broad and naked  
breast,  
And these awoke him, and by great  
mischance  
He heard but fragments of her later  
words,  
And that she fear'd she was not a true  
wife.  
And then he thought, 'In spite of all  
my care,  
For all my pains, poor man, for all my  
pains,  
She is not faithful to me, and I see  
her  
Weeping for some gay knight in  
Arthur's hall.'  
Then tho' he loved and revered  
her too much  
To dream she could be guilty of foul  
act,  
Right thro' his manful breast darted  
the pang  
That makes a man, in the sweet face  
of her  
Whom he loves most, lonely and  
miserable.  
At this he hurl'd his huge limbs out of  
bed,  
And shook his drowsy squire awake  
and cried,  
'My charger and her palfrey ;' then  
to her,  
'I will ride forth into the wilderness ;  
For tho' it seems my spurs are yet to  
win,  
I have not fall'n so low as some  
would wish.  
And thou, put on thy worst and  
meanest dress  
And ride with me.' And Enid ask'd,  
amazed,  
'If Enid errs, let Enid learn her  
fault.'  
But he, 'I charge thee, ask not, but  
obey.'  
Then she bethought her of a faded  
silk,  
A faded mantle and a faded veil,  
And moving toward a cedarn cabinet,  
Wherein she kept them folded rever-  
ently  
With sprigs of summer laid between  
the folds,

She took them, and array'd herself  
therein,  
Remembering when first he came on  
her  
Drest in that dress, and how he loved  
her in it,  
And all her foolish fears about the  
dress,  
And all his journey to her, as himself  
Had told her, and their coming to the  
court.

For Arthur on the Whitsuntide  
before  
Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk.  
There on a day, he sitting high in hall,  
Before him came a forester of Dean,  
Wet from the woods, with notice of a  
hart  
Taller than all his fellows, milky-  
white,  
First seen that day: these things he  
told the King.  
Then the good King gave order to  
let blow  
His horns for hunting on the morn-  
morn.  
And when the Queen petition'd for  
his leave  
To see the hunt, allow'd it easily.  
So with the morning all the court  
were gone.  
But Guinevere lay late into the morn,  
Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming  
of her love  
For Lancelot, and forgetful of the  
hunt;  
But rose at last, a single maiden with  
her,  
Took horse, and forded Usk, and  
gain'd the wood;  
There, on a little knoll beside it,  
stay'd  
Waiting to hear the hounds; but  
heard instead  
A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince  
Geraint,  
Late also, wearing neither hunting-  
dress  
Nor weapon, save a golden-hilted  
brand,  
Came quickly flashing thro' the shal-  
low ford

Behind them, and so gallop'd up the  
knoll.  
A purple scarf, at either end whereof  
There swung an apple of the purest  
gold,  
Sway'd round about him, as he  
gallop'd up  
To join them, glancing like a dragon-  
fly  
In summer suit and silks of holiday.  
Low bow'd the tributary Prince, and  
she,  
Sweetly and stately, and with all  
grace  
Of womanhood and queenhood,  
answer'd him:  
'Late, late, Sir Prince,' she said,  
'later than we!'  
'Yea, noble Queen,' he answer'd,  
'and so late  
That I but come like you to see the  
hunt,  
Not join it.' 'Therefore wait with  
me,' she said;  
'For on this little knoll, if anywhere,  
There is good chance that we shall  
hear the hounds:  
Here often they break covert at our  
feet.'

And while they listen'd for the  
distant hunt,  
And chiefly for the baying of Cavall,  
King Arthur's hound of deepest  
mouth, there rode  
Full slowly by a knight, lady, and  
dwarf;  
Whereof the dwarf lagg'd latest, and  
the knight  
Had visor up, and show'd a youthful  
face,  
Imperious, and of haughtiest linea-  
ments.  
And Guinevere, not mindful of his face  
In the King's hall, desired his name,  
and sent  
Her maiden to demand it of the  
dwarf;  
Who being vicious, old and irritable,  
And doubling all his master's vice of  
pride,  
Made answer sharply that she should  
not know.

'Then will I ask it of himself,' she said.  
 'Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not,' cried the dwarf;  
 'Thou art not worthy ev'n to speak of him';  
 And when she put her horse toward the knight,  
 Struck at her with his whip, and she return'd  
 Indignant to the Queen; whereat Geraint  
 Exclaiming, 'Surely I will learn the name,'  
 Made sharply to the dwarf, and ask'd it of him,  
 Who answer'd as before; and when the Prince  
 Had put his horse in motion toward the knight,  
 Struck at him with his whip, and cut his cheek.  
 The Prince's blood spirted upon the scarf,  
 Dyeing it; and his quick, instinctive hand  
 Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him:  
 But he, from his exceeding manfulness  
 And pure nobility of temperament,  
 Wroth to be wroth at such a worm, refrain'd  
 From ev'n a word, and so returning said:

'I will avenge this insult, noble Queen,  
 Done in your maiden's person to yourself:  
 And I will track this vermin to their earths:  
 For tho' I ride unarm'd, I do not doubt  
 To find, at some place I shall come at, arms  
 On loan, or else for pledge; and, being found,  
 Then will I fight him, and will break his pride,  
 And on the third day will again be here,  
 So that I be not fall'n in fight.  
 Farewell.'

'Farewell, fair Prince,' answer'd the stately Queen.  
 'Be prosperous in this journey, as in all;  
 And may you light on all things that you love,  
 And live to wed with her whom first you love:  
 But ere you wed with any, bring your bride,  
 And I, were she the daughter of a king,  
 Yea, tho' she were a beggar from the hedge,  
 Will clothe her for her bridals like the sun.'

And Prince Geraint, now thinking that he heard  
 The noble hart at bay, now the far horn,  
 A little vext at losing of the hunt,  
 A little at the vile occasion, rode,  
 By ups and downs, thro' many a grassy glade  
 And valley, with fixt eye following the three.  
 At last they issued from the world of wood,  
 And climb'd upon a fair and even ridge,  
 And show'd themselves against the sky, and sank.  
 And thither came Geraint, and underneath  
 Beheld the long street of a little town  
 In a long valley, on one side whereof,  
 White from the mason's hand, a fortress rose;  
 And on one side a castle in decay,  
 Beyond a bridge that spann'd a dry ravine:  
 And out of town and valley came a noise  
 As of a broad brook o'er a shingly bed  
 Brawling, or like a clamor of the rooks  
 At distance, ere they settle for the night.

And onward to the fortress rode the three,

And enter'd, and were lost behind the walls.

'So,' thought Geraint, 'I have track'd him to his earth.'

And down the long street riding wearily,

Found every hostel full, and every-where

Was hammer laid to hoof, and the hot hiss

And bustling whistle of the youth who scour'd

His master's armor; and of such a one

He ask'd, 'What means the tumult in the town?'

Who told him, scouring still, 'The sparrow-hawk!'

Then riding close behind an ancient churl,

Who, smitten by the dusty sloping beam,

Went sweating underneath a sack of corn,

Ask'd yet once more what meant the hubbub here?

Who answer'd gruffly, 'Ugh! the sparrow-hawk.'

Then riding further past an armorer's, Who, with back turn'd, and bow'd

above his work,

Sat riveting a helmet on his knee, He put the self-same query, but the man

Not turning round, nor looking at him, said:

'Friend, he that labors for the sparrow-hawk

Has little time for idle questioners.' Whereat Geraint flash'd into sudden spleen:

'A thousand pips eat up your sparrow-hawk!

Tits, wrens, and all wing'd nothings peck him dead!

Ye think the rustic cackle of your bourg

The murmur of the world! What is it to me?

O wretched set of sparrows, one and all,

Who pipe of nothing but of sparrow-hawks!

Speak, if ye be not like the rest, hawk-mad,

Where can I get me harborage for the night?

And arms, arms, arms to fight my enemy? Speak!

Whereat the armorer turning all amazed

And seeing one so gay in purple silks,

Came forward with the helmet yet in hand

And answer'd, 'Pardon me, O stranger knight;

We hold a tourney here to-morrow morn,

And there is scanty time for half the work.

Arms? truth! I know not: all are wanted here.

Harborage? truth, good truth, I know not, save,

It may be, at Earl Yniol's, o'er the bridge

Yonder.' He spoke and fell to work again.

Then rode Geraint, a little spleenful yet,

Across the bridge that spann'd the dry ravine.

There musing sat the hoary-headed Earl,

(His dress a suit of fray'd magnificence,

Once fit for feasts of ceremony) and said:

'Whither, fair son?' to whom Geraint replied,

'O friend, I seek a harborage for the night.'

Then Yniol, 'Enter therefore and partake

The slender entertainment of a house

Once rich, now poor, but ever open-door'd.'

'Thanks, venerable friend,' replied Geraint;

'So that ye do not serve me sparrow-hawks

For supper, I will enter, I will eat

With all the passion of a twelve hours' fast.'

Then sigh'd and smiled the hoary-headed Earl,  
 And answer'd, 'Graver cause than yours is mine  
 To curse this hedgerow thief, the sparrow-hawk:  
 But in, go in; for save yourself desire it,  
 We will not touch upon him ev'n in jest.'

Then rode Geraint into the castle court,  
 His charger trampling many a prickly star  
 Of sprouted thistle on the broken stones.  
 He look'd and saw that all was ruinous.  
 Here stood a shatter'd archway plumed with fern;  
 And here had fall'n a great part of a tower,  
 Whole, like a crag that tumbles from the cliff,  
 And like a crag was gay with wilding flowers:  
 And high above a piece of turret stair,  
 Worn by the feet that now were silent, wound  
 Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-stems  
 Claspt the gray walls with hairy-fibred arms,  
 And suck'd the joining of the stones, and look'd  
 A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a grove.

And while he waited in the castle court,  
 The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter, rang  
 Clear thro' the open casement of the hall,  
 Singing; and as the sweet voice of a bird,  
 Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,  
 Moves him to think what kind of bird it is  
 That sings so delicately clear, and make  
 Conjecture of the plumage and the form;

So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint;  
 And made him like a man abroad at morn  
 When first the liquid note beloved of men  
 Comes flying over many a windy wave  
 To Britain, and in April suddenly  
 Breaks from a coppice gemm'd with green and red,  
 And he suspends his converse with a friend,  
 Or it may be the labor of his hands,  
 To think or say, 'There is the nightingale;  
 So fared it with Geraint, who thought and said,  
 'Here, by God's grace, is the one voice for me.'

It chanced the song that Enid sang was one  
 Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid sang:

'Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and lower the proud;  
 Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine, storm, and cloud;  
 Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

'Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown;  
 With that wild wheel we go not up or down;  
 Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great.

'Smile and we smile, the lords of many lands;  
 Frown and we smile, the lords of our own hands;  
 For man is man and master of his fate.

'Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring crowd;  
 Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the cloud;  
 Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.'

'Hark, by the bird's song ye may  
learn the nest,'  
Said Yniol; 'enter quickly.' Enter-  
ing then,  
Right o'er a mound of newly-fallen  
stones,  
The dusky-rafter'd many-cobweb'd  
hall,  
He found an ancient dame in dim bro-  
cade;  
And near her, like a blossom vermeil-  
white,  
That lightly breaks a faded flower-  
sheath,  
Moved the fair Enid, all in faded  
silk,  
Her daughter. In a moment thought  
Geraint,  
'Here by God's rood is the one maid  
for me.'  
But none spake word except the hoary  
Earl:  
'Enid, the good knight's horse stands  
in the court;  
Take him to stall, and give him corn,  
and then  
Go to the town and buy us flesh and  
wine;  
And we will make us merry as we  
may.  
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are  
great.'

He spake: the Prince, as Enid past  
him, fain  
To follow, strode a stride, but Yniol  
caught  
His purple scarf, and held, and said,  
'Forbear!  
Rest! the good house, tho' ruin'd, O  
my son,  
Endures not that her guest should  
serve himself.'  
And reverencing the custom of the  
house  
Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Enid took his charger to the  
stall;  
And after went her way across the  
bridge,  
And reach'd the town, and while the  
Prince and Earl

Yet spoke together, came again with  
one,  
A youth, that following with a costrel  
bore  
The means of goodly welcome, flesh  
and wine.  
And Enid brought sweet cakes to  
make them cheer,  
And in her veil enfolded, manchet  
bread.  
And then, because their hall must  
also serve  
For kitchen, boil'd the flesh, and  
spread the board,  
And stood behind, and waited on the  
three.  
And seeing her so sweet and service-  
able,  
Geraint had longing in him evermore  
To stoop and kiss the tender little  
thumb,  
That crost the trencher as she laid it  
down:  
But after all had eaten, then Geraint,  
For now the wine made summer in  
his veins,  
Let his eye rove in following, or rest  
On Enid at her lowly handmaid-work,  
Now here, now there, about the  
dusky hall;  
Then suddenly address the hoary  
Earl:

'Fair Host and Earl, I pray your  
courtesy;  
This sparrow-hawk, what is he? tell  
me of him.  
His name? but no, good faith, I will  
not have it:  
For if he be the knight whom late  
I saw  
Ride into that new fortress by your  
town,  
White from the mason's hand, then  
have I sworn  
From his own lips to have it—I am  
Geraint  
Of Devon—for this morning when the  
Queen  
Sent her own maiden to demand the  
name,  
His dwarf, a vicious under-shapen  
thing,

Struck at her with his whip, and she  
return'd  
Indignant to the Queen; and then I  
swore  
That I would track this caitiff to his  
hold,  
And fight and break his pride, and  
have it of him.  
And all unarm'd I rode, and thought  
to find  
Arms in your town, where all the men  
are mad;  
They take the rustic murmur of their  
bourg  
For the great wave that echoes round  
the world;  
They would not hear me speak: but  
if ye know  
Where I can light on arms, or if your-  
self  
Should have them, tell me, seeing I  
have sworn  
That I will break his pride and learn  
his name,  
Avenging this great insult done the  
Queen.'

Then cried Earl Yniol, 'Art thou he  
indeed,  
Geraint, a name far-sounded among  
men  
For noble deeds? and truly I, when  
first  
I saw you moving by me on the  
bridge,  
Felt ye were somewhat, yea, and by  
your state  
And presence might have guess'd you  
one of those  
That eat in Arthur's hall at Came-  
lot.  
Nor speak I now from foolish flat-  
tery;  
For this dear child hath often heard  
me praise  
Your feats of arms, and often when I  
paused  
Hath ask'd again, and ever loved to  
hear;  
So grateful is the noise of noble  
deeds  
To noble hearts who see but acts of  
wrong:

O never yet had woman such a pair  
Of suitors as this maiden; first  
Limours,  
A creature wholly given to brawls  
and wine,  
Drunk even when he woo'd; and be  
he dead  
I know not, but he past to the wild  
land.  
The second was your foe, the sparrow-  
hawk,  
My curse, my nephew—I will not let  
his name  
Slip from my lips if I can help it—  
he,  
When I that knew him fierce and  
turbulent  
Refused her to him, then his pride  
awoke;  
And since the proud man often is the  
mean,  
He sow'd a slander in the common  
ear,  
Affirming that his father left him  
gold,  
And in my charge, which was not  
render'd to him;  
Bribed with large promises the men  
who served  
About my person, the more easily  
Because my means were somewhat  
broken into  
Thro' open doors and hospitality;  
Raised my own town against me in  
the night  
Before my Enid's birthday, sack'd  
my house;  
From mine own earldom foully ousted  
me;  
Built that new fort to overawe my  
friends,  
For truly there are those who love me  
yet;  
And keeps me in this ruinous castle  
here,  
Where doubtless he would put me  
soon to death,  
But that his pride too much despises  
me:  
And I myself sometimes despise my-  
self;  
For I have let men be, and have their  
way;



'Am much too gentle, have not used  
my power :  
Nor know I whether I be very base  
Or very manful, whether very wise  
Or very foolish ; only this I know,  
That whatsoever evil happen to me,  
I seem to suffer nothing heart or  
limb,  
But can endure it all most patiently.'

'Well said, true heart,' replied  
Geraint, 'but arms,  
That if the sparrow-hawk, this  
nephew, fight  
In next day's tourney I may break his  
pride.'

And Yniol answer'd, 'Arms, in-  
deed, but old  
And rusty, old and rusty, Prince  
Geraint,  
Are mine, and therefore at thine ask-  
ing, thine.  
But in this tournament can no man  
tilt,  
Except the lady he loves best be  
there.  
Two forks are fixt into the meadow  
ground,  
And over these is placed a silver  
wand,  
And over that a golden sparrow-hawk,  
The prize of beauty for the fairest  
there.  
And this, what knight soever be in  
field  
Lays claim to for the lady at his side,  
And tilts with my good nephew  
thereupon,  
Who being apt at arms and big of  
bone  
Has ever won it for the lady with  
him,  
And toppling over all antagonism  
Has earn'd himself the name of spar-  
row-hawk.  
But thou, that hast no lady, canst not  
fight.'

To whom Geraint with eyes all  
bright, replied,  
Leaning a little toward him, 'Thy  
leave !

Let *me* lay lance in rest, O noble  
host,  
For this dear child, because I never  
saw,  
Tho' having seen all beauties of our  
time,  
Nor can see elsewhere, anything so  
fair.  
And if I fall her name will yet re-  
main  
Untarnish'd as before ; but if I live,  
So aid me Heaven when at mine  
uttermost,  
As I will make her truly my true  
wife.'

Then, howsoever patient, Yniol's  
heart  
Danced in his bosom, seeing better  
days.  
And looking round he saw not Enid  
there,  
(Who hearing her own name had  
stol'n away)  
But that old dame, to whom full ten-  
derly  
And fondling all her hand in his  
he said,  
'Mother, a maiden is a tender thing,  
And best by her that bore her under-  
stood.  
Go thou to rest, but ere thou go to  
rest  
Tell her, and prove her heart toward  
the Prince.'

So spake the kindly-hearted Earl,  
and she  
With frequent smile and nod depart-  
ing found,  
Half disarray'd as to her rest, the  
girl ;  
Whom first she kiss'd on either cheek,  
and then  
On either shining shoulder laid a hand,  
And kept her off and gazed upon her  
face,  
And told her all their converse in the  
hall,  
Proving her heart : but never light and  
shade  
Cours'd one another more on open  
ground

Beneath a troubled heaven, than red  
and pale  
Across the face of Enid hearing her;  
While slowly falling as a scale that  
falls,  
When weight is added only grain by  
grain,  
Sank her sweet head upon her gentle  
breast;  
Nor did she lift an eye nor speak a  
word,  
Rapt in the fear and in the wonder of  
it;  
So moving without answer to her  
rest  
She heard no rest, and ever fail'd to  
draw  
The quiet night into her blood, but lay  
Contemplating her own unworthiness;  
And when the pale and bloodless east  
began  
To quicken to the sun, arose, and  
raised  
Her mother too, and hand in hand  
they moved  
Down to the meadow where the jousts  
were held,  
And waited there for Yniol and  
Geraint.

And thither came the twain, and  
when Geraint  
Beheld her first in field, awaiting him,  
He felt, were she the prize of bodily  
force,  
Himself beyond the rest pushing could  
move  
The chair of Idris. Yniol's rusted  
arms  
Were on his princely person, but thro'  
these  
Princelike his bearing shone; and  
errant knights  
And ladies came, and by and by the  
town  
Flow'd in, and settling circled all the  
lists.  
And there they fixt the forks into the  
ground,  
And over these they placed the silver  
wand,  
And over that the golden sparrow-  
hawk.

Then Yniol's nephew, after trumpet  
blown,  
Spake to the lady with him and pro-  
claim'd,  
'Advance and take, as fairest of the  
fair,  
What I these two years past have won  
for thee,  
The prize of beauty.' Loudly spake  
the Prince,  
'Forbear: there is a worthier,' and the  
knight  
With some surprise and thrice as  
much disdain  
Turn'd, and beheld the four, and all  
his face  
Glow'd like the heart of a great fire at  
Yule,  
So burnt he was with passion, crying  
out,  
'Do battle for it then,' no more; and  
thrice  
They clash'd together, and thrice they  
brake their spears.  
Then each, dishorsed and drawing,  
lash'd at each  
So often and with such blows, that all  
the crowd  
Wonder'd, and now and then from dis-  
tant walls  
There came a clapping as of phantom  
hands.  
So twice they fought, and twice they  
breathed, and still  
The dew of their great labor, and the  
blood  
Of their strong bodies, flowing, drain'd  
their force.  
But either's force was match'd till  
Yniol's cry,  
'Remember that great insult done the  
Queen,'  
Increased Geraint's, who heaved his  
blade aloft,  
And crack'd the helmet thro', and bit  
the bone,  
And fell'd him, and set foot upon his  
breast,  
And said, 'Thy name?' To whom  
the fallen man  
Made answer, groaning, 'Edyrn, son  
of Nudd!  
Ashamed am I that I should tell it thee.

My pride is broken: men have seen  
my fall.'

'Then, Edyrn, son of Nudd,' replied  
Geraint,

'These two things shalt thou do, or  
else thou diest.

First, thou thyself, with damsel and  
with dwarf,

Shalt ride to Arthur's court, and com-  
ing there,

Crave pardon for that insult done the  
Queen,

And shalt abide her judgment on it;  
next,

Thou shalt give back their earldom to  
thy kin.

These two things shalt thou do, or thou  
shalt die.'

And Edyrn answer'd, 'These things  
will I do,

For I have never yet been overthrown,  
And thou hast overthrown me, and my  
pride

Is broken down, for Enid sees my  
fall!'

And rising up, he rode to Arthur's  
court,

And there the Queen forgave him  
easily.

And being young, he changed and  
came to loathe

His crime of traitor, slowly drew him-  
self

Bright from his old dark life, and fell  
at last

In the great battle fighting for the  
King.

But when the third day from the  
hunting-morn

Made a low splendor in the world, and  
wings

Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she lay  
With her fair head in the dim-yellow  
light,

Among the dancing shadows of the  
birds,

Woke and bethought her of her prom-  
ise given

No later than last eve to Prince  
Geraint—

So bent he seem'd on going the third  
day,

He would not leave her, till her prom-  
ise given—

To ride with him this morning to the  
court,

And there be made known to the  
stately Queen,

And there be wedded with all cere-  
mony.

At this she cast her eyes upon her  
dress,

And thought it never yet had look'd so  
mean.

For as a leaf in mid-November is  
To what it was in mid-October, seem'd

The dress that now she look'd on to  
the dress

She look'd on ere the coming of  
Geraint.

And still she look'd, and still the ter-  
ror grew

Of that strange bright and dreadful  
thing, a court,

All staring at her in her faded silk:  
And softly to her own sweet heart she  
said:

'This noble prince who won our  
earldom back,

So splendid in his acts and his attire,  
Sweet heaven, how much I shall dis-  
credit him!

Would he could tarry with us here  
awhile,

But being so beholden to the Prince,  
It were but little grace in any of us,

Bent as he seem'd on going this third  
day,

To seek a second favor at his hands.  
Yet if he could but tarry a day or  
two,

Myself would work eye dim, and finger  
lame,

Far liefer than so much discredit him.'

And Enid fell in longing for a dress  
All branch'd and flower'd with gold, a  
costly gift

Of her good mother, given her on the  
night

Before her birthday, three sad years  
ago,

That night of fire, when Edyrn sack'd  
their house,

And scatter'd all they had to all the winds :  
 For while the mother show'd it, and the two  
 Were turning and admiring it, the work.  
 To both appear'd so costly, rose a cry  
 That Edyrn's men were on them, and they fled  
 With little save the jewels they had on,  
 Which being sold and sold had bought them bread :  
 And Edyrn's men had caught them in their flight,  
 And placed them in this ruin ; and she wish'd  
 The Prince had found her in her ancient home ;  
 Then let her fancy flit across the past,  
 And roam the goodly places that she knew ;  
 And last bethought her how she used to watch,  
 Near that old home, a pool of golden carp ;  
 And one was patch'd and blurr'd and lustreless  
 Among his burnish'd brethren of the pool ;  
 And half asleep she made comparison  
 Of that and these to her own faded self  
 And the gay court, and fell asleep again ;  
 And dreamt herself was such a faded form  
 Among her burnish'd sisters of the pool ;  
 But this was in the garden of a king ;  
 And tho' she lay dark in the pool, she knew  
 That all was bright ; that all about were birds  
 Of sunny plume in gilded trellis-work ;  
 That all the turf was rich in plots that look'd  
 Each like a garnet or a turkis in it ;  
 And lords and ladies of the high court went  
 In silver tissue talking things of state ;  
 And children of the King in cloth of gold

Glanced at the doors or gambol'd down the walks ;  
 And while she thought ' They will not see me,' came  
 A stately queen whose name was Guinevere,  
 And all the children in their cloth of gold  
 Ran to her, crying, ' If we have fish at all  
 Let them be gold ; and charge the gardeners now  
 To pick the faded creature from the pool,  
 And cast it on the mixen that it die.'  
 And therewithal one came and seized on her,  
 And Enid started waking, with her heart  
 All overshadow'd by the foolish dream,  
 And lo ! it was her mother grasping her  
 To get her well awake ; and in her hand  
 A suit of bright apparel, which she laid  
 Flat on the couch, and spoke exultingly :

' See here, my child, how fresh the colors look,  
 How fast they hold like colors of a shell  
 That keeps the wear and polish of the wave.  
 Why not ? It never yet was worn, I trow :  
 Look on it, child, and tell me if ye know it.'

And Enid look'd, but all confused at first,  
 Could scarce divide it from her foolish dream :  
 Then suddenly she knew it and rejoiced,  
 And answer'd, ' Yea, I know it ; your good gift,  
 So sadly lost on that unhappy night ;  
 Your own good gift !' ' Yea, surely,' said the dame,



"HE THRICE HAD SENT A HERALD TO THE GATES."—Page 69.



' And gladly given again this happy morn.  
For when the jousts were ended yesterday,  
Went Yniol thro' the town, and every-where  
He found the sack and plunder of our house  
All scatter'd thro' the houses of the town;  
And gave command that all which once was ours  
Should now be ours again : and yesterday,  
While ye were talking sweetly with your Prince,  
Came one with this and laid it in my hand,  
For love or fear, or seeking favor of us,  
Because we have our earldom back again.  
And yester-eve I would not tell you of it,  
But kept it for a sweet surprise at morn.  
Yea, truly is it not a sweet surprise ?  
For I myself unwillingly have worn  
My faded suit, as you, my child, have yours,  
And howsoever patient, Yniol his.  
Ah, dear, he took me from a goodly house,  
With store of rich apparel, sumptuous fare,  
And page, and maid, and squire, and seneschal,  
And pastime both of hawk and hound, and all  
That appertains to noble maintenance.  
Yea, and he brought me to a goodly house ;  
But since our fortune swerved from sun to shade,  
And all thro' that young traitor, cruel need  
Constrain'd us, but a better time has come ;  
So clothe yourself in this, that better fits  
Our mended fortunes and a Prince's bride :

For tho' ye won the prize of fairest fair,  
And tho' I heard him call you fairest fair,  
Let never maiden think, however fair,  
She is not fairer in new clothes than old.  
And should some great court-lady say, the Prince  
Hath pick'd a ragged-robin from the hedge,  
And like a madman brought her to the court,  
Then were ye shamed, and, worse, might shame the Prince  
To whom we are beholden ; but I know,  
When my dear child is set forth at her best,  
That neither court nor country, tho' they sought  
Thro' all the provinces like those of old  
That lighted on Queen Esther, has her match.'

Here ceased the kindly mother out of breath ;  
And Enid listen'd brightening as she lay ;  
Then, as the white and glittering star of morn  
Parts from a bank of snow, and by and by  
Slips into golden cloud, the maiden rose,  
And left her maiden couch, and robed herself,  
Help'd by the mother's careful hand and eye,  
Without a mirror, in the gorgeous gown ;  
Who, after, turn'd her daughter round, and said,  
She never yet had seen her half so fair ;  
And call'd her like that maiden in the tale,  
Whom Gwydion made by glamor out of flowers,  
And sweeter than the bride of Cassivelaun,

Flur, for whose love the Roman  
 Cæsar first  
 Invaded Britain, 'But we beat him  
 back,  
 As this great Prince invaded us, and  
 we,  
 Not beat him back, but welcomed him  
 with joy.  
 And I can scarcely ride with you to  
 court,  
 For old am I, and rough the ways and  
 wild;  
 But Yniol goes, and I full oft shall  
 dream  
 I see my princess as I see her now,  
 Clothed with my gift, and gay among  
 the gay.'

But while the women thus rejoiced,  
 Geraint  
 Woke where he slept in the high hall,  
 and call'd  
 For Enid, and when Yniol made  
 report  
 Of that good mother making Enid gay  
 In such apparel as might well besecm  
 His princess, or indeed the stately  
 Queen,  
 He answer'd: 'Earl, entreat her by  
 my love,  
 Albeit I give no reason but my wish,  
 That she ride with me in her faded  
 silk.'  
 Yniol with that hard message went;  
 it fell  
 Like flaws in summer laying lusty  
 corn:  
 For Enid, all abash'd she knew not  
 why,  
 Dared not to glance at her good  
 mother's face,  
 But silently, in all obedience,  
 Her mother silent too, nor helping her,  
 Laid from her limbs the costly-  
 broider'd gift,  
 And robed them in her ancient suit  
 again,  
 And so descended. Never man re-  
 joiced  
 More than Geraint to greet her thus  
 attired;  
 And glancing all at once as keenly at  
 her

As careful robins eye the delver's  
 toil,  
 Made her cheek burn and either eye-  
 lid fall,  
 But rested with her sweet face satis-  
 fied;  
 Then seeing cloud upon the mother's  
 brow,  
 Her by both hands he caught, and  
 sweetly said,

'O my new mother, be not wroth  
 or grieved  
 At thy new son, for my petition to  
 her.  
 When late I left Caerleon, our great  
 Queen,  
 In words whose echo lasts, they were  
 so sweet,  
 Made promise, that whatever bride I  
 brought,  
 Herself would clothe her like the sun  
 in Heaven.  
 Thereafter, when I reach'd this ruin'd  
 hall,  
 Beholding one so bright in dark  
 estate,  
 I vow'd that could I gain her, our fair  
 Queen,  
 No hand but hers, should make your  
 Enid burst  
 Sunlike from cloud—and likewise  
 thought perhaps,  
 That service done so graciously would  
 bind  
 The two together; fain I would the  
 two  
 Should love each other: how can  
 Enid find  
 A nobler friend? Another thought  
 was mine;  
 I came among you here so suddenly,  
 That tho' her gentle presence at the  
 lists  
 Might well have served for proof that  
 I was loved,  
 I doubted whether daughter's tender-  
 ness,  
 Or easy nature, might not let itself  
 Be moulded by your wishes for her  
 weal;  
 Or whether some false sense in her  
 own self



Of my contrasting brightness, over-  
 bore  
 Her fancy dwelling in this dusky hall;  
 And such a sense might make her  
 long for court  
 And all its perilous glories: and I  
 thought,  
 That could I someway prove such  
 force in her  
 Link'd with such love for me, that at  
 a word  
 (No reason given her) she could cast  
 aside  
 A splendor dear to women, new to  
 her,  
 And therefore dearer; or if not so  
 new,  
 Yet therefore tenfold dearer by the  
 power  
 Of intermitted usage; then I felt  
 That I could rest, a rock in ebbs and  
 flows,  
 Fixt on her faith. Now, therefore, I  
 do rest,  
 A prophet certain of my prophecy,  
 That never shadow of mistrust can  
 cross  
 Between us. Grant me pardon for  
 my thoughts:  
 And for my strange petition I will  
 make  
 Amends hereafter by some gaudy-day,  
 When your fair child shall wear your  
 costly gift  
 Beside your own warm hearth, with,  
 on her knees,  
 Who knows? another gift of the high  
 God,  
 Which, maybe, shall have learn'd to  
 'tisp you thanks.'

He spoke: the mother smiled, but  
 half in tears,  
 Then brought a mantle down and  
 wrapt her in it,  
 And clapt and kiss'd her, and they  
 rode away.

Now thrice that morning Guinevere  
 had climb'd  
 The giant tower, from whose high  
 crest, they say,  
 Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,

And white sails flying on the yellow sea;  
 But not to goodly hill or yellow sea  
 Look'd the fair Queen, but up the  
 vale of Usk,  
 By the flat meadow, till she saw them  
 come;  
 And then descending met them at the  
 gates,  
 Embraced her with all welcome as a  
 friend,  
 And did her honor as the Prince's  
 bride,  
 And clothed her for her bridals like  
 the sun;  
 And all that week was old Caerleon  
 gay,  
 For by the hands of Dubric, the high  
 saint,  
 They twain were wedded with all  
 ceremony.

And this was on the last year's  
 Whitsuntide.  
 But Enid ever kept the faded silk,  
 Remembering how first he came on  
 her,  
 Drest in that dress, and how he loved  
 her in it,  
 And all her foolish fears about the  
 nress,  
 And all his journey toward her, as  
 himself  
 Had told her, and their coming to the  
 court.

And now this morning when he said  
 to her,  
 'Put on your worst and meanest  
 dress,' she found  
 And took it, and array'd herself there-  
 in.

## GERAINT AND ENID.

O PURBLIND race of miserable men,  
 How many among us at this very  
 hour  
 Do forge a life-long trouble for our-  
 selves,  
 By taking true for false, or false for  
 true;

Here, thro' the feeble twilight of this world  
Groping, how many, until we pass and reach  
That other, where we see as we are seen!

So fared it with Geraint, who issuing forth  
That morning, when they both had got to horse,  
Perhaps because he loved her passionately,  
And felt that tempest brooding round his heart,  
Which, if he spoke at all, would break perforce  
Upon a head so dear in thunder, said:  
'Not at my side. I charge thee ride before,

Ever a good way on before; and this I charge thee, on thy duty as a wife,  
Whatever happens, not to speak to me,

No, not a word!' and Enid was aghast;

And forth they rode, but scarce three paces on,

When crying out, 'Effeminate as I am, I will not fight my way with gilded arms,

All shall be iron;' he loosed a mighty purse,

Hung at his belt, and hurl'd it toward the squire.

So the last sight that Enid had of home

Was all the marble threshold flashing, strown

With gold and scatter'd coinage, and the squire

Chafing his shoulder: then he cried again,

'To the wilds!' and Enid leading down the tracks

Thro' which he bad her lead him on, they past

The marches, and by bandit-haunted holds,

Gray swamps and pools, waste places of the hern,

And wildernesses, perilous paths, they rode:

Round was their pace at first, but slacken'd soon:

A stranger meeting them had surely thought

They rode so slowly and they look'd so pale,

That each had suffer'd some exceeding wrong.

For he was ever saying to himself, 'O I that wasted time to tend upon her,

To compass her with sweet observances,

To dress her beautifully and keep her true'—

And there he broke the sentence in his heart

Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue May break it, when his passion masters him.

And she was ever praying the sweet heavens

To save her dear lord whole from any wound.

And ever in her mind she cast about For that unnoticed falling in herself,

Which made him look so cloudy and so cold;

Till the great plover's human whistle amazed

Her heart, and glancing round the waste she fear'd

In every wavering brake an ambuscade.

Then thought again, 'If there be such in me,

I might amend it by the grace of Heaven,

If he would only speak and tell me of it.'

But when the fourth part of the day was gone,

Then Enid was aware of three tall knights

On horseback, wholly arm'd, behind a rock

In shadow, waiting for them, caitiffs all;

And heard one crying to his fellows, 'Look,

Here comes a laggard hanging down his head,

Who seems no bolder than a beaten  
hound;  
Come, we will slay him and will have  
his horse  
And armor, and his damsel shall be  
ours.'

Then Enid ponder'd in her heart,  
and said :  
' I will go back a little to my lord,  
And I will tell him all their caitiff  
talk ;  
For, be he wroth even to slaying me,  
Far liefer by his dear hand had I  
die,  
Than that my lord should suffer loss  
or shame.'

Then she went back some paces of  
return,  
Met his full frown timidly firm, and  
said ;  
' My lord, I saw three bandits by the  
rock  
Waiting to fall on you, and heard  
them boast  
That they would slay you, and possess  
your horse  
And armor, and your damsel should  
be theirs.'

He made a wrathful answer : ' Did  
I wish  
Your warning or your silence? one  
command  
I laid upon you, not to speak to me,  
And thus ye keep it! Well then,  
look—for now,  
Whether ye wish me victory or de-  
feat,  
Long for my life, or hunger for my  
death,  
Yourself shall see my vigor is not  
lost.'

Then Enid waited pale and sorrow-  
ful,  
And down upon him bare the bandit  
three.  
And at the midmost charging, Prince  
Geraint  
Drave the long spear a cubit thro'  
his breast

And out beyond; and then against his  
brace  
Of comrades, each of whom had  
broken on him  
A lance that splinter'd like an icicle,  
Swung from his brand a windy buffet  
out  
Once, twice, to right, to left, and  
stunn'd the twain  
Or slew them, and dismounting like  
a man  
That skins the wild beast after slay-  
ing him,  
Stript from the three dead wolves of  
woman born  
The three gay suits of armor which  
they wore,  
And let the bodies lie, but bound  
the suits  
Of armor on their horses, each on each,  
And tied the bridle-reins of all the  
three  
Together, and said to her, ' drive them  
on  
Before you;' and she drove them  
thro' the waste.

He follow'd nearer: ruth began to  
work  
Against his anger in him, while he  
watch'd  
The being he loved best in all the  
world,  
With difficulty in mild obedience  
Driving them on: he fain had spoken  
to her,  
And loosed in words of sudden fire  
the wrath  
And smoulder'd wrong that burnt him  
all within;  
But evermore it seem'd an easier  
thing  
At once without remorse to strike  
her dead,  
Than to cry 'Halt,' and to her own  
bright face  
Accuse her of the least immodesty:  
And thus tongue-tied, it made him  
wroth the more  
That she *could* speak whom his own  
ear had heard  
Call herself false: and suffering thus  
he made

Minutes an age : but in scarce longer  
time

Than at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,  
Before he turn to fall seaward again,  
Pauses, did Enid, keeping watch,  
behold

In the first shallow shade of a deep  
wood,

Before a gloom of stubborn-shafted  
oaks,

Three other horsemen waiting, wholly  
arm'd,

Whereof one seem'd far larger than  
her lord,

And shook her pulses, crying, ' Look,  
a prize !

Three horses and three goodly suits  
of arms,

And all in charge of whom ? a girl :  
set on.'

' Nay,' said the second, ' yonder comes  
a knight.'

The third, ' A craven ; how he hangs  
his head.'

The giant answer'd merrily, ' Yea,  
but one ?

Wait here, and when he passes fall  
upon him.'

And Enid ponder'd in her heart and  
said,

' I will abide the coming of my lord,  
And I will tell him all their villainy.

My lord is weary with the fight before,  
And they will fall upon him un-  
wares.

I needs must disobey him for his  
good ;

How should I dare obey him to his  
harm ?

Needs must I speak, and tho' he kill  
me for it,

I save a life dearer to me than mine.'

And she abode his coming, and  
said to him

With timid firmness, ' Have I leave  
to speak ?'

He said, ' Ye take it, speaking,' and  
she spoke.

' There lurk three villains yonder in  
the wood,

And each of them is wholly arm'd,  
and one

Is larger-limb'd than you are, and  
they say

That they will fall upon you while  
ye pass.'

To which he flung a wrathful  
answer back :

' And if there were an hundred in the  
wood,

And every man were larger-limb'd  
than I,

And all at once should sally out upon  
me,

I swear it would not ruffle me so  
much

As you that not obey me. Stand  
aside,

And if I fall, cleave to the better  
man.'

And Enid stood aside to wait the  
event,

Not dare to watch the combat, only  
breathe

Short fits of prayer, at every stroke a  
breath.

And he, she dreaded most, bare down  
upon him.

Aim'd at the helm, his lance err'd ;  
but Geraint's,

A little in the late encounter strain'd,  
Struck thro' the bulky bandit's corse-  
let home,

And then brake short, and down his  
enemy roll'd,

And there lay still ; as he that tells  
the tale

Saw once a great piece of a promon-  
tory,

That had a sapling growing on it,  
slide

From the long shore-cliff's windy walls  
to the beach,

And there lie still, and yet the sap-  
ling grew :

So lay the man transfixt. His craven  
pair

Of comrades making slower at the  
Prince,

When now they saw their bulwark  
fallen, stood ;

On whom the victor, to confound them  
 more,  
 Spurr'd with his terrible war-cry; for  
 as one,  
 That listens near a torrent mountain-  
 brook,  
 All thro' the crash of the near cata-  
 ract hears  
 The drumming thunder of the huger fall  
 At distance, were the soldiers wont to  
 hear  
 His voice in battle, and be kindled by it,  
 And foemen scared, like that false  
 pair who turn'd  
 Flying, but, overtaken, died the death  
 Themselves had wrought on many an  
 innocent.

Thereon Geraint, dismounting,  
 pick'd the lance  
 That pleased him best, and drew from  
 those dead wolves  
 Their three gay suits of armor, each  
 from each,  
 And bound them on their horses, each  
 on each,  
 And tied the bridle-reins of all the  
 three  
 Together, and said to her, 'Drive  
 them on  
 Before you,' and she drove them thro'  
 the wood.

He follow'd nearer still: the pain  
 she had  
 To keep them in the wild ways of the  
 wood,  
 Two sets of three laden with jingling  
 arms,  
 Together, served a little to disedge  
 The sharpness of that pain about her  
 heart:  
 And they themselves, like creatures  
 gently born  
 But into bad hands fall'n, and now so  
 long  
 By bandits groom'd, prick'd their light  
 ears, and felt  
 Her low firm voice and tender govern-  
 ment.

So thro' the green gloom of the  
 wood they past,

And issuing under open heavens  
 beheld  
 A little town with towers, upon a rock,  
 And close beneath, a meadow gemlike  
 chased  
 In the brown wild, and mowers mow-  
 ing in it:  
 And down a rocky pathway from the  
 place  
 There came a fair-hair'd youth, that  
 in his hand  
 Bare victual for the mowers: and Ger-  
 aint  
 Had rath again on Enid looking pale:  
 Then, moving downward to the  
 meadow ground,  
 He, when the fair-hair'd youth came  
 by him, said,  
 'Friend, let her eat; the damsel is so  
 faint.'  
 'Yea, willingly,' replied the youth;  
 'and thou,  
 My lord, eat also, tho' the fare is  
 coarse,  
 And only meet for mowers;' then set  
 down  
 His basket, and dismounting on the  
 sward  
 They let the horses graze, and ate  
 themselves.  
 And Enid took a little delicately,  
 Less having stomach for it than desire  
 To close with her lord's pleasure;  
 but Geraint  
 Ate all the mowers' victual unawares,  
 And when he found all empty, was  
 amazed;  
 And 'Boy,' said he, 'I have eaten all,  
 but take  
 A horse and arms for guerdon; choose  
 the best.'  
 He, reddening in extremity of  
 delight,  
 'My lord, you overpay me fifty-fold.'  
 'Ye will be all the wealthier,' cried  
 the Prince.  
 'I take it as free gift, then,' said the  
 boy,  
 'Not guerdon; for myself can easily,  
 While your good damsel rests, return,  
 and fetch  
 Fresh victual for these mowers of our  
 Earl;

For these are his, and all the field is  
his,  
And I myself am his; and I will tell  
him  
How great a man thou art: he loves  
to know  
When men of mark are in his terri-  
tory:  
And he will have thee to his palace  
here,  
And serve thee costlier than with  
mowers' fare.'

Then said Geraint, 'I wish no bet-  
ter fare:  
I never ate with angrier appetite  
Than when I left your mowers dinner-  
less.  
And into no Earl's palace will I go.  
I know, God knows, too much of  
palaces!  
And if he want me, let him come to me.  
But hire us some fair chamber for the  
night,  
And stalling for the horses, and  
return  
With victual for these men, and let  
us know.'

'Yea, my kind lord,' said the glad  
youth, and went,  
Held his head high, and thought him-  
self a knight,  
And up the rocky pathway disappear'd,  
Leading the horse, and they were left  
alone.

But when the Prince had brought  
his errant eyes  
Home from the rock, sideways he let  
them glance  
At Enid, where she droopt: his own  
false doom,  
That shadow of mistrust should never  
cross  
Betwixt them, came upon him, and he  
sigh'd;  
Then with another humorous ruth re-  
mark'd  
The lusty mowers laboring dinnerless,  
And watch'd the sun blaze on the  
turning scythe,  
And after nodded sleepily in the heat.

But she, remembering her old ruin'd  
hall,  
And all the windy clamor of the daws  
About her hollow turret, pluck'd the  
grass  
There growing longest by the meadow's  
edge,  
And into many a listless annulet,  
Now over, now beneath her marriage  
ring,  
Wove and unwove it, till the boy  
return'd  
And told them of a chamber, and  
they went;  
Where, after saying to her, 'If ye will,  
Call for the woman of the house,' to  
which  
She answer'd, 'Thanks, my lord;'  
the two remain'd  
Apart by all the chamber's width, and  
mute  
As creatures voiceless thro' the fault  
of birth,  
Or two wild men supporters of a  
shield,  
Painted, who stare at open space, nor  
glance  
The one at other, parted by the shield.

On a sudden, many a voice along  
the street,  
And heel against the pavement echo-  
ing, burst  
Their drowse; and either started  
while the door,  
Push'd from without, drave backward  
to the wall,  
And midmost of a rout of roisterers,  
Femininely fair and dissolutely pale,  
Her suitor in old years before Geraint,  
Enter'd, the wild lord of the place,  
Limours.  
He moving up with pliant courtliness,  
Greeted Geraint full face, but stealth-  
ily,  
In the mid-warmth of welcome and  
graspt hand,  
Found Enid with the corner of his eye,  
And knew her sitting sad and solitary.  
Then cried Geraint for wine and  
goodly cheer  
To feed the sudden guest, and sump-  
tuously

According to his fashion, bad the host  
 Call in what men soever were his  
 friends,  
 And feast with these in honor of their  
 Earl ;  
 ' And care not for the cost ; the cost is  
 mine.'

And wine and food were brought,  
 and Earl Limours  
 Drank till he jested with all ease, and  
 told  
 Free tales, and took the word and  
 play'd upon it,  
 And made it of two colors ; for his  
 talk,  
 When wine and free companions  
 kindled him,  
 Was wont to glance and sparkle like  
 a gem  
 Of fifty facets ; thus he moved the  
 Prince  
 To laughter and his comrades to  
 applause.  
 Then, when the Prince was merry,  
 ask'd Limours,  
 ' Your leave, my lord, to cross the  
 room, and speak  
 To your good damsel there who sits  
 apart,  
 And seems so lonely?' ' My free  
 leave,' he said ;  
 ' Get her to speak : she doth not speak  
 to me.'  
 Then rose Limours, and looking at  
 his feet,  
 Like him who tries the bridge he  
 fears may fail,  
 Crost and came near, lifted adoring  
 eyes,  
 Bow'd at her side and utter'd whisper-  
 ingly :

' Enid, the pilot star of my lone life,  
 Enid, my early and my only love,  
 Enid, the loss of whom hath turn'd  
 me wild—  
 What chance is this? how is it I see  
 you here?  
 Ye are in my power at last, are in my  
 power.  
 Yet fear me not : I call mine own  
 self wild,

But keep a touch of sweet civility  
 Here in the heart of waste and wilder-  
 ness.  
 I thought, but that your father came  
 between,  
 In former days you saw me favorably.  
 And if it were so do not keep it  
 back :  
 Make me a little happier : let me  
 know it :  
 Owe you me nothing for a life half-  
 lost?  
 Yea, yea, the whole dear debt of all  
 you are.  
 And, Enid, you and he, I see with  
 joy,  
 Ye sit apart, you do not speak to him,  
 You come with no attendance, page  
 or maid,  
 To serve you—doth he love you as of  
 old?  
 For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I  
 know  
 Tho' men may bicker with the things  
 they love,  
 They would not make them laughable  
 in all eyes,  
 Not while they loved them ; and  
 your wretched dress,  
 A wretched insult on you, dumbly  
 speaks  
 Your story, that this man loves you  
 no more.  
 Your beauty is no beauty to him now :  
 A common chance—right well I know  
 it—pall'd—  
 For I know men : nor will ye win  
 him back,  
 For the man's love once gone never  
 returns.  
 But here is one who loves you as of old ;  
 With more exceeding passion than of  
 old :  
 Good, speak the word : my followers  
 ring him round :  
 He sits unarm'd ; I hold a finger up ;  
 They understand : nay ; I do not  
 mean blood :  
 Nor need ye look so scared at what I  
 say :  
 My malice is no deeper than a moat,  
 No stronger than a wall : there is the  
 keep ;

He shall not cross us more; speak  
 but the word:  
 Or speak it not; but then by Him that  
 made me  
 The one true lover whom you ever  
 own'd,  
 I will make use of all the power I  
 have.  
 O pardon me! the madness of that  
 hour,  
 When first I parted from thee, moves  
 me yet.'

At this the tender sound of his own  
 voice  
 And sweet self-pity, or the fancy of it,  
 Made his eye moist; but Enid fear'd  
 his eyes,  
 Moist as they were, wine-heated from  
 the feast;  
 And answer'd with such craft as  
 women use,  
 Guilty or guiltless, to stave off a  
 chance  
 That breaks upon them perilously,  
 and said:

'Earl, if you love me as in former  
 years,  
 And do not practise on me, come  
 with morn,  
 And snatch me from him as by vio-  
 lence;  
 Leave me to-night: I am weary to  
 the death.'

Low at leave-taking, with his brand-  
 ish'd plume  
 Brushing his instep, bow'd the all-  
 amorous Earl,  
 And the stout Prince bad him a loud  
 good-night.  
 He moving homeward babbled to his  
 men,  
 How Enid never loved a man but  
 him,  
 Nor cared a broken egg-shell for her  
 lord.

But Enid left alone with Prince Ger-  
 aint,  
 Debating his command of silence  
 given,

And that she now perforce must vio-  
 late it,  
 Held commune with herself, and  
 while she held  
 He fell asleep, and Enid had no  
 heart  
 To wake him, but hung o'er him,  
 wholly pleased  
 To find him yet unwounded after  
 fight,  
 And hear him breathing low and  
 equally.  
 Anon she rose, and stepping lightly,  
 heap'd  
 The pieces of his armor in one place,  
 All to be there against a sudden  
 need;  
 Then dozed awhile herself, but over-  
 toil'd  
 By that day's grief and travel, ever-  
 more  
 Seem'd catching at a rootless thorn,  
 and then  
 Went slipping down horrible preci-  
 pices,  
 And strongly striking out her limbs  
 awoke;  
 Then thought she heard the wild Earl  
 at the door,  
 With all his rout of random followers,  
 Sound on a dreadful trumpet, sum-  
 moning her;  
 Which was the red cock shouting to  
 the light,  
 As the gray dawn stole o'er the dewy  
 world,  
 And glimmer'd on his armor in the  
 room.  
 And once again she rose to look at  
 it,  
 But touch'd it unawares: jangling,  
 the casque  
 Fell, and he started up and stared at  
 her.  
 Then breaking his command of silence  
 given,  
 She told him all that Earl Limours  
 had said,  
 Except the passage that he loved her  
 not;  
 Nor left untold the craft herself had  
 used;  
 But ended with apology so sweet,



Low-spoken, and of so few words,  
 and seem'd  
 So justified by that necessity,  
 That tho' he thought 'was it for  
 him she wept  
 In Devon?' he but gave a wrathful  
 groan,  
 Saying, 'Your sweet faces make good  
 fellows fools  
 And traitors. Call the host and bid  
 him bring  
 Charger and palfrey.' So she glided  
 out  
 Among the heavy breathings of the  
 house,  
 And like a household Spirit at the  
 walls  
 Beat, till she woke the sleepers, and  
 return'd:  
 Then tending her rough lord, tho' all  
 unask'd,  
 In silence, did him service as a  
 squire;  
 Till issuing arm'd he found the host  
 and cried,  
 'Thy reckoning, friend?' and ere he  
 learnt it, 'Take  
 Five horses and their armors;' and  
 the host  
 Suddenly honest, answer'd in amaze,  
 'My lord, I scarce have spent the  
 worth of one!'  
 'Ye will be all the wealthier,' said the  
 Prince,  
 And then to Enid, 'Forward! and  
 to-day  
 I charge you, Enid, more especially,  
 What thing soever ye may hear, or  
 see,  
 Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use  
 To charge you) that ye speak not but  
 obey.'

And Enid answer'd, 'Yea, my lord,  
 I know  
 Your wish, and would obey; but rid-  
 ing first,  
 I hear the violent threats you do not  
 hear,  
 I see the danger which you cannot  
 see:  
 Then not to give you warning, that  
 seems hard;

Almost beyond me: yet I would  
 obey.'  
 'Yea so,' said he, 'do it: be not too  
 wise;  
 Seeing that ye are wedded to a man,  
 Not all mismated with a yawning  
 clown,  
 But one with arms to guard his head  
 and yours,  
 With eyes to find you out however  
 far,  
 And ears to hear you even in his  
 dreams.'

With that he turn'd and look'd as  
 keenly at her  
 As careful robins eye the delver's toil;  
 And that within her, which a wanton  
 fool,  
 Or hasty judger would have call'd her  
 guilt,  
 Made her cheek burn and either eye-  
 lid fall.  
 And Geraint look'd and was not satis-  
 fied.

Then forward by a way which,  
 beaten broad,  
 Led from the territory of false  
 Limours  
 To the waste earldom of another earl,  
 Doorm, whom his shaking vassals  
 call'd the Bull,  
 Went Enid with her sullen follower  
 on.  
 Once she look'd back, and when she  
 saw him ride  
 More near by many a rood than yes-  
 ter-morn,  
 It wellnigh made her cheerful; till  
 Geraint  
 Waving an angry hand as who should  
 say  
 'Ye watch me,' sadden'd all her heart  
 again.  
 But while the sun yet beat a dewy  
 blade  
 The sound of many a heavily-galloping  
 hoof  
 Smote on her ear, and turning round  
 she saw  
 Dust, and the points of lances bicker  
 in it.

Then not to disobey her lord's behest,  
 And yet to give him warning, for he  
   rode  
 As if he heard not, moving back she  
   held  
 Her finger up, and pointed to the  
   dust.  
 At which the warrior in his obstinacy,  
 Because she kept the letter of his  
   word,  
 Was in a manner pleased, and turn-  
   ing, stood.  
 And in a moment after, wild Limours,  
 Borne on a black horse, like a thunder-  
   cloud  
 Whose skirts are loosen'd by the  
   breaking storm,  
 Half ridden off with by the thing he  
   rode,  
 And all in passion uttering a dry  
   shriek,  
 Dash'd on Geraint, who closed with  
   him, and bore  
 Down by the length of lance and arm  
   beyond  
 The crupper, and so left him stunn'd  
   or dead,  
 And overthrew the next that follow'd  
   him,  
 And blindly rush'd on all the rout  
   behind.  
 But at the flash and motion of the man  
 They vanish'd panic-stricken, like a  
   shoal  
 Of darting fish, that on a summer  
   morn  
 Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot  
 Come slipping o'er their shadows on  
   the sand,  
 But if a man who stands upon the  
   brink  
 But lift a shining hand against the  
   sun,  
 There is not left the twinkle of a fin  
 Betwixt the cressy islets white in  
   flower';  
 So, scared but at the motion of the  
   man,  
 Fled all the boon companions of the  
   Earl,  
 And left him lying in the public way;  
 So vanish friendships only made in  
   wine.

Then like a stormy sunlight smiled  
 Geraint,  
 Who saw the chargers of the two that  
   fell  
 Start from their fallen lords, and  
   wildly fly,  
 Mixt with the flyers. 'Horse and  
   man,' he said,  
 'All of one mind and all right-honest  
   friends!  
 Not a hoof left: and I methinks till  
   now  
 Was honest—paid with horses and  
   with arms;  
 I cannot steal or plunder, nor nor beg:  
 And so what say ye, shall we strip  
   him there  
 Your lover? has your palfrey heart  
   enough  
 To bear his armor? shall we fast, or  
   dine?  
 No?—then do thou, being right hon-  
   est, pray  
 That we may meet the horsemen of  
   Earl Doorm,  
 I too would still be honest.' Thus he  
   said:  
 And sadly gazing on her bridle-reins,  
 And answering not one word, she led  
   the way.

But as a man to whom a dreadful  
 loss  
 Falls in a far land and he knows it not,  
 But coming back he learns it, and the  
   loss  
 So pains him that he sickens nigh to  
   death;  
 So fared it with Geraint, who being  
   prick'd  
 In combat with the follower of  
   Limours,  
 Bled underneath his armor secretly,  
 And so rode on, nor told his gentle  
   wife  
 What ail'd him, hardly knowing it  
   himself,  
 Till his eye darken'd and his helmet  
   wagg'd;  
 And at a sudden swerving of the  
   road,  
 Tho' happily down on a bank of  
   grass,

The Prince, without a word, from his horse fell.

And Enid heard the clashing of his fall,  
Suddenly came, and at his side all pale  
Dismounting, loosed the fastenings of his arms,  
Nor let her true hand falter, nor blue eye  
Moisten, till she had lighted on his wound,  
And tearing off her veil of faded silk  
Had bared her forehead to the blistering sun,  
And swathed the hurt that drain'd her dear lord's life.  
Then after all was done that hand could do,  
She rested, and her desolation came  
Upon her, and she wept beside the way.

And many past, but none regarded her,  
For in that realm of lawless turbulence,  
A woman weeping for her murder'd mate  
Was cared as much for as a summer shower:  
One took him for a victim of Earl Doorm,  
Nor dared to waste a perilous pity on him:  
Another hurrying past, a man-at-arms,  
Rode on a mission to the bandit Earl;  
Half whistling and half singing a coarse song,  
He drove the dust against her veiless eyes:  
Another, flying from the wrath of Doorm  
Before an ever-fancied arrow, made  
The long way smoke beneath him in his fear;  
At which her palfrey whinnying lifted heel,  
And scour'd into the coppices and was lost,  
While the great charger stood, grieved like a man.

But at the point of noon the huge Earl Doorm,  
Broad-faced with under-fringe of russet beard,  
Bound on a foray, rolling eyes of prey,  
Came riding with a hundred lances up;  
But ere he came, like one that hails a ship,  
Cried out with a big voice, 'What, is he dead?'  
'No, no, not dead!' she answer'd in all haste.  
'Would some of your kind people take him up,  
And bear him hence out of this cruel sun?  
Most sure am I, quite sure, he is not dead.'

Then said Earl Doorm: 'Well, if he be not dead,  
Why wail ye for him thus? ye seem a child.  
And be he dead, I count you for a fool;  
Your wailing will not quicken him: dead or not,  
Ye mar a comely face with idiot tears.  
Yet, since the face *is* comely—some of you,  
Here, take him up, and bear him to our hall:  
An if he live, we will have him of our band;  
And if he die, why earth has earth enough  
To hide him. See ye take the charger too,  
A noble one.'

He spake, and past away,  
But left two brawny spearmen, who advanced,  
Each growling like a dog, when his good bone  
Seems to be pluck'd at by the village boys  
Who love to vex him eating, and he fears  
To lose his bone, and lays his foot upon it,  
Gnawing and growling: so the ruffians growl'd,

Fearing to lose, and all for a dead man,  
 Their chance of booty from the morning's raid,  
 Yet raised and laid him on a litter-bier,  
 Such as they brought upon their forays out  
 For those that might be wounded; laid him on it  
 All in the hollow of his shield, and took  
 And bore him to the naked hall of Doorm,  
 (His gentle charger following him unled)  
 And cast him and the bier in which he lay  
 Down on an oaken settle in the hall,  
 And then departed, hot in haste to join  
 Their luckier mates, but growling as before,  
 And cursing their lost time, and the dead man,  
 And their own Earl, and their own souls, and her.  
 They might as well have blest her: she was deaf  
 To blessing or to cursing save from one.

So for long hours sat Enid by her lord,  
 There in the naked hall, propping his head,  
 And chafing his pale hands, and calling to him.  
 Till at the last he waken'd from his swoon,  
 And found his own dear bride propping his head,  
 And chafing his faint hands, and calling to him;  
 And felt the warm tears falling on his face;  
 And said to his own heart, 'She weeps for me.'  
 And yet lay still, and feign'd himself as dead,  
 That he might prove her to the uttermost,  
 And say to his own heart, 'She weeps for me.'

But in the falling afternoon return'd  
 The huge Earl Doorm with plunder to the hall.  
 His lusty spearmen follow'd him with noise:  
 Each hurling down a heap of things that rang  
 Against the pavement, cast his lance aside,  
 And doff'd his helm: and then there flutter'd in,  
 Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated eyes,  
 A tribe of women, dress'd in many hues,  
 And mingled with the spearmen: and Earl Doorm  
 Struck with a knife's haft hard against the board,  
 And call'd for flesh and wine to feed his spears.  
 And men brought in whole hogs and quarter beeves,  
 And all the hall was dim with steam of flesh:  
 And none spake word, but all sat down at once,  
 And ate with tumult in the naked hall,  
 Feeding like horses when you hear them feed;  
 Till Enid shrank far back into herself,  
 To shun the wild ways of the lawless tribe.  
 But when Earl Doorm had eaten all he would,  
 He roll'd his eyes about the hall, and found  
 A damsel drooping in a corner of it.  
 Then he remember'd her, and how she wept;  
 And out of her there came a power upon him;  
 And rising on the sudden he said,  
 'Eat!  
 I never yet beheld a thing so pale.  
 God's curse, it makes me mad to see you weep.  
 Eat! Look yourself. Good luck had your good man,  
 For were I dead who is it would weep for me?  
 Sweet lady, never since I first drew breath

Have I beheld a lily like yourself.  
 And so there lived some color in  
 your cheek,  
 There is not one among my gentle-  
 women  
 Were fit to wear your slipper for a  
 glove.  
 But listen to me, and by me be ruled,  
 And I will do the thing I have not  
 done,  
 For ye shall share my earldom with  
 me, girl,  
 And we will live like two birds in one  
 nest,  
 And I will fetch you forage from all  
 fields,  
 For I compel all creatures to my will.'

He spake: the brawny spearman  
 let his cheek  
 Bulge with the unswallow'd piece, and  
 turning stared;  
 While some, whose souls the old ser-  
 pent long had drawn  
 Down, as the worm draws in the  
 wither'd leaf  
 And makes it earth, hiss'd each at  
 other's ear  
 What shall not be recorded—women  
 they,  
 Women, or what had been those  
 gracious things,  
 But now desired the humbling of their  
 best,  
 Yea, would have help'd him to it:  
 and all at once  
 They hated her, who took no thought  
 of them,  
 But answer'd in low voice, her meek  
 head yet  
 Drooping, 'I pray you of your cour-  
 tesy,  
 He being as he is, to let me be.'

She spake so low he hardly heard  
 her speak,  
 But like a mighty patron, satisfied  
 With what himself had done so gra-  
 ciously,  
 Assumed that she had thank'd him,  
 adding, 'Yea,  
 Eat and be glad, for I account you  
 mine.'

She answer'd meekly, 'How should  
 I be glad  
 Henceforth in all the world at any-  
 thing,  
 Until my lord arise and look upon  
 me?'

Here the huge Earl cried out upon  
 her talk,  
 As all but empty heart and weariness  
 And sickly nothing; suddenly seized  
 on her,  
 And bare her by main violence to the  
 board,  
 And thrust the dish before her, crying,  
 'Eat.'

'No, no,' said Enid, vext, 'I will  
 not eat  
 Till yonder man upon the bier arise,  
 And eat with me.' 'Drink, then,' he  
 answer'd. 'Here!'  
 (And fill'd a horn with wine and held  
 it to her,)  
 'Lo! I, myself, when flush'd with  
 fight, or hot,  
 God's curse, with anger—often I my-  
 self,  
 Before I well have drunken, scarce  
 can eat:  
 Drink therefore and the wine will  
 change your will.'

'Not so,' she cried, 'by Heaven, I  
 will not drink  
 Till my dear lord arise and bid me do  
 it,  
 And drink with me; and if he rise no  
 more,  
 I will not look at wine until I die.'

At this he turn'd all red and paced  
 his hall,  
 Now gnaw'd his under, now his upper  
 lip,  
 And coming up close to her, said at  
 last:  
 'Girl, for I see ye scorn my courtesies,  
 Take warning: yonder man is surely  
 dead;  
 And I compel all creatures to my will.  
 Not eat nor drink? And wherefore  
 wail for one,

Who put your beauty to this flout and  
 scorn  
 By dressing it in rags? Amazed am  
 I,  
 Beholding how ye butt against my  
 wish,  
 That I forbear you thus : cross me no  
 more.

At least put off to please me this poor  
 gown,  
 This silken rag, this beggar-woman's  
 weed :

I love that beauty should go beauti-  
 fully :

For see ye not my gentlewomen here,  
 How gay, how suited to the house of  
 one

Who loves that beauty should go  
 beautifully ?

Rise therefore ; robe yourself in this :  
 obey.'

He spoke, and one among his gen-  
 tle-women

Display'd a splendid silk of foreign  
 loom,

Where like a shoaling sea the lovely  
 blue

Play'd into green, and thicker down  
 the front

With jewels than the sward with  
 drops of dew,

When all night long a cloud clings to  
 the hill,

And with the dawn ascending lets the  
 day

Strike where it clung : so thickly shone  
 the gems.

But Enid answer'd, harder to be  
 moved

Than hardest tyrants in their day of  
 power,

With life-long injuries burning un-  
 avenged,

And now their hour has come ; and  
 Enid said :

'In this poor gown my dear lord  
 found me first,

And loved me serving in my father's  
 hall :

In this poor gown I rode with him to  
 court,

And there the Queen array'd me like  
 the sun :

In this poor gown he bad me clothe  
 myself,

When now we rode upon this fatal  
 quest

Of honor, where no honor can be  
 gain'd :

And this poor gown I will not cast  
 aside

Until himself arise a living man,  
 And bid me cast it. I have griefs

enough :

Pray you be gentle, pray you let me  
 be :

I never loved, can never love but  
 him :

Yea, God, I pray you of your gentle-  
 ness,

He being as he is, to let me be.'

Then strode the brute Earl up and  
 down his hall,

And took his russet beard between  
 his teeth ;

Last, coming up quite close, and in  
 his mood

Crying, 'I count it of no more avail,  
 Dame, to be gentle than ungentle

with you ;

Take my salute,' unknighly with  
 flat hand,

However lightly, smote her on the  
 cheek.

Then Enid, in her utter helpless-  
 ness,

And since she thought, 'He had not  
 dared to do it,

Except he surely knew my lord was  
 dead,'

Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter  
 cry,

As of a wild thing taken in a trap,  
 Which sees the trapper coming thro'  
 the wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at  
 his sword,

(It lay beside him in the hollow  
 shield),

Made but a single bound, and with a  
 sweep of it

Shore thro' the swarthy neck, and like  
 a ball  
 The russet-bearded head roll'd on the  
 floor.  
 So died Earl Doorm by him he  
 counted dead.  
 And all the men and women in the  
 hall  
 Rose when they saw the dead man  
 rise, and fled  
 Yelling as from a spectre, and the  
 two  
 Were left alone together, and he  
 said :

'Enid, I have used you worse than  
 that dead man ;  
 Done you more wrong : we both have  
 undergone  
 That trouble which has left me thrice  
 your own :  
 Henceforward I will rather die than  
 doubt.  
 And here I lay this penance on my-  
 self,  
 Not, tho' mine own ears heard you  
 yesternorn—  
 You thought me sleeping, but I heard  
 you say,  
 I heard you say, that you were no  
 true wife :  
 I swear I will not ask your meaning  
 in it :  
 I do believe yourself against yourself,  
 And will henceforward rather die  
 than doubt.'

And Enid could not say one tender  
 word,  
 She felt so blunt and stupid at the  
 heart :  
 She only pray'd him, 'Fly, they will  
 return  
 And slay you ; fly, your charger is  
 without,  
 My palfrey lost.' 'Then, Enid, shall  
 you ride  
 Behind me.' 'Yea,' said Enid, 'let  
 us go.'  
 And moving out they found the  
 stately horse,  
 Who now no more a vassal to the  
 thief,

But free to stretch his limbs in lawful  
 fight,  
 Neigh'd with all gladness as they  
 came, and stoop'd  
 With a low whinny toward the pair :  
 and she  
 Kiss'd the white star upon his noble  
 front,  
 Glad also ; then Geraint upon the  
 horse  
 Mounted, and reach'd a hand, and on  
 his foot  
 She set her own and climb'd ; he  
 turn'd his face  
 And kiss'd her climbing, and she  
 cast her arms  
 About him, and at once they rode  
 away.

And never yet, since high in Paradise  
 O'er the four rivers the first roses  
 blew,  
 Came purer pleasure unto mortal  
 kind  
 Than lived thro' her, who in that per-  
 ilous hour  
 Put hand to hand beneath her hus-  
 band's heart,  
 And felt him hers again : she did not  
 weep,  
 But o'er her meek eyes came a happy  
 mist  
 Like that which kept the heart of  
 Eden green  
 Before the useful trouble of the rain :  
 Yet not so misty were her meek blue  
 eyes  
 As not to see before them on the  
 path,  
 Right in the gateway of the bandit  
 bold,  
 A knight of Arthur's court, who laid  
 his lance  
 In rest, and made as if to fall upon  
 him.  
 Then, fearing for his hurt and loss of  
 blood,  
 She, with her mind all full of what  
 had chanced,  
 Shriek'd to the stranger 'Slay not a  
 dead man !'  
 'The voice of Enid,' said the knight ;  
 but she,

Beholding it was Edyrn son of  
Nudd,  
Was moved so much the more, and  
shriek'd again,  
'O cousin, slay not him who gave you  
life.'  
And Edyrn moving frankly forward  
spake:  
'My lord Geraint, I greet you with all  
love;  
I took you for a bandit knight of  
Doorn;  
And fear not, Enid, I should fall  
upon him,  
Who love you, Prince, with some-  
thing of the love  
Wherewith we love the Heaven that  
chastens us.  
For once when I was up so high in  
pride  
That I was halfway down the slope to  
Hell,  
By overthrowing me you threw me  
higher.  
Now, made a knight of Arthur's Table  
Round,  
And since I knew this Earl, when I  
myself  
Was half a bandit in my lawless  
hour,  
I come the monthpiece of our King  
to Doorn  
(The King is close behind me) bidding  
him  
Disband himself, and scatter all his  
powers,  
Submit, and hear the judgment of the  
King.'

'He hears the judgment of the  
King of kings,'  
Cried the wan Prince; 'and lo, the  
powers of Doorn  
Are scatter'd,' and he pointed to the  
field,  
Where, huddled here and there on  
mound and knoll,  
Were men and women staring and  
aghast,  
While some yet fled; and then he  
plainlier told  
How the huge Earl lay slain within  
his hall.

But when the knight besought him,  
'Follow me,  
Prince, to the camp, and in the King's  
own ear  
Speak what has chanced; ye surely  
have endured  
Strange chances here alone;' that  
other flush'd,  
And hung his head, and halted in  
reply,  
Fearing the mild face of the blameless  
King,  
And after madness acted question  
ask'd:  
Till Edyrn crying, 'If ye will not go  
To Arthur, then will Arthur come to  
you,'  
'Enough,' he said, 'I follow,' and they  
went.  
But Enid in their going had two fears,  
One from the bandit scatter'd in the  
field,  
And one from Edyrn. Every now  
and then,  
When Edyrn rein'd his charger at her  
side,  
She shrank a little. In a hollow land,  
From which old fires have broken,  
men may fear  
Fresh fire and ruin. He, perceiving,  
said:

'Fair and dear cousin, you that  
most had cause  
To fear me, fear no longer, I am  
changed.  
Yourself were first the blameless  
cause to make  
My nature's prideful sparkle in the  
blood  
Break into furious flame; being re-  
pulsed  
By Yniol and yourself, I schemed and  
wrought  
Until I overturn'd him; then set up  
(With one main purpose ever at my  
heart)  
My haughty jousts, and took a para-  
mour;  
Did her mock-honor as the fairest fair,  
And, toppling over all antagonism,  
So wax'd in pride, that I believed  
myself



Unconquerable, for I was wellnigh  
 mad:  
 And, but for my main purpose in these  
 jousts,  
 I should have slain your father, seized  
 yourself.  
 I lived in hope that sometime you  
 would come  
 To these my lists with him whom  
 best you loved;  
 And there, poor cousin, with your  
 meek blue eyes,  
 The truest eyes that ever answer'd  
 Heaven,  
 Behold me overturn and trample on  
 him.  
 Then, had you cried, or knelt, or  
 pray'd to me,  
 I should not less have kill'd him.  
 And you came,—  
 But once you came,—and with your  
 own true eyes  
 Beheld the man you loved (I speak as  
 one  
 Speaks of a service done him) over-  
 throw  
 My proud self, and my purpose three  
 years old,  
 And set his foot upon me, and give  
 me life.  
 There was I broken down; there was  
 I saved:  
 Tho' thence I rode all-shamed, hating  
 the life  
 He gave me, meaning to be rid of it.  
 And all the penance the Queen laid  
 upon me  
 Was but to rest awhile within her  
 court;  
 Where first as sullen as a beast new-  
 caged,  
 And waiting to be treated like a wolf,  
 Because I knew my deeds were  
 known, I found,  
 Instead of scornful pity or pure scorn,  
 Such fine reserve and noble reticence,  
 Manners so kind, yet stately, such a  
 grace  
 Of tenderest courtesy, that I began  
 To glance behind me at my former  
 life,  
 And find that it had been the wolf's  
 indeed:

And oft I talk'd with Dubric, the high  
 saint,  
 Who, with mild heat of holy oratory,  
 Subdued me somewhat to that gentle-  
 ness,  
 Which, when it weds with manhood,  
 makes a man.  
 And you were often there about the  
 Queen,  
 But saw me not, or mark'd not if you  
 saw;  
 Nor did I care or dare to speak with  
 you,  
 But kept myself aloof till I was  
 changed;  
 And fear not, cousin; I am changed  
 indeed.'

He spoke, and Enid easily believed,  
 Like simple noble natures, credulous  
 Of what they long for, good in friend  
 or foe,  
 There most in those who most have  
 done them ill.  
 And when they reach'd the camp the  
 King himself  
 Advanced to greet them, and behold-  
 ing her  
 Tho' pale, yet happy, ask'd her not a  
 word,  
 But went apart with Edyrn, whom he  
 held  
 In converse for a little, and return'd,  
 And, gravely smiling, lifted her from  
 horse,  
 And kiss'd her with all pureness,  
 brotherlike,  
 And show'd an empty tent allotted her,  
 And glancing for a minute, till he saw  
 her  
 Pass into it, turn'd to the Prince, and  
 said:

'Prince, when of late ye pray'd me  
 for my leave  
 To move to your own land, and there  
 defend  
 Your marches, I was prick'd with  
 some reproof,  
 As one that let foul wrong stagnate  
 and be,  
 By having look'd too much thro' alien  
 eyes,

And wrought too long with delegated hands,  
 Not used mine own : but now behold me come  
 To cleanse this common sewer of all my realm,  
 With Edyrn and with others : have ye look'd  
 At Edyrn ? have ye seen how nobly changed ?  
 This work of his is great and wonderful.  
 His very face with change of heart is changed.  
 The world will not believe a man repents :  
 And this wise world of ours is mainly right.  
 Full seldom doth a man repent, or use  
 Both grace and will to pick the vicious quitch  
 Of blood and custom wholly out of him,  
 And make all clean, and plant himself afresh.  
 Edyrn has done it, weeding all his heart  
 As I will weed this land before I go.  
 I, therefore, made him of our Table Round,  
 Not rashly, but have proved him everyway  
 One of our noblest, our most valorous,  
 Sanest and most obedient : and indeed  
 This work of Edyrn wrought upon himself  
 After a life of violence, seems to me  
 A thousand-fold more great and wonderful  
 Than if some knight of mine, risking his life,  
 My subject with my subjects under him,  
 Should make an onslaught single on a realm  
 Of robbers, tho' he slew them one by one,  
 And were himself nigh wounded to the death.'

So spake the King ; low bow'd the Prince, and felt

His work was neither great nor wonderful,  
 And past to Enid's tent ; and thither came  
 The King's own leech to look into his hurt ;  
 And Enid tended on him there ; and there  
 Her constant motion round him, and the breath  
 Of her sweet tendance hovering over him,  
 Fill'd all the genial courses of his blood  
 With deeper and with ever deeper love  
 As the south-west that blowing Bala lake  
 Fills all the sacred Dee. So past the days.

But while Geraint lay healing of his hurt,  
 The blameless King went forth and cast his eyes  
 On each of all whom Uther left in charge  
 Long since, to guard the justice of the King :  
 He look'd and found them wanting ; and as now  
 Men weed the white horse on the Berkshire hills  
 To keep him bright and clean as heretofore,  
 He rooted out the slothful officer  
 Or guilty, which for bribe had wink'd at wrong,  
 And in their chairs set up a stronger race  
 With hearts and hands, and sent a thousand men  
 To till the wastes, and moving everywhere  
 Clear'd the dark places and let in the law,  
 And broke the bandit holds and cleansed the land.

Then, when Geraint was whole again, they past  
 With Arthur to Caerleon upon Usk.  
 There the great Queen once more embraced her friend,

And clothed her in apparel like the day.  
 And tho' Geraint could never take again  
 That comfort from their converse, which he took  
 Before the Queen's fair name was breathed upon,  
 He rested well content that all was well.  
 Thence after tarrying for a space they rode,  
 And fifty knights rode with them to the shores  
 Of Severn, and they past to their own land.  
 And there he kept the justice of the King  
 So vigorously yet mildly, that all hearts  
 Applauded, and the spiteful whisper died:  
 And being ever foremost in the chase,  
 And victor at the tilt and tournament,  
 They call'd him the great Prince and man of men.  
 But Enid, whom her ladies loved to call  
 Enid the Fair, a grateful people named  
 Enid the Good; and in their halls arose  
 The cry of children, Enids and Geraints  
 Of times to be; nor did he doubt her more,  
 But rested in her fealty, till he crown'd  
 A happy life with a fair death, and fell  
 Against the heathen of the Northern Sea  
 In battle, fighting for the blameless King.

BALIN AND BALAN.

PELLAM the King, who held and lost with Lot  
 In that first war, and had his realm restored  
 But render'd tributary, fail'd of late  
 To send his tribute; wherefore Arthur call'd

His treasurer, one of many years, and spake,  
 'Go thou with him and him and bring it to us,  
 Lest we should set one truer on his throne.  
 Man's word is God in man.'

His Baron said  
 'We go but harken: there be two strange knights  
 Who sit near Camelot at a fountain side,  
 A mile beneath the forest, challenging  
 And overthrowing every knight who comes.  
 Wilt thou I undertake them as we pass,  
 And send them to thee?

Arthur laugh'd upon him.  
 'Old friend, too old to be so young, depart,  
 Delay not thou for ought, but let them sit,  
 Until they find a lustier than themselves.'

So these departed. Early, one fair dawn,  
 The light-wing'd spirit of his youth return'd  
 On Arthur's heart; he arm'd himself and went,  
 So coming to the fountain-side beheld  
 Balin and Balan sitting statuelike,  
 Brethren, to right and left the spring,  
 that down,  
 From underneath a plume of lady-fern,  
 Sang, and the sand danced at the bottom of it.  
 And on the right of Balin Balin's horse  
 Was fast beside an alder, on the left  
 Of Balan Balan's near a poplartree.  
 'Fair Sirs,' said Arthur, 'wherefore sit ye here?'  
 Balin and Balan answer'd 'For the sake  
 Of glory; we be mightier men than all  
 In Arthur's court; that also have we proved;  
 For 'whatsoever knight against us came

Or I or he have easily overthrown.  
 'I too,' said Arthur, 'am of Arthur's  
 hall,  
 But rather proven in his Paynim wars  
 Than famous jousts; but see, or  
 proven or not,  
 Whether me likewise ye can over-  
 throw.'  
 And Arthur lightly smote the brethren  
 down,  
 And lightly so return'd, and no man  
 knew.

Then Balin rose, and Balan, and  
 beside  
 The carolling water set themselves  
 again,  
 And spake no word until the shadow  
 turn'd;  
 When from the fringe of coppice  
 round them burst  
 A spangled pursuivant, and crying  
 'Sirs,  
 Rise, follow! ye be sent for by the  
 King,'  
 They follow'd; whom when Arthur  
 seeing ask'd  
 'Tell me your names; why sat ye by  
 the well?'

Balin the stillness of a minute broke  
 Saying 'An unmelodious name to thee,  
 Balin, "the Savage"—that addition  
 thine—  
 My brother and my better, this man  
 here,  
 Balan. I smote upon the naked skull  
 A thrall of thine in open hall, my  
 hand  
 Was gauntleted, half slew him; for I  
 heard  
 He had spoken evil of me; thy just  
 wrath  
 Sent me a three-years' exile from thine  
 eyes.  
 I have not lived my life delightously:  
 For I that did that violence to thy  
 thrall,  
 Had often wrought some fury on my-  
 self,  
 Saving for Balan: those three king-  
 less years  
 Have past—were wormwood-bitter to  
 me. King,

Methought that if we sat beside the  
 well,  
 And hurl'd to ground what knight  
 soever spurr'd  
 Against us, thou would'st take me  
 gladlier back,  
 And make, as ten-times worthier to be  
 thine  
 Than twenty Balins, Balan knight. I  
 have said.  
 Not so—not all. A man of thine to-day  
 Abash'd us both, and brake my boast.  
 Thy will?'  
 Said Arthur 'Thou hast ever spoken  
 truth;  
 Thy too fierce manhood would not let  
 thee lie.  
 Rise, my true knight. As children  
 learn, be thou  
 Wiser for falling! walk with me, and  
 move  
 To music with thine Order and the  
 King.  
 Thy chair, a grief to all the brethren,  
 stands  
 Vacant, but thou retake it, mine  
 again!'

Thereafter, when Sir Balin enter'd  
 hall,  
 The Lost one Found was greeted as  
 in Heaven  
 With joy that blazed itself in wood-  
 land wealth  
 Of leaf, and gayest garlandage of  
 flowers,  
 Along the walls and down the board;  
 they sat,  
 And cup clash'd cup; they drank and  
 some one sang,  
 Sweet-voiced, a song of welcome,  
 whereupon  
 Their common shout in chorus, mount-  
 ing, made  
 Those banners of twelve battles over-  
 head  
 Stir, as they stir'd of old, when  
 Arthur's host  
 Proclaim'd him Victor, and the day  
 was won.

Then Balan added to their Order  
 lived

A wealthier life than heretofore with  
these  
And Balin, till their embassy  
return'd.

'Sir King' they brought report 'we  
hardly found,  
So bush'd about it is with gloom, the  
hall  
Of him to whom ye sent us, Pellam,  
once  
A Christless foe of thine as ever dash'd  
Horse against horse; but seeing that  
thy realm  
Hath prosper'd in the name of Christ,  
the King  
Took, as in rival heat, to holy things;  
And finds himself descended from the  
Saint  
Arimathæan Joseph; him who first  
Brought the great faith to Britain  
over seas;  
He boasts his life as purer than thine  
own;  
Eats scarce enow to keep his pulse  
abeat;  
Hath push'd aside his faithful wife,  
nor lets  
Or dame or damsel enter at his gates  
Lest he should be polluted. This  
gray King  
Show'd us a shrine wherein were  
wonders—yea—  
Rich arks with priceless bones of  
martyrdom,  
Thorns of the crown and shivers of  
the cross,  
And therewithal (for thus he told us)  
brought  
By holy Joseph hither, that same  
spear  
Wherewith the Roman pierced the  
side of Christ.  
He much amazed us; after, when we  
sought  
The tribute, answer'd "I have quite  
foregone  
All matters of this world: Garlon,  
mine heir,  
Of him demand it," which this Gar-  
lon gave  
With much ado, railing at thine and  
thee.

But when we left, in those deep  
woods we found  
A knight of thine spear-stricken from  
behind,  
Dead, whom we buried; more than  
one of us  
Cried out on Garlon, but a woodman  
there  
Reported of some demon in the  
woods  
Was once a man, who driven by evil  
tongues  
From all his fellows, lived alone, and  
came  
To learn black magic, and to hate his  
kind  
With such a hate, that when he died,  
his soul  
Became a Fiend, which, as the man in  
life  
Was wounded by blind tongues he  
saw not whence,  
Strikes from behind. This woodman  
show'd the cave  
From which he sallies, and wherein  
he dwelt.  
We saw the hoof-print of a horse, no  
more.'

Then Arthur, 'Let who goes before  
me, see  
He do not fall behind me: foully  
slain  
And villainously! who will hunt for  
me  
This demon of the woods?' Said  
Balan, 'I'  
So claim'd the quest and rode away,  
but first,  
Embracing Balin, 'Good my brother,  
hear!  
Let not thy moods prevail, when I am  
gone  
Who used to lay them! hold them  
outer fiends,  
Who leap at thee to tear thee; shake  
them aside,  
Dreams ruling when wit sleeps! yea,  
but to dream  
That any of these would wrong thee,  
wrongs thyself.  
Witness their flowery welcome.  
Bound are they

To speak no evil. Truly safe for fears,  
 My fears for thee, so rich a fellowship  
 Would make me wholly blest: thou one of them,  
 Be one indeed: consider them, and all  
 Their bearing in their common bond of love,  
 No more of hatred than in Heaven itself,  
 No more of jealousy than in Paradise.'

So Balan warn'd, and went; Balin remain'd:  
 Who—for but three brief moons had glanced away  
 From being knighted till he smote the thrall,  
 And faded from the presence into years  
 Of exile—now would strictlier set himself  
 To learn what Arthur meant by courtesy,  
 Manhood, and knighthood; wherefore hover'd round  
 Lancelot, but when he mark'd his high sweet smile  
 In passing, and a transitory word  
 Make knight or churl or child or damsel seem  
 From being smiled at happier in themselves—  
 Sigh'd, as a boy lame-born beneath a height,  
 That glooms his valley, sighs to see the peak  
 Sun-flush'd, or touch at night the northern star;  
 For one from out his village lately climb'd  
 And brought report of azure lands and fair,  
 Far seen to left and right; and he himself  
 Hath hardly scaled with help a hundred feet  
 Up from the base: so Balin marveling oft  
 How far beyond him Lancelot seem'd to move,

Groan'd, and at times would mutter,  
 'These be gifts,  
 Born with the blood, not learnable, divine,  
 Beyond *my* reach. Well had I foughten—well—  
 In those fierce wars, struck hard—and had I crown'd  
 With my slain self the heaps of whom I slew—  
 So—better!—But this worship of the Queen,  
 That honor too wherein she holds him—this,  
 This was the sunshine that hath given the man  
 A growth, a name that branches o'er the rest,  
 And strength against all odds, and what the King  
 So prizes—overprizes—gentleness.  
 Her likewise would I worship an I might.  
 I never can be close with her, as he  
 That brought her hither. Shall I pray the King  
 To let me bear some token of his Queen  
 Whereon to gaze, remembering her—forget  
 My heats and violences? live afresh?  
 What, if the Queen disdain'd to grant it! nay  
 Being so stately-gentle, would she make  
 My darkness blackness? and with how sweet grace  
 She greeted my return! Bold will I be—  
 Some goodly cognizance of Guinevere,  
 In lieu of this rough beast upon my shield,  
 Langued gules, and tooth'd with grinning savagery.'

And Arthur, when Sir Balin sought him, said  
 'What wilt thou bear?' Balin was bold, and ask'd  
 To bear her own crown-royal upon shield,  
 Whereat she smiled and turn'd ner to the King,

Who answer'd 'Thou shalt put the crown to use.

The crown is but the shadow of the King,

And this a shadow's shadow, let him have it,

So this will help him of his violences !'

'No shadow' said Sir Balin 'O my Queen,

But light to me! no shadow, O my King

But golden earnest of a gentler life !'

So Balin bare the crown, and all the knights

Approved him, and the Queen, and all the world

Made music, and he felt his being move

In music with his Order, and the King.

The nightingale, full-toned in middle May,

Hath ever and anon a note so thin

It seems another voice in other groves ;

Thus, after some quick burst of sudden wrath,

The music in him seem'd to change, and grow faint and far-off.

And once he saw the thrall

His passion half had gauntleted to death,

That causer of his banishment and shame,

Smile at him, as he deem'd, presumptuously :

His arm half rose to strike again, but fell :

The memory of that cognizance on shield

Weighted it down, but in himself he moan'd :

'Too high this mount of Camelot for me :

These high-set courtesies are not for me.

Shall I not rather prove the worse for these ?

Fierier and stormier from restraining, break

Into some madness ev'n before the Queen ?'

Thus, as a hearth lit in a mountain home,

And glancing on the window, when the gloom

Of twilight deepens round it, seems a flame

That rages in the woodland far below,

So when his moods were darken'd, court and King

And all the kindly warmth of Arthur's hall

Shadow'd an angry distance : yet he strove

To learn the graces of their Table, fought

Hard with himself, and seem'd at length in peace.

Then chanced, one morning, that Sir Balin sat

Close-bower'd in that garden nigh the hall.

A walk of roses ran from door to door ;

A walk of lilies crost it to the bower :

And down that range of roses the great Queen

Came with slow steps, the morning on her face ;

And all in shadow from the counter door

Sir Lancelot as to meet her, then at once,

As if he saw not, glanced aside, and paced

The long white walk of lilies toward the bower.

Follow'd the Queen ; Sir Balin heard her 'Prince,

Art thou so little loyal to thy Queen,

As pass without good morrow to thy Queen ?'

To whom Sir Lancelot with his eyes on earth,

'Fain would I still be loyal to the Queen.'

'Yea so' she said 'but so to pass me by—

So loyal scarce is loyal to thyself,  
Whom all men rate the king of cour-  
tesy.  
Let be: ye stand, fair lord, as in a  
dream.'

Then Lancelot with his hand among  
the flowers  
'Yea—for a dream. Last night me-  
thought I saw  
That maiden Saint who stands with  
lily in hand  
In yonder shrine. All round her  
prest the dark,  
And all the light upon her silver face  
Flow'd from the spiritual lily that she  
held.  
Lo! these her emblems drew mine  
eyes—away:  
For see, how perfect-pure! As light  
a flush  
As hardly tints the blossom of the  
quince  
Would mar their charm of stainless  
maidenhood.'

'Sweeter to me' she said 'this  
garden rose  
Deep-hued and many-folded! sweeter  
still  
The wild-hued hyacinth and the bloom  
of May.  
Prince, we have ridd'n before among  
the flowers  
In those fair days—not all as cool as  
these,  
Tho' season-earlier. Art thou sad?  
or sick?  
Our noble King will send thee his  
own leech—  
Sick? or for any matter anger'd at me?'

Then Lancelot lifted his large eyes;  
they dwelt  
Deep-tranced on hers, and could not  
fall: her hue  
Changed at his gaze: so turning side  
by side  
They past, and Balin started from his  
bower.

'Queen? subject? but I see not  
what I see.

Damsel and lover? hear not what I  
hear.  
My father hath begotten me in his  
wrath.  
I suffer from the things before me,  
know,  
Learn nothing; am not worthy to be  
knight;  
A churl, a clown!' and in him gloom  
on gloom  
Deepen'd: he sharply caught his lance  
and shield,  
Nor stay'd to crave permission of the  
king,  
But, mad for strange adventure, dash'd  
away.

He took the selfsame track as Balan,  
saw  
The fountain where they sat together,  
sigh'd  
'Was I not better there with him?'  
and rode  
The skyless woods, but under open  
blue  
Came on the hoarhead woodman at a  
bough  
Wearily hewing. 'Churl, thine axe!'  
he cried,  
Descended, and disjointed it at a blow:  
To whom the woodman utter'd won-  
deringly  
'Lord, thou couldst lay the Devil of  
these woods  
If arm of flesh could lay him.' Balin  
cried  
'Him, or the viler devil who plays his  
part,  
To lay that devil would lay the Devil  
in me.'  
'Nay' said the churl, 'our devil is a  
truth,  
I saw the flash of him but yestereven.  
And some do say that our Sir Garlon  
too  
Hath learn'd black magic, and to ride  
unseen.  
Look to the cave.' But Balin answer'd  
him  
'Old fabler, these be fancies of the  
churl,  
Look to thy woodcraft,' and so leav-  
ing him,



Now with slack rein and careless of  
 himself,  
 Now with dug spur and raving at him-  
 self,  
 Now with droopt brow down the long  
 glades he rode;  
 So mark'd not on his right a cavern-  
 chasm  
 Yawn over darkness, where, nor far  
 within,  
 The whole day died, but, dying,  
 gleam'd on rocks  
 Roof-pendent, sharp; and others from  
 the floor,  
 Tusklike, arising, made that mouth of  
 night  
 Whereout the Demon issued up from  
 Hell.  
 He mark'd not this, but blind and deaf  
 to all  
 Save that chain'd rage, which ever  
 yelp'd within,  
 Past eastward from the falling sun.  
 At once  
 He felt the hollow-beaten mosses  
 thud  
 And tremble, and then the shadow of  
 a spear,  
 Shot from behind him, ran along the  
 ground.  
 Sideways he started from the path,  
 and saw,  
 With pointed lance as if to pierce, a  
 shape,  
 A light of armor by him flash, and  
 pass  
 And vanish in the woods; and fol-  
 low'd this,  
 But all so blind in rage that unawares  
 He burst his lance against a forest  
 bough,  
 Dishorsed himself, and rose again, and  
 fled  
 Far, till the castle of a King, the hall  
 Of Pellam, lichen-bearded, grayly  
 draped  
 With streaming grass, appear'd, low-  
 built but strong;  
 The ruinous donjon as a knoll of  
 moss,  
 The battlement overtopt with ivytods,  
 A home of bats, in every tower an  
 owl.

Then spake the men of Pellam cry-  
 ing 'Lord,  
 Why wear ye this crown-royal upon  
 shield?'  
 Said Balin 'For the fairest and the  
 best  
 Of ladies living gave me this to bear.'  
 So stall'd his horse, and strode across  
 the court,  
 But found the greetings both of knight  
 and King  
 Faint in the low dark hall of banquet:  
 leaves  
 Laid their green faces flat against the  
 panes,  
 Sprays grated, and the canker'd  
 boughs without  
 Whined in the wood; for all was  
 hush'd within,  
 Till when at feast Sir Garlon likewise  
 ask'd  
 'Why wear ye that crown-royal?'  
 Balin said  
 'The Queen we worship, Lancelot, I,  
 and all,  
 As fairest, best and purest, granted me  
 To bear it!' Such a sound (for  
 Arthur's knights  
 Were hated strangers in the hall) as  
 makes  
 The white swan-mother, sitting, when  
 she hears  
 A strange knee rustle thro' her secret  
 reeds,  
 Made Garlon, hissing; then he sourly  
 smiled.  
 'Fairest I grant her: I have seen;  
 but best,  
 Best, purest? *thou* from Arthur's hall,  
 and yet  
 So simple! hast thou eyes, or if, are  
 these  
 So far besotted that they fail to see  
 This fair wife-worship cloaks a secret  
 shame?  
 Truly, ye men of Arthur be but babes.'

A goblet on the board by Balin,  
 boss'd  
 With holy Joseph's legend, on his  
 right  
 Stood, all of massiest bronze: one side  
 had sea

And ship and sail and angels blowing  
on it:  
And one was rough with wattling,  
and the walls  
Of that low church he built at Glaston-  
bury.

This Balin graspt, but while in act to  
hurl,  
Thro' memory of that token on the  
shield

Relax'd his hold: 'I will be gentle' he  
thought

'And passing gentle' caught his hand  
away.

Then fiercely to Sir Garlon 'eyes have I  
That saw to-day the shadow of a spear,  
Shot from behind me, run along the  
ground;

Eyes too that long have watch'd how  
Lancelot draws

From homage to the best and purest,  
might,

Name, manhood, and a grace, but  
scantly thine,

Who, sitting in thine own hall, canst  
endure

To mouth so huge a foulness—to thy  
guest,

Me, me of Arthur's Table. Felon  
talk!

Let be! no more!

But not the less by night

The scorn of Garlon, poisoning all his  
rest,

Stung him in dreams. At length, and  
dim thro' leaves

Blink the white morn, sprays grated,  
and old boughs

Whined in the wood. He rose, de-  
scended, met

The scorner in the castle court, and  
fain,

For hate and loathing, would have  
past him by;

But when Sir Garlon utter'd mock-  
ing-  
wise;

'What, wear ye still that same crown-  
scandalous?'

His countenance blacken'd, and his  
forehead veins

Bloated, and branch'd; and tearing  
out of sheath

The brand, Sir Balin with a fiery 'Ha!  
So thou be shadow, here I make thee  
ghost,'

Hard upon helm smote him, and the  
blade flew

Splintering in six, and clinkt upon the  
stones.

Then Garlon, reeling slowly back-  
ward, fell,

And Balin by the banneret of his helm  
Dragg'd him, and struck, but from the  
castle a cry

Sounded across the court, and—men-  
at-arms,

A score with pointed lances, making  
at him—

He dash'd the pummel at the fore-  
most face,

Beneath a low door dipt, and made his  
feet

Wings thro' a glimmering gallery, till  
he mark'd

The portal of King Pellam's chapel  
wide

And inward to the wall; he stept  
behind;

Thence in a moment heard them pass  
like wolves

Howling; but while he stared about  
the shrine,

In which he scare could spy the Christ  
for Saints,

Beheld before a golden altar lie  
The longest lance his eyes had ever  
seen,

Point-painted red; and seizing there-  
upon

Push'd thro' an open casement down,  
lean'd on it,

Leapt in a semicircle, and lit on earth;  
Then hand at ear, and harkening from  
what side

The blindfold rummage buried in the  
walls

Might echo, ran the counter path, and  
found

His charger; mounted on him and  
away.

An arrow whizz'd to the right, one to  
the left,

One overhead; and Pellam's feeble cry  
'Stay, stay him! he defileth heavenly  
things

With earthly uses'—made him quickly  
dive  
Beneath the boughs, and race thro'  
many a mile  
Of dense and open, till his goodly  
horse,  
Arising wearily at a fallen oak,  
Stumbled headlong, and cast him face  
to ground.

Half-wroth he had not ended, but  
all glad,  
Knightlike, to find his charger yet  
unlamed,  
Sir Balin drew the shield from off his  
neck,  
Stared at the priceless cognizance,  
and thought  
'I have shamed thee so that now thou  
shamest me,  
Thee will I bear no more,' high on a  
branch  
Hung it, and turn'd aside into the  
woods,  
And there in gloom cast himself all  
along,  
Moaning 'My violences, my vio-  
lences!'

But now the wholesome music of  
the wood  
Was dumb'd by one from out the hall  
of Mark,  
A damsel-errant, warbling, as she rode  
The woodland alleys, Vivien, with her  
Squire.

'The fire of Heaven has kill'd the  
barren cold,  
And kindled all the plain and all the  
wold.  
The new leaf ever pushes off the old.  
The fire of Heaven is not the flame of  
Hell.

Old priest, who mumble worship in  
your quire—  
Old monk and nun, ye scorn the  
world's desire,  
Yet in your frosty cells ye feel the  
fire!  
The fire of Heaven is not the flame of  
Hell.

The fire of Heaven is on the dusty  
ways.  
The wayside blossoms open to the  
blaze.  
The whole wood-world is one full peal  
of praise.  
The fire of Heaven is not the flame of  
Hell.

The fire of Heaven is Lord of all  
things good,  
And starve not thou this fire within  
thy blood,  
But follow Vivien thro' the fiery flood!  
The fire of Heaven is not the flame of  
Hell!

Then turning to her Squire 'This  
fire of Heaven,  
This old sun-worship, boy, will rise  
again,  
And beat the cross to earth, and break  
the King  
And all his Table.'

Then they reach'd a glade,  
Where under one long lane of cloud-  
less air  
Before another wood, the royal crown  
Sparkled, and swaying upon a restless  
elm  
Drew the vague glance of Vivien, and  
her Squire;  
Amazed were these; 'Lo there!' she  
cried—'a crown—  
Borne by some high lord-prince of  
Arthur's hall,  
And there a horse! the rider? where  
is he?  
See, yonder lies one dead within the  
wood.  
Not dead; he stirs!—but sleeping. I  
will speak.  
Hail, royal knight, we break on thy  
sweet rest,  
Not, doubtless, all unearn'd by noble  
deeds.  
But bounden art thou, if from Arthur's  
hall,  
To help the weak. Behold, I fly from  
shame,  
A lustful King, who sought to win my  
love

Thro' evil ways: the knight, with  
whom I rode,  
Hath suffer'd misadventure, and my  
squire  
Hath in him small defence; but thou,  
Sir Prince,  
Wilt surely guide me to the warrior  
King,  
Arthur the blameless, pure as any  
maid,  
To get me shelter for my maidenhood.  
I charge thee by that crown upon thy  
shield,  
And by the great Queen's name, arise  
and hence.'

And Balin rose, 'Thither no more!  
nor Prince  
Nor knight am I, but one that hath  
defamed  
The cognizance she gave me: here I  
dwell  
Savage among the savage woods, here  
die—  
Die: let the wolves' black maws en-  
sepulchre  
Their brother beast, whose anger was  
his lord.  
O me, that such a name as Guinevere's,  
Which our high Lancelot hath so  
lifted up,  
And been thereby uplifted, should  
thro' me,  
My violence, and my villainy, come to  
shame.'

Thereat she suddenly laugh'd and  
shrill, anon  
Sigh'd all as suddenly. Said Balin to  
her  
'Is this thy courtesy—to mock me, ha?  
Hence, for I will not with thee.' Again  
she sigh'd  
'Pardon, sweet lord! we maidens often  
laugh  
When sick at heart, when rather we  
should weep.  
I knew thee wrong'd. I brake upon  
thy rest,  
And now full loth am I to break thy  
dream,  
But thou art man, and canst abide a  
truth,

Tho' bitter. Hither, boy—and mark  
me well.  
Dost thou remember at Caerleon  
once—  
A year ago—nay, then I love thee not—  
Ay, thou rememberest well—one sum-  
mer dawn—  
By the great tower—Caerleon upon  
Usk—  
Nay, truly we were hidden: this fair  
lord,  
The flower of all their vestal knight-  
hood, knelt  
In amorous homage—knelt—what  
else?—O ay  
Knelt, and drew down from out his  
night-black hair  
And mumbled that white hand whose  
ring'd caress  
Had wander'd from her own King's  
golden head,  
And lost itself in darkness, till she  
cried—  
I thought the great tower would crash  
down on both—  
'Rise, my sweet King, and kiss me on  
the lips,  
Thou art my King.' This lad, whose  
lightest word  
Is mere white truth in simple naked-  
ness,  
Saw them embrace: he reddens, can-  
not speak,  
So bashful, he! but all the maiden  
Saints,  
The deathless mother-maidenhood of  
Heaven  
Cry out upon her. Up then, ride with  
me!  
Talk not of shame! thou canst not,  
an thou would'st,  
Do these more shame than these have  
done themselves.'

She lied with ease; but horror-  
stricken he,  
Remembering that dark bower at  
Cameiot,  
Breathed in a dismal whisper 'It is  
truth.'

Sunnily she smiled 'And even in  
this lone wood,

Sweet lord, ye do right well to whisper  
this.  
Fools prate, and perish traitors.  
Woods have tongues,  
As walls have ears: but thou shalt go  
with me,  
And we will speak at first exceeding  
low.  
Meet is it the good King be not de-  
ceived.  
See now, I set thee high on vantage  
ground,  
From whence to watch the time, and  
eagle-like  
Stoop at thy will on Lancelot and the  
Queen."

She ceased; his evil spirit upon him  
leapt,  
He ground his teeth together, sprang  
with a yell,  
Tore from the branch, and cast on  
earth, the shield,  
Drove his mail'd heel athwart the  
royal crown,  
Stampt all into defacement, hurl'd it  
from him  
Among the forest weeds, and cursed  
the tale,  
The told-of, and the teller.

That weird yell,  
Unearthlier than all shriek of bird or  
beast,  
Thrill'd thro' the woods; and Balan  
lurking there  
(His quest was unaccomplish'd) heard  
and thought  
'The scream of that Wood-devil I  
came to quell!'  
Then nearing 'Lo! he hath slain some  
brother-knight,  
And tramples on the goodly shield to  
show  
His loathing of our Order and the  
Queen.  
My quest, meseems, is here. Or devil  
or man  
Guard thou thine head.' Sir Balin  
spake not word,  
But snatch'd a sudden buckler from  
the Squire,

And vaulted on his horse, and so they  
crash'd  
In onset, and King Pellam's holy  
spear,  
Reputed to be red with sinless blood,  
Redden'd at once with sinful, for the  
point  
Across the maiden shield of Balan  
prick'd  
The hauberk to the flesh; and Balin's  
horse  
Was wearied to the death, and, when  
they clash'd,  
Rolling back upon Balin, crush'd the  
man  
Inward, and either fell, and swoon'd  
away.

Then to her Squire mutter'd the  
damsel 'Fools!  
This fellow hath wrought some foul-  
ness with his Queen:  
Else never had he borne her crown,  
nor raved.  
And thus foam'd over at a rival  
name:  
But thou, Sir Chick, that scarce hast  
broken shell,  
Art yet half-yolk, not even come to  
down—  
Who never sawest Caerleon upon  
Usk—  
And yet hast often pleaded for my  
love—  
See what I see, be thou where I have  
been,  
Or else Sir Chick—dismount and  
loose their casques  
I fain would know what manner of  
men they be.'  
And when the Squire had loosed  
them, 'Goodly l—look!  
They might have crompt the myriad  
flower of May,  
And butt each other here, like brain-  
less bulls,  
Dead for one heifer!'

Then the gentle Squire  
'I hold them happy, so they died for  
love:  
And, Vivien, tho' ye beat me like your  
dog,

I too could die, as now I live, for thee.'

'Live on, Sir Boy,' she cried. 'I better prize  
The living dog than the dead lion:  
away!  
I cannot brook to gaze upon the dead.'  
Then leapt her palfrey o'er the fallen oak,  
And bounding forward 'Leave them to the wolves.'

But when their foreheads felt the cooling air,  
Balin first woke, and seeing that true face,  
Familiar up from cradle-time, so wan,  
Crawl'd slowly with low moans to where he lay,  
And on his dying brother cast himself  
Dying; and *he* lifted faint eyes; he felt  
One near him; all at once they found the world,  
Staring wild-wide; then with a child-like wail,  
And drawing down the dim disastrous brow  
That o'er him hung, he kiss'd it, moan'd and spake;

'O Balin, Balin, I that fain had died  
To save thy life, have brought thee to thy death.  
Why had ye not the shield I knew? and why  
Trampled ye thus on that which bare the Crown?'

Then Balin told him brokenly, and in gasps,  
All that had chanced, and Balan moan'd again.

'Brother, I dwelt a day in Pellam's hall:  
This Garlon mock'd me, but I heeded not.

And one said "Eat in peace! a liar is he,  
And hates thee for the tribute!" this good knight  
Told me, that twice a wanton damsel came,  
And sought for Garlon at the castle-gates,  
Whom Pellam drove away with holy heat.  
I well believe this damsel, and the one  
Who stood beside thee even now, the same.  
"She dwells among the woods" he said "and meets  
And dallies with him in the Mouth of Hell."  
Foul are their lives; foul are their lips; they lied.  
Pure as our own true Mother is our Queen.'

'O brother' answer'd Balin 'woe is me!  
My madness all thy life has been thy doom,  
Thy curse, and darken'd all thy day; and now  
The night has come. I scarce can see thee now.  
Goodnight! for we shall never bid again  
Goodmorrow—Dark my doom was here, and dark  
It will be there. I see thee now no more.  
I would not mine again should darken thine,  
Goodnight, true brother.'

Balan answer'd low  
'Goodnight, true brother here! goodmorrow there!  
We two were born together, and we die  
Together by one doom: ' and while he spoke  
Closed his death-drowning eyes, and slept the sleep  
With Balin, either lock'd in either's arms.



Man for the field  
and woman for  
the hearth:  
Man for the sword  
and for the needle  
she:  
Man with the head  
and woman with the  
heart:  
Man to command  
and woman to obey.

"MAN FOR THE FIELD AND WOMAN FOR THE HEARTH."—Page 71.





MERLIN AND VIVIEN.

A STORM was coming, but the winds  
were still,  
And in the wild woods of Broce-  
liande,  
Before an oak, so hollow, huge and  
old  
It look'd a tower of ivied masonwork,  
At Merlin's feet the wily Vivien lay.

For he that always bare in bitter  
grudge  
The slights of Arthur and his Table,  
Mark  
The Cornish King, had heard a wan-  
dering voice,  
A minstrel of Caerleon by strong  
storm  
Blown into shelter at Tintagil, say  
That out of naked knightlike purity  
Sir Lancelot worshipt no unmarried  
girl  
But the great Queen herself, fought in  
her name,  
Swore by her—vows like theirs, that  
high in heaven  
Love most, but neither marry, nor are  
given  
In marriage, angels of our Lord's  
report.

He ceased, and then—for Vivien  
sweetly said  
(She sat beside the banquet nearest  
Mark),  
'And is the fair example follow'd,  
Sir,  
In Arthur's household?'—answer'd  
innocently :

'Ay, by some few—ay, truly—youths  
that hold  
It more beseems the perfect virgin  
knight  
To worship woman as true wife be-  
yond  
All hopes of gaining, than as maiden  
girl.  
They place their pride in Lancelot  
and the Queen.  
So passionate for an utter purity

Beyond the limit of their bond, are  
these,  
For Arthur bound them not to single-  
ness.  
Brave hearts and clean! and yet—  
God guide them—young.'

Then Mark was half in heart to  
hurl his cup  
Straight at the speaker, but forebore :  
he rose  
To leave the hall, and, Vivien follow-  
ing him,  
Turu'd to her : 'Here are snakes with-  
in the grass ;  
And you methinks, O Vivien, save ye  
fear  
The monkish manhood, and the mask  
of pure  
Worn by this court, can stir them till  
they sting.'

And Vivien answer'd, smiling scorn-  
fully,  
'Why fear? because that foster'd at  
*thy* court  
I savor of thy—virtues? fear them?  
no.  
As Love, if Love be perfect, casts out  
fear,  
So Hate, if Hate be perfect, casts out  
fear.  
My father died in battle against the  
King,  
My mother on his corpse in open field ;  
She bore me there, for born from  
death was I  
Among the dead and sown upon the  
wind—  
And then on thee! and shown the  
truth betimes,  
That old true filth, and bottom of the  
well,  
Where Truth is hidden. Gracious  
lessons thine  
And maxims of the mud! "This  
Arthur pure!  
Great Nature thro' the flesh herself  
hath made  
Gives him the lie! There is no being  
pure,  
My cherub; saith not Holy Writ the  
same?"—

If I were Arthur, I would have thy  
 blood.  
 Thy blessing, stainless King! I bring  
 thee back,  
 When I have ferreted out their bur-  
 rowings,  
 The hearts of all this Order in mine  
 hand—  
 Ay—so that fate and craft and folly  
 close,  
 Perchance, one curl of Arthur's golden  
 beard.  
 To me this narrow grizzled fork of  
 thine  
 Is cleaner-fashion'd—Well, I loved  
 thee first,  
 That warps the wit.'

Loud laugh'd the graceless Mark.  
 But Vivien, into Camelot stealing,  
 lodged  
 Low in the city, and on a festal day  
 When Guinevere was crossing the  
 great hall  
 Cast herself down, knelt to the Queen,  
 and wail'd.

'Why kneel ye there? What evil  
 have ye wrought?  
 Rise!' and the damsel bidden rise  
 arose  
 And stood with folded hands and  
 downward eyes  
 Of glancing corner, and all, meekly  
 said,  
 'None wrought, but suffer'd much, an  
 orphan maid!  
 My father died in battle for thy  
 King,  
 My mother on his corpse—in open  
 field,  
 The sad sea-sounding wastes of Lyo-  
 nesse—  
 Poor wretch—no friend!—and now  
 by Mark the King  
 For that small charm of feature mine,  
 pursued—  
 If any such be mine—I fly to thee.  
 Save, save me thou—Woman of  
 women—thine  
 The wreath of beauty, thine the crown  
 of power,

Be thine the balm of pity, O Heaven's  
 own white  
 Earth-angel, stainless bride of stain-  
 less King—  
 Help, for he follows! take me to thy-  
 self!  
 O yield me shelter for mine innocency  
 Among thy maidens!'

Here her slow sweet eyes  
 Fear-tremulous, but humbly hopeful,  
 rose  
 Fixt on her hearer's, while the Queen  
 who stood  
 All glittering like May sunshine on  
 May leaves  
 In green and gold, and plumed with  
 green replied,  
 'Peace, child! of overpraise and over-  
 blame  
 We choose the last. Our noble  
 Arthur, him  
 Ye scarce can overpraise, will hear  
 and know.  
 Nay—we believe all evil of thy  
 Mark—  
 Well, we shall test thee farther; but  
 this hour  
 We ride a-hawking with Sir Lancelot.  
 He hath given us a fair falcon which  
 he train'd;  
 We go to prove it. Bide ye here the  
 while.'

She past; and Vivien murmur'd  
 after 'Go!  
 I bide the while.' Then thro' the por-  
 tal-arch  
 Peering askance, and muttering bro-  
 kenwise,  
 As one that labors with an evil dream,  
 Beheld the Queen and Lancelot get to  
 horse.

'Is that the Lancelot? goodly—ay,  
 but gaunt:  
 Courteous—amends for gauntness—  
 takes her hand—  
 That glance of theirs, but for the  
 street, had been  
 A clinging kiss—how hand lingers in  
 hand!

Let go at last!—they ride away—to  
hawk  
For waterfowl. Royaller game is  
mine.  
For such a supersensual sensual bond  
As that gray cricket chirpt of at our  
hearth—  
Touch flax with flame—a glance will  
serve—the liars!  
Ah little rat that borest in the dyke  
Thy hole by night to let the boundless  
deep  
Down upon far-off cities while they  
dance—  
Or dream—of thee they dream'd not—  
nor of me  
These—ay, but each of either: ride,  
and dream  
The mortal dream that never yet was  
mine—  
Ride, ride and dream until ye wake—  
to me!  
Then, narrow court and lubber King,  
farewell!  
For Lancelot will be gracious to the  
rat,  
And our wise Queen, if knowing that  
I know,  
Will hate, loathe, fear—but honor me  
the more.'

Yet while they rode together down  
the plain,  
Their talk was all of training, terms  
of art,  
Diet and seeling, jesses, leash and  
lure.  
'She is too noble' he said 'to check  
at pies,  
Nor will she rake: there is no base-  
ness in her.'  
Here when the Queen demanded as  
by chance  
'Know ye the stranger woman?'  
'Let her be,'  
Said Lancelot and unhooded casting  
off  
The goodly falcon free; she tower'd;  
her bells,  
Tone under tone, shrill'd, and they  
lifted up  
Their eager faces, wondering at the  
strength,

Boldness and royal knighthood of the  
bird  
Who pounced her quarry and slew it.  
Many a time  
As once—of old—among the flowers—  
they rode.

But Vivien half-forgotten of the  
Queen  
Among her damsels broidering sat,  
heard, watch'd  
And whisper'd: thro' the peaceful  
court she crept  
And whisper'd: then as Arthur in the  
highest  
Leaven'd the world, so Vivien in the  
lowest,  
Arriving at a time of golden rest,  
And sowing one ill hint from ear to  
ear,  
While all the heathen lay at Arthur's  
feet,  
And no quest came, but all was joust  
and play,  
Leaven'd his hall. They heard and  
let her be.

Thereafter as an enemy that has  
left  
Death in the living waters, and with-  
drawn,  
The wily Vivien stole from Arthur's  
court.

She hated all the knights, and  
heard in thought  
Their lavish comment when her name  
was named.  
For once, when Arthur walking all  
alone,  
Vext at a rumor issued from her-  
self  
Of some corruption crept among his  
knights,  
Had met her, Vivien, being greeted  
fair,  
Would fain have wrought upon his  
cloudy mood  
With reverent eyes mock-loyal, shaken  
voice,  
And flutter'd adoration, and at last  
With dark sweet hints of some who  
prized him more

Than who should prize him most; at  
 which the King  
 Had gazed upon her blankly and gone  
 by:  
 But one had watch'd, and had not held  
 his peace:  
 It made the laughter of an afternoon  
 That Vivien should attempt the blame-  
 less King.  
 And after that, she set herself to gain  
 Him, the most famous man of all those  
 times,  
 Merlin, who knew the range of all  
 their arts,  
 Had built the King his havens, ships,  
 and halls,  
 Was also Bard, and knew the starry  
 heavens;  
 The people call'd him Wizard; whom  
 at first  
 She play'd about with slight and  
 sprightly talk,  
 And vivid smiles, and faintly-venom'd  
 points  
 Of slander, glancing here and grazing  
 there;  
 And yielding to his kindlier moods,  
 the Seer  
 Would watch her at her petulance, and  
 play,  
 Ev'n when they seem'd unloveable,  
 and laugh  
 As those that watch a kitten; thus he  
 grew  
 Tolerant of what he half disdain'd,  
 and she,  
 Perceiving that she was but half dis-  
 dain'd,  
 Began to break her sports with graver  
 fits,  
 Turn red or pale, would often when  
 they met  
 Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him  
 With such a fixt devotion, that the old  
 man,  
 Tho' doubtful, felt the flattery, and at  
 times  
 Would flatter his own wish in age for  
 love,  
 And half believe her true: for thus at  
 times  
 He waver'd; but that other clung to  
 him,

Fixt in her will, and so the seasons  
 went.

Then fell on Merlin a great melan-  
 choly;  
 He walk'd with dreams and darkness,  
 and he found  
 A doom that ever poised itself to  
 fall,  
 An ever-moaning battle in the mist,  
 World-war of dying flesh against the  
 life,  
 Death in all life and lying in all love,  
 The meanest having power upon the  
 highest,  
 And the high purpose broken by the  
 worm.

So leaving Arthur's court he gain'd  
 the beach;  
 There found a little boat, and stept  
 into it;  
 And Vivien follow'd, but he mark'd  
 her not.  
 She took the helm and he the sail;  
 the boat  
 Drave with a sudden wind across the  
 deeps,  
 And touching Breton sands, they dis-  
 embark'd.  
 And then she follow'd Merlin all the  
 way,  
 Ev'n to the wild woods of Broceliande.  
 For Merlin once had told her of a  
 charm,  
 The which if any wrought on anyone  
 With woven paces and with waving  
 arms,  
 The man so wrought on ever seem'd  
 to lie  
 Closed in the four walls of a hollow  
 tower,  
 From which was no escape for ever-  
 more;  
 And none could find that man for ever-  
 more,  
 Nor could he see but him who wrought  
 the charm  
 Coming and going, and he lay as dead  
 And lost to life and use and name and  
 fame.  
 And Vivien ever sought to work the  
 charm

Upon the great Enchanter of the  
Time,  
As fancying that her glory would be  
great  
According to his greatness whom she  
quench'd.

There lay she all her length and  
kiss'd his feet,  
As if in deepest reverence and in love.  
A twist of gold was round her hair; a  
robe  
Of samite without price, that more  
express  
Than hid her, clung about her lissome  
limbs,  
In color like the satin-shining palm  
On sallows in the windy gleams of  
March:  
And while she kiss'd them, crying,  
'Trample me,  
Dear feet, that I have follow'd thro'  
the world,  
And I will pay you worship; tread me  
down  
And I will kiss you for it;' he was  
mute:  
So dark a forethought roll'd about his  
brain,  
As on a dull day in an Ocean cave  
The blind wave feeling round his long  
sea-hall  
In silence: wherefore, when she lifted  
up  
A face of sad appeal, and spake and  
said,  
'O Merlin, do ye love me?' and again,  
'O Merlin, do ye love me?' and once  
more,  
'Great Master, do ye love me?' he was  
mute.  
And lissome Vivien, holding by his  
heel,  
Writhed toward him, slid up his  
knee and sat,  
Behind his ankle twined her hollow  
feet  
Together, curved an arm about his  
neck,  
Clung like a snake; and letting her  
left hand  
Droop from his mighty shoulder, as a  
leaf,

Made with her right a comb of pearl  
to part  
The lists of such a beard as youth gone  
out  
Had left in ashes: then he spoke and  
said,  
Not looking at her; 'Who are wise in  
love  
Love most, say least,' and Vivien an-  
swer'd quick,  
'I saw the little elf-god eyeless once  
In Arthur's arras hall at Camelot:  
But neither eyes nor tongue—O stupid  
child!  
Yet you are wise who say it; let me  
think  
Silence is wisdom. I am silent then,  
And ask no kiss;' then adding all at  
once,  
'And lo, I clothe myself with wisdom,'  
drew  
The vast and shaggy mantle of his  
beard  
Across her neck and bosom to her  
knee,  
And call'd herself a gilded summer fly  
Caught in a great old tyrant spider's  
web,  
Who meant to eat her up in that wild  
wood  
Without one word. So Vivien call'd  
herself,  
But rather seem'd a lovely baleful star  
Veil'd in gray vapor; till he sadly  
smiled:  
'To what request for what strange  
boon,' he said,  
'Are these your pretty tricks and fool-  
eries,  
O Vivien, the preamble? yet my  
thanks,  
For these have broken up my melan-  
choly.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling sau-  
cily,  
'What, O my Master, have ye found  
your voice?  
I bid the stranger welcome. Thanks  
at last!  
But yesterday you never open'd lip,  
Except indeed to drink: no cup had  
we:

In mine own lady palms I cull'd the  
spring  
That gather'd trickling dropwise from  
the cleft,  
And made a pretty cup of both my  
hands  
And offer'd you it kneeling : then you  
drank  
And knew no more, nor gave me one  
poor word ;  
O no more thanks than might a goat  
have given  
With no more sign of reverence than  
a beard.  
And when we halted at that other  
well,  
And I was faint to swooning, and you  
lay  
Foot-gilt with all the blossom-dust of  
those  
Deep meadows we had traversed, did  
you know  
That Vivien bathed your feet before  
her own ?  
And yet no thanks : and all thro' this  
wild wood  
And all this morning when I fondled  
you :  
Boon, ay, there was a boon, one not so  
strange—  
How had I wrong'd you ? surely ye  
are wise,  
But such a silence is more wise than  
kind.'

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers  
and said :  
'O did ye never lie upon the shore,  
And watch the curl'd white of the  
coming wave  
Glass'd in the slippery sand before it  
breaks ?  
Ev'n such a wave, but not so pleasur-  
able,  
Dark in the glass of some presageful  
mood,  
Had I for three days seen, ready to fall.  
And then I rose and fled from Arthur's  
court  
To break the mood. You follow'd  
me unask'd ;  
And when I look'd, and saw you  
following still.

My mind involved yourself the near-  
est thing  
In that mind-mist : for shall I tell you  
truth ?  
You seem'd that wave about to break  
upon me  
And sweep me from my hold upon the  
world,  
My use and name and fame. Your  
pardon, child.  
Your pretty sports have brighten'd all  
again.  
And ask your boon, for boon I owe  
you thrice,  
Once for wrong done you by confu-  
sion, next  
For thanks it seems till now neglected,  
last  
For these your dainty gambols :  
wherefore ask ;  
And take this boon so strange and  
not so strange.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling  
mournfully :  
'O not so strange as my long asking it,  
Not yet so strange as you yourself are  
strange,  
Nor half so strange as that dark mood  
of yours.  
I ever fear'd ye were not wholly mine ;  
And see, yourself have own'd ye did  
me wrong.  
The people call you prophet : let it be :  
But not of those that can expound  
themselves.  
Take Vivien for expounder ; she will  
call  
That three-days-long presageful gloom  
of yours  
No presage, but the same mistrustful  
mood  
That makes you seem less noble than  
yourself,  
Whenever I have ask'd this very boon,  
Now ask'd again : for see you not, dear  
love,  
That such a mood as that, which lately  
gloom'd  
Your fancy when ye saw me following  
you,  
Must make me fear still more you are  
not mine,

Must make me yearn still more to  
prove you mine,  
And make me wish still more to learn  
this charm  
Of woven paces and of waving hands,  
As proof of trust. O Merlin, teach it  
me.  
The charm so taught will charm us  
both to rest.  
For, grant me some slight power upon  
your fate,  
I, feeling that you felt me worthy trust,  
Should rest and let you rest, knowing  
you mine.  
And therefore be as great as ye are  
named,  
Not muffled round with selfish reti-  
cence.  
How hard you look and how deny-  
ingly!  
O, if you think this wickedness in me,  
That I should prove it on you  
unawares,  
That makes me passing wrathful; then  
our bond  
Had best be loosed for ever: but  
think or not,  
By Heaven that hears I tell you the  
clean truth,  
As clean as blood of babes, as white  
as milk:  
O Merlin, may this earth, if ever I,  
If these unwitty wandering wits of  
mine,  
Ev'n in the jumbled rubbish of a  
dream,  
Have tript on such conjectural treach-  
ery—  
May this hard earth cleave to the  
Nadir hell  
Down, down, and close again, and nip  
me flat,  
If I be such a traitress. Yield my  
boon,  
Till which I scare can yield you all I  
am;  
And grant my re-reiterated wish,  
The great proof of your love: because  
I think,  
However wise, ye hardly know me yet.'

And Merlin loosed his hand from  
hers and said,

'I never was less wise, however wise,  
Too curious Vivien, tho' you talk of  
trust,  
Than when I told you first of such a  
charm.  
Yea, if ye talk of trust I tell you this,  
Too much I trusted when I told you  
that,  
And stirr'd this vice in you which  
ruin'd man  
Thro' woman the first hour; for how-  
sue'er  
In children a great curiousness be  
well,  
Who have to learn themselves and all  
the world,  
In you, that are no child, for still I  
find  
Your face is practised when I spell the  
lines,  
I call it,—well, I will not call it vice:  
But since you name yourself the sum-  
mer fly,  
I well could wish a cobweb for the  
gnat,  
That settles, beaten back, and beaten  
back  
Settles, till one could yield for wear-  
iness:  
But since I will not yield to give you  
power  
Upon my life and use and name and  
fame,  
Why will ye never ask some other  
boon?  
Yea, by God's rood, I trusted you too  
much.'

And Vivien, like the tenderest-  
hearted maid  
That ever bided tryst at village stile,  
Made answer, either eyelid wet with  
tears:  
'Nay, Master, be not wrathful with  
your maid;  
Caress her: let her feel herself for-  
given  
Who feels no heart to ask another  
boon.  
I think ye hardly know the tender  
rhyme  
Of "trust me not at all or all in  
all."

I heard the great Sir Lancelot sing it  
 once,  
 And it shall answer for me. Listen  
 to it.

“ In Love, if Love be Love, if Love  
 be ours,  
 Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal  
 powers:  
 Unfaith in aught is want of faith in  
 all.

“ It is the little rift within the lute,  
 That by and by will make the music  
 mute,  
 And ever widening slowly silence all.

“ The little rift within the lover's  
 lute  
 Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,  
 That rotting inward slowly moulders  
 all.

“ It is not worth the keeping: let it  
 go:  
 But shall it? answer, darling, answer,  
 no.  
 And trust me not at all or all in all.”

O Master, do ye love my tender  
 rhyme?’

And Merlin look'd and half believed  
 her true,  
 So tender was her voice, so fair her  
 face,  
 So sweetly gleam'd her eyes behind  
 her tears  
 Like sunlight on the plain behind a  
 shower:  
 And yet he answer'd half indignantly:

‘ Far other was the song that once I  
 heard  
 By this huge oak, sung nearly where  
 we sit:  
 For here we met, some ten or twelve  
 of us,  
 To chase a creature that was current  
 then  
 In these wild woods, the hart with  
 golden horns.

It was the time when first the question  
 rose  
 About the founding of a Table Round,  
 That was to be, for love of God and  
 men  
 And noble deeds, the flower of all the  
 world.  
 And each incited each to noble  
 deeds.  
 And while we waited, one, the young-  
 est of us,  
 We could not keep him silent, out he  
 flash'd,  
 And into such a song, such fire for  
 fame,  
 Such trumpet-blowings in it, coming  
 down  
 To such a stern and iron-clashing  
 close,  
 That when he stopt we long'd to hurl  
 together,  
 And should have done it; but the  
 beauteous beast  
 Scared by the noise upstarted at our  
 feet,  
 And like a silver shadow slipt away  
 Thro' the dim land; and all day long  
 we rode  
 Thro' the dim land against a rushing  
 wind,  
 That glorious roundel echoing in our  
 ears,  
 And chased the flashes of his golden  
 horns  
 Until they vanish'd by the fairy well  
 That laughs at iron—as our warriors  
 did—  
 Where children cast their pins and  
 nails, and cry,  
 “ Laugh, little well!” but touch it  
 with a sword,  
 It buzzes fiercely round the point, and  
 there  
 We lost him: such a noble song was  
 that.  
 But, Vivien, when you sang me that  
 sweet rhyme,  
 I felt as tho' you knew this cursed  
 charm,  
 Were proving it on me, and that I  
 lay  
 And felt them slowly ebbing, name  
 and fame.’



And Vivien answer'd smiling  
mournfully :

'O mine have ebb'd away for ever-  
more,

And all thro' following you to this  
wild wood,  
Because I saw you sad, to comfort  
you.

Lo now, what hearts have men! they  
never mount

As high as woman in her selfless  
mood.

And touching fame, howe'er ye scorn  
my song,

Take one verse more—the lady speaks  
it—this :

“My name, once mine, now thine,  
is closelier mine,

For fame, could fame be mine, that  
fame were thine,

And shame, could shame be thine,  
that shame were mine.

So trust me not at all or all in all.”

'Says she not well? and there is  
more—this rhyme

Is like the fair pearl-necklace of the  
Queen,

That burst in dancing, and the pearls  
were spilt;

Some lost, some stolen, some as  
relics kept.

But nevermore the same two sister  
pearls

Ran down the silken thread to kiss  
each other

On her white neck—so is it with this  
rhyme :

It lives dispersedly in many hands,  
And every minstrel sings it differ-  
ently :

Yet is there one true line, the pearl  
of pearls :

“Man dreams of Fame while woman  
wakes to love.”

Yea! Love, tho' Love were of the  
grossest, carves

A portion from the solid present, eats  
And uses, careless of the rest; but  
Fame,

The Fame that follows death is  
nothing to us;

And what is Fame in life but half-  
disfame,

And counterchanged with darkness?  
ye yourself

Know well that Envy calls you Devil's  
son,

And since ye seem the Master of all  
Art,

They fain would make you Master of  
all vice.'

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers  
and said,

'I once was looking for a magic  
weed,

And found a fair young squire who  
sat alone,

Had carved himself a knightly shield  
of wood,

And then was painting on it fancied  
arms,

Azure, an Eagle rising or, the Sun  
In dexter chief; the scroll "I follow  
fame."

And speaking not, but leaning over  
him,

I took his brush and blotted out the  
bird,

And made a Gardener putting in a  
graff,

With this for motto, "Rather use  
than fame."

You should have seen him blush;  
but afterwards

He made a stalwart knight. O Viv-  
ien,

For you, methinks you think you love  
me well;

For me, I love you somewhat; rest:  
and Love

Should have some rest and pleasure  
in himself,

Not ever be too curious for a hoon,  
Too prurient for a proof against the  
grain

Of him ye say ye love: but Fame  
with men,

Being but ampler means to serve man-  
kind,

Should have small rest or pleasure in  
herself,

But work as vassal to the larger  
love,

That dwarfs the petty love of one to  
 one.  
 Use gave me Fame at first, and Fame  
 again  
 Increasing gave me use. Lo, there  
 my boon!  
 What other? for men sought to  
 prove me vile,  
 Because I fain had given them greater  
 wits:  
 And then did Envy call me Devil's  
 son:  
 The sick weak beast seeking to help  
 herself  
 By striking at her better, miss'd, and  
 brought  
 Her own claw back, and wounded  
 her own heart.  
 Sweet were the days when I was all  
 unknown,  
 But when my name was lifted up, the  
 storm  
 Brake on the mountain and I cared  
 not for it.  
 Right well know I that Fame is half-  
 dis-  
 fame,  
 Yet needs must work my work. That  
 other fame,  
 To one at least, who hath not child-  
 ren, vague,  
 The cackle of the unborn about the  
 grave,  
 I cared not for it: a single misty  
 star,  
 Which is the second in a line of stars  
 That seem a sword beneath a belt of  
 three,  
 I never gazed upon it but I dreamt  
 Of some vast charm concluded in  
 that star  
 To make fame nothing. Wherefore,  
 if I fear,  
 Giving you power upon me thro' this  
 charm,  
 That you might play me falsely, hav-  
 ing power,  
 However well ye think ye love me  
 now  
 (As sons of kings loving in pupilage  
 Have turn'd to tyrants when they  
 came to power)  
 I rather dread the loss of use than  
 fame;

If you—and not so much from wick-  
 edness,  
 As some wild turn of anger, or a  
 mood  
 Of overstrain'd affection, it may be,  
 To keep me all to your own self,—or  
 else  
 A sudden spurt of woman's jeal-  
 ousy,—  
 Should try this charm on whom-ye  
 say ye love.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling as in  
 wrath  
 'Have I not sworn? I am not trusted.  
 Good!  
 Well, hide it, hide it; I shall find it  
 out;  
 And being found take heed of Vivien.  
 A woman and not trusted, doubtless  
 I  
 Might feel some sudden turn of anger  
 born  
 Of your misfaith; and your fine  
 epithet  
 Is accurate too, for this full love of  
 mine  
 Without the full heart back may  
 merit well  
 Your term of overstrain'd. So used  
 as I,  
 My daily wonder is, I love at all.  
 And as to woman's jealousy, O why  
 not?  
 O to what end, except a jealous one,  
 And one to make me jealous if I love,  
 Was this fair charm invented by your-  
 self?  
 I well believe that all about this  
 world  
 Ye cage a buxom captive here and  
 there,  
 Closed in the four walls of a hollow  
 tower  
 From which is no escape for ever-  
 more.'

Then the great Master merrily  
 answer'd her:  
 'Full many a love in loving youth was  
 mine;  
 I needed then no charm to keep them  
 mine

But youth and love; and that full  
heart of yours  
Whereof ye prattle, may now assure  
you mine;  
So live uncharm'd. For those who  
wrought it first,  
The wrist is parted from the hand that  
waved,  
The feet unmortised from their ankle-  
bones  
Who paced it, ages back: but will ye  
hear  
The legend as in guerdon for your  
rhyme?

'There lived a king in the most  
Eastern East,  
Less old than I, yet older, for my  
blood  
Hath earnest in it of far springs to be.  
A tawny pirate anchor'd in his port,  
Whose bark had plunder'd twenty  
nameless isles;  
And passing one, at the high peep of  
dawn,  
He saw two cities in a thousand  
boats  
All fighting for a woman on the sea.  
And pushing his black craft among  
them all,  
He lightly scatter'd theirs and brought  
her off,  
With loss of half his people arrow-  
slain;  
A maid so smooth, so white, so won-  
derful,  
They said a light came from her when  
she moved:  
And since the pirate would not yield  
her up,  
The King impaled him for his piracy;  
Then made her Queen: but those  
isle-nurtured eyes  
Waged such unwilling tho' successful  
war  
On all the youth, they sicken'd; coun-  
cils thinn'd,  
And armies waned, for magnet-like  
she drew  
The rustiest iron of old fighters'  
hearts;  
And beasts themselves would wor-  
ship; camels knelt

Unbidden, and the brutes of mountain  
back  
That carry kings in castles, bow'd  
black knees  
Of homage, ringing with their serpent  
hands,  
To make her smile, her golden ankle-  
bells.  
What wonder, being jealous, that he  
sent  
His horns of proclamation out thro'  
all  
The hundred under-kingdoms that he  
sway'd  
To find a wizard who might teach the  
King  
Some charm, which being wrought  
upon the Queen  
Might keep her all his own: to such a  
one  
He promised more than ever king has  
given,  
A league of mountain full of golden  
mines,  
A province with a hundred miles of  
coast,  
A palace and a princess, all for him:  
But on all those who tried and fail'd,  
the King  
Pronounced a dismal sentence, mean-  
ing by it  
To keep the list low and pretenders  
back,  
Or like a king, not to be trifled with—  
Their heads should moulder on the  
city gates.  
And many tried and fail'd, because  
the charm  
Of nature in her overbore their own:  
And many a wizard brow bleach'd on  
the walls:  
And many weeks a troop of carrion  
crows  
Hung like a cloud above the gateway  
towers.'

And Vivien breaking in upon him-  
said:  
'I sit and gather honey; yet, me,  
thinks,  
Thy tongue has tript a little: ask thy-  
self.  
The lady never made *unwilling* war

With those fine eyes: she had her  
 pleasure in it,  
 And made her good man jealous with  
 good cause.  
 And lived there neither dame nor  
 damsel then  
 Wroth at a lover's loss? were all  
 as tame,  
 I mean, as noble, as their Queen was  
 fair?  
 Not one to flirt a venom at her eyes,  
 Or pinch a murderous dust into her  
 drink,  
 Or make her paler with a poison'd  
 rose?  
 Well, those were not our days: but  
 did they find  
 A wizard? Tell me, was he like to  
 thee?'

She ceased, and made her lithe arm  
 round his neck  
 Tighten, and then drew back, and let  
 her eyes  
 Speak for her, glowing on him, like a  
 bride's  
 On her new lord, her own, the first of  
 men.

He answer'd laughing, 'Nay, not  
 like to me.  
 At last they found—his foragers for  
 charms—  
 A little glassy-headed hairless man,  
 Who lived alone in a great wild on  
 grass;  
 Read but one book, and ever reading  
 grew  
 So grated down and filed away with  
 thought.  
 So lean his eyes were monstrous;  
 while the skin  
 Clung but to crate and basket, ribs  
 and spine.  
 And since he kept his mind on one  
 sole aim,  
 Nor ever touch'd fierce wine, nor  
 tasted flesh,  
 Nor own'd a sensual wish, to him the  
 wall  
 That sunders ghosts and shadow-  
 casting men

Became a crystal, and he saw them  
 thro' it,  
 And heard their voices talk behind,  
 the wall,  
 And learnt their elemental secrets,  
 powers  
 And forces; often o'er the sun's bright  
 eye  
 Drew the vast eyelid of an inky  
 cloud,  
 And lash'd it at the base with slanting  
 storm;  
 Or in the noon of mist and driving  
 rain,  
 When the lake whiten'd and the pine-  
 wood roar'd,  
 And the cairn'd mountain was a  
 shadow, sunn'd  
 The world to peace again: here was  
 the man.  
 And so by force they dragg'd him to  
 the King.  
 And then he taught the King to charm  
 the Queen  
 In such-wise, that no man could see  
 her more,  
 Nor saw she save the King, who  
 wrought the charm,  
 Coming and going, and she lay as  
 dead,  
 And lost all use of life: but when the  
 King  
 Made proffer of the league of golden  
 mines,  
 The province with a hundred miles of  
 coast,  
 The palace and the princess, that old  
 man  
 Went back to his old wild, and lived  
 on grass,  
 And vanished, and his book came  
 down to me.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling  
 saucily:  
 'Ye have the book: the charm is  
 written in it:  
 Good: take my counsel: let me know  
 it at once:  
 For keep it like a puzzle chest in  
 chest,  
 With each chest lock'd and padlock'd  
 thirty-fold,

And whelm all this beneath as vast a mound  
 As after a furious battle turfs the slain  
 On some wild down above the windy deep,  
 I yet should strike upon a sudden means  
 To dig, pick, open, find and read the charm:  
 Then, if I tried it, who should blame me then?'

And smiling as a master smiles at one  
 That is not of his school, nor any school  
 But that where blind and naked Ignorance  
 Delivers brawling judgments, unashamed,  
 On all things all day long, he answer'd her:

'Thou read the book, my pretty Vivien!  
 O ay, it is but twenty pages long,  
 But every page having an ample marge,  
 And every marge enclosing in the midst  
 A square of text that looks a little blot,  
 The text no larger than the limbs of fleas;  
 And every square of text an awful charm,  
 Writ in a language that has long gone by.  
 So long, that mountains have arisen since  
 With cities on their flanks—thou read the book!  
 And every margin scribbled, crost, and cramm'd  
 With comment, densest condensation, hard  
 To mind and eye; but the long sleepless nights  
 Of my long life have made it easy to me.  
 And none can read the text, not even I;

And none can read the comment but myself;  
 And in the comment did I find the charm.  
 O, the results are simple; a mere child  
 Might use it to the harm of anyone,  
 And never could undo it: ask no more:  
 For tho' you should not prove it upon me,  
 But keep that oath ye sware, ye might, perchance,  
 Assay it on some one of the Table Round,  
 And all because ye dream they babble of you.'

And Vivien, frowning in true anger, said:  
 'What dare the full-fed liars say of me?  
 They ride abroad redressing human wrongs!  
 They sit with knife in meat and wine in horn!  
 They bound to holy vows of chastity!  
 Were I not woman, I could tell a tale.  
 But you are man, you well can understand  
 The shame that cannot be explain'd for shame.  
 Not one of all the drove should touch me: swine!'

Then answer'd Merlin careless of her words:  
 'You breathe but accusation vast and vague,  
 Spleen-born, I think, and proofless. If ye know,  
 Set up the charge ye know, to stand or fall!'

And Vivien answer'd frowning wrathfully:  
 'O ay, what say ye to Sir Valence, him  
 Whose kinsman left him watcher o'er his wife  
 And two fair babes, and went to distant lands;  
 Was one year gone, and on returning found  
 Not two but three? there lay the reckling, one

But one hour old! What said the  
happy sire?  
A seven-months' babe had been a truer  
gift.  
Those twelve sweet moons confused  
his fatherhood.'

Then answer'd Merlin, 'Nay, I  
know the tale.  
Sir Valence wedded with an outland  
dame:  
Some cause had kept him sunder'd  
from his wife:  
One child they had: it lived with her:  
she died:  
His kinsman travelling on his own  
affair  
Was charged by Valence to bring  
home the child.  
He brought, not found it therefore:  
take the truth.'

'O ay,' said Vivien, 'overtue a tale.  
What say ye then to sweet Sir Sagra-  
more,  
That ardent man? "to pluck the  
flower in season,"  
So says the song, "I trow it is no trea-  
son."  
O Master, shall we call him overquick  
To crop his own sweet rose before the  
hour?'

And Merlin answer'd, 'Overquick  
art thou  
To catch a loathly plume fall'n from  
the wing  
Of that foul bird of rapine whose whole  
prey  
Is man's good name: he never wrong'd  
his bride.  
I know the tale. An angry gust of  
wind  
Puff'd out his torch among the myriad-  
room'd  
And many-corridor'd complexities  
Of Arthur's palace: then he found a  
door,  
And darkling felt the sculptured orna-  
ment  
That wreathen round it made it seem  
his own;

And wearied out made for the couch  
and slept,  
A stainless man beside a stainless  
maid;  
And either slept, nor knew of other  
there;  
Till the high dawn piercing the royal  
rose  
In Arthur's casement glimmer'd  
chastely down,  
Blushing upon them blushing, and at  
once  
He rose without a word and parted  
from her:  
But when the thing was blazed about  
the court,  
The brute world howling forced them  
into bonds,  
And as it chanced they are happy, be-  
ing pure.'

'O ay,' said Vivien, 'that were likely  
too.  
What say ye then to fair Sir Percivale  
And of the horrid foulness that he  
wrought,  
The saintly youth, the spotless lamb  
of Christ,  
Or some black wether of St. Satan's  
fold.  
What, in the precincts of the chapel-  
yard,  
Among the knightly brasses of the  
graves,  
And by the cold Hic Jacets of the  
dead!'

And Merlin answer'd careless of her  
charge,  
'A sober man is Percivale and pure;  
But once in life was fluster'd with new  
wine,  
Then paced for coolness in the chapel-  
yard;  
Where one of Satan's shepherdesses  
caught  
And meant to stamp him with her  
master's mark;  
And that he sinned is not believable;  
For, look upon his face!—but it is  
sim'd,  
The sin that practice burns into the  
blood,

And not the one dark hour which  
brings remorse,  
Will brand us, after, of whose fold we  
be:  
Or else were he, the holy king, whose  
hymns  
Are chanted in the minster, worse than  
all.  
But is your spleen froth'd out, or have  
ye more?'

And Vivien answer'd frowning yet  
in wrath:  
'O ay; what say ye to Sir Lancelot,  
friend  
Traitor or true? that commerce with  
the Queen,  
I ask you, is it clamor'd by the child,  
Or whisper'd in the corner do ye  
know it?'

To which he answer'd sadly, 'yea, I  
know it.  
Sir Lancelot went ambassador, at first,  
To fetch her, and she watch'd him from  
her walls.  
A rumor runs, she took him for the  
King,  
So fixt her fancy on him: let them be.  
But have ye no one word of loyal  
praise  
For Arthur, blameless King and stain-  
less man?'

She answer'd with a low and chuck-  
ling laugh:  
'Man! is he man at all, who knows  
and winks?  
Sees what his fair bride is and does,  
and winks?  
By which the good King means to  
blind himself,  
And blinds himself and all the Table  
Round  
To all the foulness that they work.  
Myself  
Could call him (were it not for woman-  
hood)  
The pretty, popular name such man-  
hood earns,  
Could call him the main cause of all  
their crime;

Yea, were he not crown'd King,  
coward, and fool.'

Then Merlin to his own heart, loath-  
ing, said:  
'O true and tender! O my liege and  
King!  
O selfless man and stainless gentle-  
man,  
Who wouldst against thine own eye-  
witness fain  
Have all men true and leal, all women  
pure;  
How, in the mouths of base interpre-  
ters,  
From over-fineness not intelligible  
To things with every sense as false and  
foul  
As the poach'd filth that floods the  
middle street,  
Is thy white blamelessness accounted  
blame!'

But Vivien, deeming Merlin over-  
borne  
By instance, recommenced, and let her  
tongue  
Rage like a fire among the noblest  
names,  
Polluting, and imputing her whole self,  
Defaming and defacing, till she left  
Not even Lancelot brave, nor Gala-  
had clean.

Her words had issue other than she  
will'd.  
He dragg'd his eyebrow bushes down,  
and made  
A snowy penthouse for his hollow  
eyes,  
And mutter'd in himself, 'Tell *her* the  
charm!  
So, if she had it, would she rail on me  
To snare the next, and if she have it  
not  
So will she rail. What did the wan-  
ton say?  
"Not mount as high;" we scarce can  
sink as low:  
For men at most differ as Heaven and  
earth,  
But women, worst and best, as Heaven  
and Hell.

I know the Table Round, my friends  
 of old;  
 All brave, and many generous, and  
 some chaste.  
 She cloaks the scar of some repulse  
 with lies;  
 I well believe she tempted them and  
 fail'd,  
 Being so bitter: for fine plots may fail,  
 Tho' harlots paint their talk as well  
 as face  
 With colors of the heart that are not  
 theirs.  
 I will not let her know: nine tithes  
 of times  
 Face-flatterer and backbiter are the  
 same.  
 And they, sweet soul, that most im-  
 pute a crime  
 Are pronest to it, and impute them-  
 selves,  
 Wanting the mental range; or low  
 desire  
 Not to feel lowest makes them level  
 all;  
 Yea, they would pare the mountain to  
 the plain,  
 To leave an equal baseness; and in  
 this  
 Are harlots like the crowd, that if  
 they find  
 Some stain or blemish in a name of  
 note,  
 Not grieving that their greatest are so  
 small,  
 Inflate themselves with some insane  
 delight,  
 And judge all nature from her feet of  
 clay,  
 Without the will to lift their eyes, and  
 see  
 Her godlike head crown'd with spir-  
 itual fire,  
 And touching other worlds. I am  
 weary of her.'

He spoke in words part heard, in  
 whispers part,  
 Half-suffocated in the hoary fell  
 And many-winter'd fleece of throat  
 and chin.  
 But Vivien, gathering somewhat of  
 his mood,

And hearing 'harlot' mutter'd twice  
 or thrice,  
 Leapt from her session on his lap, and  
 stood  
 Stiff as a viper frozen; loathsome  
 sight,  
 How from the rosy lips of life and  
 love,  
 Flash'd the bare-grinning skeleton of  
 death!  
 White was her cheek; sharp breaths  
 of anger puff'd  
 Her fairy nostril out; her hand half-  
 clench'd  
 Went faltering sideways downward to  
 her belt,  
 And feeling; had she found a dagger  
 there  
 (For in a wink the false love turns to  
 hate)  
 She would have stabb'd him; but she  
 found it not:  
 His eye was calm, and suddenly she  
 took  
 To bitter weeping like a beaten child,  
 A long, long weeping, not consolable.  
 Then her false voice made way,  
 broken with sobs:

'O crueller than was ever told in  
 tale,  
 Or sung in song! O vainly lavish'd  
 love!  
 O cruel, there was nothing wild or  
 strange,  
 Or seeming shameful—for what shame  
 in love,  
 So love be true, and not as yours is—  
 nothing  
 Poor Vivien had not done to win his  
 trust  
 Who call'd her what he call'd her—  
 all her crime,  
 All—all—the wish to prove him  
 wholly hers.'

She mused a little, and then clapt  
 her hands  
 Together with a wailing shriek, and  
 said:  
 'Stabb'd through the heart's affec-  
 tions to the heart!



Seethed like the kid in its own moth-  
 er's milk !  
 Kill'd with a word worse than a life  
 of blows !  
 I thought that he was gentle, being  
 great :  
 O God, that I had loved a smaller  
 man !  
 I should have found in him a greater  
 heart.  
 O, I, that flattering my true passion,  
 saw  
 The knights, the court, the King, dark  
 in your light,  
 Who loved to make men darker than  
 they are,  
 Because of that high pleasure which  
 I had  
 To seat you sole upon my pedestal  
 Of worship—I am answer'd, and  
 henceforth  
 The course of life that seem'd so  
 flowery to me  
 With you for guide and master, only  
 you,  
 Becomes the sea-cliff pathway broken  
 short,  
 And ending in a ruin—nothing left,  
 But into some low cave to crawl, and  
 there,  
 If the wolf spare me, weep my life  
 away,  
 Kill'd with inutterable unkindness.'

She paused, she turn'd away, she  
 hung her head,  
 The snake of gold slid from her hair,  
 the braid  
 Slipt and uncoil'd itself, she wept  
 afresh,  
 And the dark wood grew darker  
 toward the storm  
 In silence, while his anger slowly died  
 Within him, till he let his wisdom go  
 For ease of heart, and half believed  
 her true :  
 Call'd her to shelter in the hollow oak,  
 'Come from the storm,' and having  
 no reply,  
 Gazed at the heaving shoulder, and  
 the face  
 Hand-hidden, as for utmost grief or  
 shame ;

Then thrice essay'd, by tenderest-  
 touching terms,  
 To sleek her ruffled peace of mind, in  
 vain.  
 At last she let herself be conquer'd by  
 him,  
 And as the cageling newly flown re-  
 turns,  
 The seeming-injured simple-hearted  
 thing  
 Came to her old perch back, and set-  
 tled there.  
 There while she sat, half-falling from  
 his knees,  
 Half-nestled at his heart, and since he  
 saw  
 The slow tear creep from her closed  
 eyelid yet,  
 About her, more in kindness than in  
 love,  
 The gentle wizard cast a shielding  
 arm.  
 But she dislink'd herself at once and  
 rose,  
 Her arms upon her breast across, and  
 stood,  
 A virtuous gentlewoman deeply  
 wrong'd,  
 Upright and flush'd before him : then  
 she said :

'There must be now no passages of  
 love  
 Betwixt us twain henceforward ever-  
 more ;  
 Since, if I be what I am grossly  
 call'd,  
 What should be granted which your  
 own gross heart  
 Would reckon worth the taking? I  
 will go.  
 In truth, but one thing now—better  
 have died  
 Thrice than have ask'd it once—could  
 make me stay—  
 That proof of trust—so often ask'd in  
 vain !  
 How justly, after that vile term of  
 yours,  
 I find with grief! I might believe you  
 then,  
 Who knows? once more. Lo! what  
 was once to me

Mere matter of the fancy, now hath  
 grown  
 The vast necessity of heart and life.  
 Farewell; think gently of me, for I  
 fear  
 My fate or folly, passing gayer youth  
 For one so old, must be to love thee  
 still.  
 But ere I leave thee let me swear once  
 more  
 That if I schemed against thy peace  
 in this,  
 May you just heaven, that darkens  
 o'er me, send  
 One flash, that, missing all things else,  
 may make  
 My scheming brain a cinder, if I lie.

Scarce had she ceased, when out of  
 heaven a bolt  
 (For now the storm was close above  
 them) struck,  
 Furrowing a giant oak, and javelining  
 With darted spikes and splinters of  
 the wood  
 The dark earth round. He raised his  
 eyes and saw  
 The tree that shone white-listed thro'  
 the gloom.  
 But Vivien, fearing heaven had heard  
 her oath,  
 And dazzled by the livid-flickering  
 fork,  
 And deafen'd with the stammering  
 cracks and claps  
 That follow'd, flying back and crying  
 out,  
 'O Merlin, tho' you do not love me,  
 save,  
 Yet save me!' clung to him and  
 hugg'd him close;  
 And call'd him dear protector in her  
 fright,  
 Nor yet forgot her practice in her  
 fright,  
 But wrought upon his mood and  
 hugg'd him close.  
 The pale blood of the wizard at her  
 touch  
 Took gayer colors, like an opal  
 warm'd.  
 She blamed herself for telling hearsay  
 tales:

She shook from fear, and for her fault  
 she wept  
 Of petulancy; she call'd him lord and  
 liege,  
 Her seer, her bard, her silver star of  
 eve,  
 Her God, her Merlin, the one passion-  
 ate love  
 Of her whole life; and ever overhead  
 Bellow'd the tempest, and the rotten  
 branch  
 Snapt in the rushing of the river-rain  
 Above them; and in change of glare  
 and gloom  
 Her eyes and neck glittering went and  
 came;  
 Till now the storm, its burst of passion  
 spent,  
 Moaning and calling out of other  
 lands,  
 Had left the ravaged woodland yet  
 once more  
 To peace; and what should not have  
 been had been,  
 For Merlin, overtalk'd and overworn,  
 Had yielded, told her all the charm,  
 and slept.

Then, in one moment, she put forth  
 the charm  
 Of woven paces and of waving hands,  
 And in the hollow oak he lay as dead,  
 And lost to life and use and name and  
 fame.

Then crying 'I have made his glory  
 mine,'  
 And shrieking out 'O fool!' the har-  
 lot leapt  
 Adown the forest, and the thicket  
 closed  
 Behind her, and the forest echo'd:  
 'fool.'

#### LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

ELAINE the fair, Elaine the loveable,  
 Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,  
 High in her chamber up a tower to  
 the east  
 Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot;

Which first she placed where morn-  
 ing's earliest ray  
 Might strike it, and awake her with  
 the gleam;  
 Then fearing rust or soilure fashion'd  
 for it  
 A case of silk, and braided there-  
 upon  
 All the devices blazon'd on the shield  
 In their own tinct, and added, of her  
 wit,  
 A border fantasy of branch and flower,  
 And yellow-throated nestling in the  
 nest,  
 Nor rested thus content, but day by  
 day,  
 Leaving her household and good  
 father, climb'd  
 That eastern tower, and entering  
 barr'd her door,  
 Stript off the case, and read the naked  
 shield,  
 Now guess'd a hidden meaning in his  
 arms,  
 Now made a pretty history to herself  
 Of every dint a sword had beaten in  
 it,  
 And every scratch a lance had made  
 upon it,  
 Conjecturing when and where: this  
 cut is fresh;  
 That ten years back; this dealt him at  
 Caerlyle;  
 That at Caerleon; this at Camelot:  
 And ah God's mercy, what a stroke  
 was there!  
 And here a thrust that might have  
 kill'd, but God  
 Broke the strong lance, and roll'd his  
 enemy down,  
 And saved him: so she lived in fan-  
 tasy.

How came the lily maid by that  
 good shield  
 Of Lancelot, she that knew not ev'n  
 his name?  
 He left it with her, when he rode to  
 tilt  
 For the great diamond in the diamond  
 jousts,  
 Which Arthur had ordain'd, and by  
 that name

Had named them, since a diamond  
 was the prize.

For Arthur, long before they  
 crown'd him King,  
 Roving the trackless realms of Lyon-  
 nesse,  
 Had found a glen, gray boulder and  
 black tarn.  
 A horror lived about the tarn, and  
 clave  
 Like its own mists to all the mountain  
 side:  
 For here two brothers, one a king,  
 had met  
 And fought together; but their names  
 were lost;  
 And each had slain his brother at a  
 blow;  
 And down they fell and made the glen  
 abhor'd:  
 And there they lay till all their bones  
 were bleach'd,  
 And lichen'd into color with the  
 crags:  
 And he, that once was king, had on a  
 crown  
 Of diamonds, one in front, and four  
 aside.  
 And Arthur came, and laboring up  
 the pass,  
 All in a misty moonshine, unawares  
 Had trodden that crown'd skeleton,  
 and the skull  
 Brake from the nape, and from the  
 skull the crown  
 Roll'd into light, and turning on its  
 rims  
 Fled like a glittering rivulet to the  
 tarn:  
 And down the shingly scaur he  
 plunged, and caught,  
 And set it on his head, and in his  
 heart  
 Heard murmurs, 'Lo, thou likewise  
 shalt be King.'

Thereafter, when a King, he had  
 the gems  
 Pluck'd from the crown, and show'd  
 them to his knights,  
 Saying, 'These jewels, whereupon I  
 chanced

Divinely, are the kingdom's, not the  
 King's—  
 For public use: henceforward let  
 there be,  
 Once every year, a joust for one of  
 these:  
 For so by nine years' proof we needs  
 must learn  
 Which is our mightiest, and ourselves  
 shall grow  
 In use of arms and manhood, till we  
 drive  
 The heathen, who, some say, shall  
 rule the land  
 Hereafter, which God hinder.' Thus  
 he spoke:  
 And eight years past, eight jousts had  
 been, and still  
 Had Lancelot won the diamond of  
 the year,  
 With purpose to present them to the  
 Queen,  
 When all were won; but meaning all  
 at once  
 To snare her royal fancy with a  
 boon  
 Worth half her realm, had never  
 spoken word.

Now for the central diamond and  
 the last  
 And largest, Arthur, holding then his  
 court  
 Hard on the river nigh the place  
 which now  
 Is this world's hugest, let proclaim a  
 joust  
 At Camelot, and when the time drew  
 nigh  
 Spake (for she had been sick) to  
 Guinevere,  
 'Are you so sick, my Queen, you can-  
 not move  
 To these fair jousts?' 'Yea, lord,'  
 she said, 'ye know it.'  
 'Then will ye miss,' he answer'd,  
 'the great deeds  
 Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the  
 fists,  
 A sight ye love to look on.' And the  
 Queen  
 Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt  
 languidly

On Lancelot, where he stood beside  
 the King.  
 He thinking that he read her meaning  
 there,  
 'Stay with me, I am sick; my love is  
 more  
 Than many diamonds,' yielded; and  
 a heart  
 Love-loyal to the least wish of the  
 Queen  
 (However much he yearn'd to make  
 complete  
 The tale of diamonds for his destined  
 boon)  
 Urged him to speak against the truth,  
 and say,  
 'Sir King, mine ancient wound is  
 hardly whole,  
 And lets me from the saddle;' and  
 the King  
 Glanced first at him, then her, and  
 went his way.  
 No sooner gone than suddenly she  
 began:

'To blame, my lord Sir Lancelot,  
 much to blame!  
 Why go ye not to these fair jousts?  
 the knights  
 Are half of them our enemies, and  
 the crowd  
 Will murmur, "Lo the shameless  
 ones, who take  
 Their pastime now the trustful King  
 is gone!"'  
 Then Lancelot vext at having lied in  
 vain:  
 'Are ye so wise? ye were not once so  
 wise,  
 My Queen, that summer, when ye  
 loved me first.  
 Then of the crowd ye took no more  
 account  
 Than of the myriad cricket of the  
 mead,  
 When its own voice clings to each  
 blade of grass,  
 And every voice is nothing. As to  
 knights,  
 Them surely can I silence with all ease.  
 But now my loyal worship is allow'd  
 Of all men: many a bard, without  
 offence,

Has link'd our names together in his  
lay,  
Lancelot, the flower of bravery,  
Guinevere,  
The pearl of beauty: and our knights  
at feast  
Have pledged us in this union, while  
the King  
Would listen smiling. How then?  
is there more?  
Has Arthur spoken aught? or would  
yourself,  
Now weary of my service and devoir,  
Henceforth be truer to your faultless  
lord?'

She broke into a little scornful  
laugh:  
'Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the fault-  
less King,  
That passionate perfection, my good  
lord—  
But who can gaze upon the Sun in  
heaven?  
He never spake word of reproach to  
me,  
He never had a glimpse of mine  
untruth,  
He cares not for me: only here  
to-day  
There gleam'd a vague suspicion in  
his eyes:  
Some meddling rogue has tamper'd  
with him—else  
Rapt in this fancy of his Table  
Round,  
And swearing men to vows impossi-  
ble,  
To make them like himself: but,  
friend, to me  
He is all fault who hath no fault at all:  
For who loves me must have a touch  
of earth;  
The low sun makes the color: I am  
yours,  
Not Arthur's, as ye know, save by the  
bond.  
And therefore hear my words: go to  
the jousts:  
The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break  
our dream  
When sweetest; and the vermin  
voices here

May buzz so loud—we scorn them,  
but they sting.'

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief  
of knights:  
'And with what face, after my pretext  
made,  
Shall I appear, O Queen, at Camelot, I  
Before a King who honors his own  
word,  
As if it were his God's?'

'Yea,' said the Queen,  
'A moral child without the craft to  
rule,  
Else had he not lost me: but listen to  
me,  
If I must find you wit: we hear it  
said  
That men go down before your spear  
at a touch,  
But knowing you are Lancelot; your  
great name,  
This conquers: hide it therefore; go  
unknown:  
Win! by this kiss you will: and our  
true King  
Will then allow your pretext, O my  
knight,  
As all for glory; for to speak him  
true,  
Ye know right well, how meek soe'er  
he seem,  
No keener hunter after glory breathes.  
He loves it in his knights more than  
himself:  
They prove to him his work: win and  
return.'

Then got Sir Lancelot suddenly to  
horse,  
Wroth at himself. Not willing to be  
known,  
He left the barren-beaten thorough-  
fare,  
Chose the green path that show'd the  
rarer foot,  
And there among the solitary downs,  
Full often lost in fancy, lost his way;  
Till as he traced a faintly-shadow'd  
track,  
That all in loops and links among the  
dales

Ran to the Castle of Astolat, he saw  
Fired from the west, far on a hill, the  
towers.

Thither he made, and blew the gate-  
way horn.

Then came an old, dumb, myriad-  
wrinkled man,

Who let him into lodging and dis-  
arm'd.

And Lancelot marvell'd at the word-  
less man;

And issuing found the Lord of Astolat  
With two strong sons, Sir Torre and  
Sir Lavaine,

Moving to meet him in the castle  
court;

And close behind them stept the lily  
maid

Elaine, his daughter: mother of the  
house

There was not: some light jest  
among them rose

With laughter dying down as the  
great knight

Approach'd them: then the Lord of  
Astolat:

'Whence comest thou, my guest, and  
by what name

Livest between the lips? for by thy  
state

And presence I might guess thee  
chief of those,

After the King, who eat in Arthur's  
halls.

Him have I seen: the rest, his Table  
Round,

Known as they are, to me they are  
unknown.'

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief  
of knights:

Known am I, and of Arthur's hall,  
and known,

What I by mere mischance have  
brought, my shield.

But since I go to joust as one un-  
known

At Camelot for the diamond, ask me  
not,

Hereafter ye shall know me—and the  
shield—

I pray you lend me one, if such you  
have,

Blank, or at least with some device  
not mine.'

Then said the Lord of Astolat,  
'Here is Torre's:

Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir  
Torre.

And so, God wot, his shield is blank  
enough.

His ye can have.' Then added plain  
Sir Torre,

'Yea, since I cannot use it, ye may  
have it.'

Here laugh'd the father saying, 'Fie,  
Sir Churl,

Is that an answer for a noble knight?  
Allow him! but Lavaine, my younger

here,

He is so full of lusthood, he will ride,  
Joust for it, and win, and bring it in

an hour,

And set it in this damsel's golden hair,  
To make her thrice as wilful as be-  
fore.'

'Nay, father, nay good father,  
shame me not

Before this noble knight,' said young  
Lavaine,

'For nothing. Surely I but play'd on  
Torre:

He seem'd so sullen, vext he could  
not go:

A jest, no more! for, knight, the  
maiden dreamt

That some one put this diamond in  
her hand,

And that it was too slippery to be held,  
And slipt and fell into some pool or

stream,

The castle-well, belike; and then I  
said

That *if* I went and *if* I fought and  
won it

(But all was jest and joke among our-  
selves)

Then must she keep it safelier. All  
was jest.

But, father, give me leave, an if he  
will,

To ride to Camelot with this noble  
knight:

Win shall I not, but do my best to win:

Young as I am, yet would I do my best.'

'So ye will grace me,' answer'd Lancelot,  
Smiling a moment, 'with your fellowship  
O'er these waste downs whereon I lost myself,  
Then were I glad of you as guide and friend:  
And you shall win this diamond,—as I hear  
It is a fair large diamond,—if ye may,  
And yield it to this maiden, if ye will.'  
'A fair large diamond,' added plain Sir Torre,  
'Such be for queens, and not for simple maids.'  
Then she, who held her eyes upon the ground,  
Elaine, and heard her name so tost about,  
Flush'd slightly at the slight disparagement  
Before the stranger knight, who, looking at her,  
Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus return'd:  
'If what is fair be but for what is fair,  
And only queens are to be counted so,  
Rash were my judgment then, who deem this maid  
Might wear as fair a jewel as is on earth,  
Not violating the bond of like to like.'

He spoke and ceased: the lily maid Elaine,  
Won by the mellow voice before she look'd,  
Lifted her eyes, and read his lineaments.  
The great and guilty love he bare the Queen,  
In battle with the love he bare his lord,  
Had marr'd his face, and mark'd it ere his time.  
Another sinning on such heights with one,  
The flower of all the west and all the world,

Had been the sleeker for it: but in him  
His mood was often like a fiend, and rose  
And drove him into wastes and solitudes  
For agony, who was yet a living soul.  
Marr'd as he was, he seem'd the goodliest man  
That ever among ladies ate in hall,  
And noblest, when she lifted up her eyes.  
However marr'd, of more than twice her years,  
Seem'd with an ancient swordcut on the cheek,  
And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up her eyes  
And loved him, with that love which was her doom.

Then the great knight, the darling of the court,  
Loved of the loveliest, into that rude hall  
Stept with all grace, and not with half disdain  
Hid under grace, as in a smaller time,  
But kindly man moving among his kind:  
Whom they with meats and vintage of their best  
And talk and minstrel melody entertain'd.  
And much they ask'd of court and Table Round,  
And ever well and readily answer'd he:  
But Lancelot, when they glanced at Guinevere,  
Suddenly speaking of the wordless man,  
Heard from the Baron that, ten years before,  
The heathen caught and reft him of his tongue.  
'He learnt and warn'd me of their fierce design  
Against my house, and him they caught and maim'd;  
But I, my sons, and little daughter fled  
From bonds or death, and dwelt among the woods

By the great river in a boatman's hut.  
 Dnil days were those, till our good  
 Arthur broke  
 The Pagan yet once more on Badon  
 hill.'

'O there, great lord, doubtless,' La-  
 vaine said, rapt  
 By all the sweet and sudden passion  
 of youth  
 Toward greatness in its elder, 'you  
 have fought.  
 O tell us—for we live apart—you know  
 Of Arthur's glorious wars.' And  
 Lancelot spoke  
 And answer'd him at full, as having  
 been  
 With Arthur in the fight which all  
 day long  
 Rang by the white mouth of the vio-  
 lent Glem;  
 And in the four loud battles by the  
 shore  
 Of Duglas; that on Bassa; then the  
 war  
 That thunder'd in and out the gloomy  
 skirts  
 Of Celidon the forest; and again  
 By castle Gurnion, where the glori-  
 ous King  
 Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's  
 Head,  
 Carved of one emerald center'd in a  
 sun  
 Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he  
 breathed;  
 And at Caerleon had he help'd his  
 lord,  
 When the strong neighings of the  
 wild white Horse  
 Set every gilded parapet shuddering;  
 And up in Agned-Cathregonion too,  
 And down the waste sand-shores of  
 Trath Treroit,  
 Where many a heathen fell; 'and on  
 the mount  
 Of Badon I myself beheld the King  
 Charge at the head of all his Table  
 Round,  
 And all his legions crying Christ and  
 him,  
 And break them; and I saw him,  
 after, stand

High on a heap of slain, from spur to  
 plume  
 Red as the rising sun with heathen  
 blood,  
 And seeing me, with a great voice he  
 cried,  
 "They are broken, they are broken!"  
 for the King,  
 However mild he seems at home, nor  
 cares  
 For triumph in our mimic wars, the  
 jousts—  
 For if his own knight cast him down,  
 he laughs  
 Saying, his knights are better men  
 than he—  
 Yet in this heathen war the fire of  
 God  
 Fills him: I never saw his like: there  
 lives  
 No greater leader.'

While he utter'd this,  
 Low to her own heart said the lily  
 maid,  
 'Save your great self, fair lord;' and  
 when he fell  
 From talk of war to traits of pleas-  
 antry—  
 Being mirthful he, but in a stately  
 kind—  
 She still took note that when the liv-  
 ing smile  
 Died from his lips, across him came a  
 cloud  
 Of melancholy severe, from which  
 again,  
 Whenever in her hovering to and fro  
 The lily maid had striven to make  
 him cheer,  
 There brake a sudden-beaming ten-  
 derness  
 Of manners and of nature: and she  
 thought  
 That all was nature, all, perchance, for  
 her.  
 And all night long his face before her  
 lived,  
 As when a painter, poring on a face,  
 Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the  
 man  
 Behind it, and so paints him that his  
 face,



The shape and color of a mind and life,  
Lives for his children, ever at its best  
And fullest; so the face before her lived,  
Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence,  
Of noble things, and held her from her sleep.  
Till rathe she rose, half-cheated in the thought  
She needs must bid farewell to sweet Lavaine.  
First as in fear, step after step, she stole  
Down the long tower-stairs, hesitating:  
Anon, she heard Sir Lancelot cry in the court,  
'This shield, my friend, where is it?' and Lavaine  
Past inward, as she came from out the tower.  
There to his proud horse Lancelot turn'd, and smooth'd  
The glossy shoulder, humming to himself.  
Half-envious of the flattering hand, she drew  
Nearer and stood. He look'd, and more amazed  
Than if seven men had set upon him, saw  
The maiden standing in the dewy light.  
He had not dream'd she was so beautiful.  
Then came on him a sort of sacred fear,  
For silent, tho' he greeted her, she stood  
Rapt on his face as if it were a God's.  
Suddenly flash'd on her a wild desire,  
That he should wear her favor at the tilt.  
She braved a riotous heart in asking for it.  
'Fair lord, whose name I know not—noble it is,  
I well believe, the noblest—will you wear  
My favor at this tourney?' 'Nay,' said he,

'Fair lady, since I never yet have worn  
Favor of any lady in the lists.  
Such is my wont, as those, who know me, know.'  
'Yea, so,' she answer'd; 'then in wearing mine  
Needs must be lesser likelihood, noble lord,  
That those who know should know you.' And he turn'd  
Her counsel up and down within his mind,  
And found it true, and answer'd, 'True, my child.  
Well, I will wear it: fetch it out to me:  
What is it?' and she told him 'A red sleeve  
Broider'd with pearls,' and brought it: then he bound  
Her token on his helmet, with a smile  
Saying, 'I never yet have done so much  
For any maiden living,' and the blood  
Sprang to her face and fill'd her with delight;  
But left her all the paler, when Lavaine  
Returning brought the yet-unblazon'd shield,  
His brother's; which he gave to Lancelot,  
Who parted with his own to fair Elaine:  
'Do me this grace, my child, to have my shield  
In keeping till I come.' 'A grace to me,  
She answer'd, 'twice to-day. I am your squire!  
Whereat Lavaine said, laughing, 'Lily maid,  
For fear our people call you lily maid  
In earnest, let me bring your color back;  
Once, twice, and thrice: now get you hence to bed.'  
So kiss'd her, and Sir Lancelot his own hand,  
And thus they moved away: she stay'd a minute,  
Then made a sudden step to the gate, and there—

Her bright hair blown about the serious face  
 Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's kiss—  
 Paused by the gateway, standing near the shield  
 In silence, while she watch'd their arms far-off  
 Sparkle, until they dipt below the downs.  
 Then to her tower she climb'd, and took the shield,  
 There kept it, and so lived in fantasy.

Meanwhile the new companions past away  
 Far o'er the long backs of the bushless downs,  
 To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived a knight  
 Not far from Camelot, now for forty years  
 A hermit, who had pray'd, labor'd and pray'd,  
 And ever laboring had scoop'd himself  
 In the white rock a chapel and a hall  
 On massive columns, like a shorecliff cave,  
 And cells and chambers: all were fair and dry;  
 The green light from the meadows underneath  
 Struck up and lived along the milky roofs;  
 And in the meadows tremulous aspen-trees  
 And poplars made a noise of falling showers.  
 And thither wending there that night they bode.

But when the next day broke from underground,  
 And shot red fire and shadows thro' the cave,  
 They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and rode away:  
 Then Lancelot saying, 'Hear, but hold my name  
 Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the Lake,'  
 Abash'd Lavaine, whose instant reverence,

Dearer to true young hearts than their own praise,  
 But left him leave to stammer, 'Is it indeed?'  
 And after muttering 'The great Lancelot,'  
 At last he got his breath and answer'd,  
 'One,  
 One have I seen—that other, our liege lord,  
 The dread Pendragon, Britain's King of kings,  
 Of whom the people talk mysteriously,  
 He will be there—then were I stricken blind  
 That minute, I might say that I had seen.'

So spake Lavaine, and when they reach'd the lists  
 By Camelot in the meadow, let his eyes  
 Run thro' the peopled gallery which half round  
 Lay like a rainbow fall'n upon the grass,  
 Until they found the clear-faced King, who sat  
 Robed in red samite, easily to be known,  
 Since to his crown the golden dragon clung,  
 And down his robe the dragon writhed in gold,  
 And from the carven-work behind him crept  
 Two dragons gilded, sloping down to make  
 Arms for his chair, while all the rest of them  
 Thro' knots and loops and folds innumerable  
 Fled ever thro' the woodwork, till they found  
 The new design wherein they lost themselves,  
 Yet with all ease, so tender was the work:  
 And, in the costly canopy o'er him set,  
 Blazed the last diamond of the nameless king.

Then Lancelot answer'd young Lavaine and said,

'Me you call great: mine is the firmer seat,  
The truer lance: but there is many a youth  
Now crescent, who will come to all I am  
And overcome it; and in me there dwells  
No greatness, save it be some far-off touch  
Of greatness to know well I am not great:  
There is the man.' And Lavaine gaped upon him  
As on a thing miraculous, and anon  
The trumpets blew; and then did either side,  
They that assail'd, and they that held the lists,  
Set lance in rest, strike spur, suddenly move,  
Meet in the midst, and there so furiously  
Shock, that a man far-off might well perceive,  
If any man that day were left afield,  
The hard earth shake, and a low thunder of arms.  
And Lancelot bode a little, till he saw  
Which were the weaker; then he hurl'd into it  
Against the stronger: little need to speak  
Of Lancelot in his glory! King, duke, earl,  
Count, baron—whom he smote, he overthrew.

But in the field were Lancelot's kith and kin,  
Ranged with the Table Round that held the lists,  
Strong men, and wrathful that a stranger knight  
Should do and almost overdo the deeds  
Of Lancelot; and one said to the other, 'Lo!  
What is he? I do not mean the force alone—  
The grace and versatility of the man!

Is it not Lancelot?' 'When has Lancelot worn  
Favor of any lady in the lists? Not such his wont, as we, that know him, know.'  
'How then? who then?' a fury seized them all,  
A fiery family passion for the name  
Of Lancelot, and a glory one with theirs.  
They couch'd their spears and prick'd their steeds, and thus,  
Their plumes driv'n backward by the wind they made  
In moving, all together down upon him  
Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North-sea,  
Green-glimmering toward the summit, bears, with all  
Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies,  
Down on a bark, and overbears the bark,  
And him that helms it, so they overbore  
Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a spear  
Down-glancing lamed the charger, and a spear  
Prick'd sharply his own cuirass, and the head  
Pierced thro' his side, and there snapt, and remain'd.

Then Sir Lavaine did well and worshipfully;  
He bore a knight of old repute to the earth,  
And brought his horse to Lancelot where he lay.  
He up the side, sweating with agony, got,  
But thought to do while he might yet endure,  
And being lustily holpen by the rest,  
His party,—tho' it seem'd half-miracle  
To those he fought with,—drave his kith and kin,  
And all the Table Round that held the lists,  
Back to the barrier; then the trumpets blew

Proclaiming his the prize, who wore  
 the sleeve  
 Of scarlet, and the pearls; and all the  
 knights,  
 His party, cried 'Advance and take  
 thy prize  
 The diamond;' but he answer'd,  
 'Diamond me  
 No diamonds! for God's love, a little  
 air!  
 Prize me no prizes, for my prize is  
 death!  
 Hence will I, and I charge you, follow  
 me not.'

He spoke, and vanish'd suddenly  
 from the field  
 With young Lavaine into the poplar  
 grove.  
 There from his charger down he slid,  
 and sat,  
 Gasping to Sir Lavaine, 'Draw the  
 lance-head:'  
 'Ah my sweet lord Sir Lancelot,' said  
 Lavaine,  
 'I dread me, if I draw it, you will  
 die.'  
 But he, 'I die already with it: draw—  
 Draw,'—and Lavaine drew, and Sir  
 Lancelot gave  
 A marvellous great shriek and ghastly  
 groan,  
 And half his blood burst forth, and  
 down he sank  
 For the pure pain, and wholly swoon'd  
 away.  
 Then came the hermit out and bare  
 him in,  
 There stanch'd his wound; and there,  
 in daily doubt  
 Whether to live or die, for many a  
 week  
 Hid from the wide world's rumor by  
 the grove  
 Of poplars with their noise of falling  
 showers,  
 And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he  
 lay.

But on that day when Lancelot fled  
 the lists,  
 His party, knights of utmost North  
 and West,

Lords of waste marches, kings of  
 desolate isles,  
 Came round their great Pendragon,  
 saying to him,  
 'Lo, Sire, our knight, thro' whom we  
 won the day,  
 Hath gone sore wounded, and hath  
 left his prize  
 Untaken, crying that his prize is  
 death.'  
 'Heaven hinder,' said the King, 'that  
 such an one,  
 So great a knight as we have seen to-  
 day—  
 He seem'd to me another Lancelot—  
 Yea, twenty times I thought him  
 Lancelot—  
 He must not pass uncared for.  
 Wherefore, rise,  
 O Gawain, and ride forth and find the  
 knight.  
 Wounded and wearied needs must he  
 be near.  
 I charge you that you get at once to  
 horse.  
 And, knights and kings, there breathes  
 not one of you  
 Will deem this prize of ours is rashly  
 given:  
 His prowess was too wondrous. We  
 will do him  
 No customary honor: since the knight  
 Came not to us, of us to claim the  
 prize,  
 Ourselves will send it after. Rise and  
 take  
 This diamond, and deliver it, and  
 return,  
 And bring us where he is, and how  
 he fares,  
 And cease not from your quest until  
 ye find.'

So saying, from the carven flower  
 above,  
 To which it made a restless heart, he  
 took,  
 And gave, the diamond: then from  
 where he sat  
 At Arthur's right, with smiling face  
 arose,  
 With smiling face and frowning heart  
 a Prince

In the mid might and flourish of his  
 May,  
 Gawain, surnamed The Courteous,  
 fair and strong,  
 And after Lancelot, Tristram, and  
 Geraint  
 And Gareth, a good knight, but there-  
 withal  
 Sir Modred's brother, and the child of  
 Lot,  
 Nor often loyal to his word, and  
 now  
 Wroth that the King's command to  
 sally forth  
 In quest of whom he knew not, made  
 him leave  
 The banquet, and concourse of knights  
 and kings.

So all in wrath he got to horse and  
 went;  
 While Arthur to the banquet, dark in  
 mood,  
 Past, thinking 'Is it Lancelot who  
 hath come  
 Despite the wound he spake of, all for  
 gain  
 Of glory, and hath added wound to  
 wound,  
 And ridd'n away to die?' So fear'd  
 the King,  
 And, after two days' tarriance there,  
 return'd.  
 Then when he saw the Queen,  
 embracing ask'd,  
 'Love, are you yet so sick?' 'Nay,  
 lord,' she said.  
 'And where is Lancelot?' Then the  
 Queen amazed,  
 'Was he not with you? won he not  
 your prize?'  
 'Nay, but one like him.' 'Why that  
 like was he.'  
 And when the King demanded how  
 she knew,  
 Said, 'Lord, no sooner had ye parted  
 from us,  
 Than Lancelot told me of a common  
 talk  
 That men went down before his spear  
 at a touch,  
 But knowing he was Lancelot; his  
 great name

Conquer'd; and therefore would he  
 hide his name  
 From all men, ev'n the King, and to  
 this end  
 Had made the pretext of a hindering  
 wound,  
 That he might joust unknown of all,  
 and learn  
 If his old prowess were in aught  
 decay'd;  
 And added, 'Our true Arthur, when  
 he learns,  
 Will well allow my pretext, as for  
 gain  
 Of purer glory.'"

Then replied the King:  
 'Far lovelier in our Lancelot had it  
 been,  
 In lieu of idly dallying with the truth,  
 To have trusted me as he hath trusted  
 thee.  
 Surely his King and most familiar  
 friend  
 Might well have kept his secret.  
 True, indeed,  
 Albeit I know my knights fantastical,  
 So fine a fear in our large Lancelot  
 Must needs have moved my laughter:  
 now remains  
 But little cause for laughter: his own  
 kin—  
 Ill news, my Queen, for all who love  
 him, this!—  
 His kith and kin, not knowing, set  
 upon him;  
 So that he went sore wounded from  
 the field:  
 Yet good news too: for goodly hopes  
 are mine  
 That Lancelot is no more a lonely  
 heart.  
 He wore, against his wont, upon his  
 helm  
 A sleeve of scarlet, broider'd with  
 great pearls,  
 Some gentle maiden's gift.'

'Yea, lord,' she said,  
 'Thy hopes are mine,' and saying  
 that, she choked,  
 And sharply turn'd about to hide her  
 face,

Past to her chamber, and there flung  
herself  
Down on the great King's couch, and  
writhed upon it,  
And clench'd her fingers till they bit  
the palm,  
And shriek'd out 'Traitor' to the  
unhearing wall,  
Then flash'd into wild tears, and rose  
again,  
And moved about her palace, proud  
and pale.

Gawain the while thro' all the  
region round  
Rode with his diamond, wearied of  
the quest,  
Touch'd at all points, except the  
poplar grove,  
And came at last, tho' late, to Asto-  
lat:  
Whom glittering in enamell'd arms  
the maid  
Glanced at, and cried, 'What news  
from Camelot, lord?  
What of the knight with the red  
sleeve?' 'He won.'  
'I knew it,' she said. 'But parted  
from the jousts  
Hurt in the side,' whereat she caught  
her breath;  
Thro' her own side she felt the sharp  
lance go;  
Thereon she smote her hand: well-  
nigh she swoon'd:  
And, while he gazed wonderingly at  
her, came  
The Lord of Astolat out, to whom  
the Prince  
Reported who he was, and on what  
quest  
Sent, that he bore the prize and could  
not find  
The victor, but had ridd'n a random  
round  
To seek him, and had wearied of the  
search.  
To whom the Lord of Astolat, 'Bide  
with us,  
And ride no more at random, noble  
Prince!  
Here was the knight, and here he left  
a shield;

This will he send or come for:  
furthermore  
Our son is with him; we shall hear  
anon,  
Needs must we hear.' To this the  
courteous Prince  
Accorded with his wonted courtesy,  
Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it,  
And stay'd; and cast his eyes on fair  
Elaine:  
Where could be found face daintier?  
then her shape  
From forehead down to foot, perfect  
—again  
From foot to forehead exquisitely  
turn'd:  
'Well—if I bide, lo! this wild flower  
for me!'  
And oft they met among the garden  
yews,  
And there he set himself to play upon  
her  
With sallying wit, free flashes from a  
height  
Above her, graces of the court, and  
songs,  
Sighs, and slow smiles, and golden  
eloquence  
And amorous adulation, till the maid  
Rebell'd against it, saying to him,  
'Prince,  
O loyal nephew of our noble King,  
Why ask you not to see the shield he  
left,  
Whence you might learn his name?  
Why slight your King,  
And lose the quest he sent you on,  
and prove  
No surer than our falcon yesterday,  
Who lost the hern we slipt her at, and  
went  
To all the winds?' 'Nay, by mine  
head,' said he,  
'I lose it, as we lose the lark in  
heaven,  
O damsel, in the light of your blue  
eyes;  
But an ye will it let me see the  
shield.'  
And when the shield was brought,  
and Gawain saw  
Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crown'd  
with gold,

Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh,  
and mock'd :  
'Right was the King! our Lancelot!  
that true man!'  
'And right was I,' she answer'd  
merrily, 'I,  
Who dream'd my knight the greatest  
knight of all.'  
'And if I dream'd,' said Gawain,  
'that you love  
This greatest knight, your pardon!  
lo, ye know it!  
Speak therefore: shall I waste myself  
in vain?'  
Full simple was her answer, 'What  
know I?  
My brethren have been all my fellow-  
ship;  
And I, when often they have talk'd of  
love,  
Wish'd it had been my mother, for  
they talk'd,  
Meseem'd, of what they knew not;  
so myself—  
I know not if I know what true love  
is,  
But if I know, then, if I love not  
him,  
I know there is none other I can love.'  
'Yea, by God's death,' said he, 'ye  
love him well,  
But would not, knew ye what all  
others know,  
And whom he loves.' 'So be it,'  
cried Elaine,  
And lifted her fair face and moved  
away:  
But he pursued her, calling, 'Stay a  
little!  
One golden minute's grace! he wore  
your sleeve:  
Would he break faith with one I may  
not name?  
Must our true man change like a leaf  
at last?  
Nay—like enow: why then, far be it  
from me  
To cross our mighty Lancelot in his  
loves!  
And, damsel, for I deem you know  
full well  
Where your great knight is hidden, let  
me leave

My quest with you; the diamond also:  
here!  
For if you love, it will be sweet to  
give it;  
And if he love, it will be sweet to have  
it  
From your own hand; and whether he  
love or not,  
A diamond is a diamond. Fare you  
well  
A thousand times!—a thousand times  
farewell!  
Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we  
two  
May meet at court hereafter: there, I  
think,  
So ye will learn the courtesies of the  
court,  
We two shall know each other.'

Then he gave,  
And slightly kiss'd the hand to which  
he gave,  
The diamond, and all wearied of the  
quest  
Leapt on his horse, and carolling as  
he went  
A true-love ballad, lightly rode away.

Thence to the court he past; there  
told the King  
What the King knew, 'Sir Lancelot  
is the knight.'  
And added, 'Sire, my liege, so much I  
learnt;  
But fail'd to find him tho' I rode all  
round  
The region: but I lighted on the maid  
Whose sleeve he wore; she loves  
him; and to her,  
Deeming our courtesy is the truest  
law,  
I gave the diamond: she will render  
it;  
For by mine head she knows his hid-  
ing-place.'

The seldom-frowning King frown'd,  
and replied,  
'Too courteous truly! ye shall go no  
more  
On quest of mine, seeing that ye for-  
get

Obedience is the courtesy due to kings.'

He spake and parted. Wroth, but all in awe,  
For twenty strokes of the blood, without a word,

Linger'd that other, staring after him;  
Then shook his hair, strode off, and buzz'd abroad  
About the maid of Astolat, and her love.

All ears were prick'd at once, all tongues were loosed -

'The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lancelot,  
Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Astolat.'

Some read the King's face, some the Queen's, and all

Had marvel what the maid might be, but most

Predoom'd her as unworthy. One old dame

Came suddenly on the Queen with the sharp news.

She, that had heard the noise of it before,

But sorrowing Lancelot should have have stoop'd so low,  
Marr'd her friend's aim with pale tranquillity.

So ran the tale like fire about the court,

Fire in dry stubble a nine-days' wonder flared:

Till ev'n the knights at banquet twice or thrice

Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the Queen,

And pledging Lancelot and the lily maid

Smiled at each other, while the Queen, who sat

With lips severely placid, felt the knot  
Climb in her throat, and with her feet unseen

Crush'd the wild passion out against the floor

Beneath the banquet, where the meats became

As wormwood, and she hated all who pledged.

But far away the maid in Astolat,  
Her guiltless rival, she that ever kept  
The one-day-seen Sir Lancelot in her heart,

Crept to her father, while he mused alone,

Sat on his knee, stroked his gray face and said,

'Father, you call me wilful, and the fault

Is yours who let me have my will, and now,

Sweet father, will you let me lose my wits?'

'Nay,' said he, 'surely.' 'Wherefore, let me hence,'

She answer'd, 'and find out our dear Lavaine.'

'Ye will not lose your wits for dear Lavaine:

Bide,' answer'd he: 'we needs must hear anon

Of him, and of that other.' 'Ay,' she said,

'And of that other, for I needs must hence

And find that other, wheresoe'er he be,

And with mine own hand give his diamond to him,

Lest I be found as faithless in the quest

As you proud Prince who left the quest to me.

Sweet father, I behold him in my dreams

Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,

Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's aid.

The gentler-born the maiden, the more bound,

My father, to be sweet and serviceable

To noble knights in sickness, as ye know

When these have worn their tokens: let me hence

I pray you.' Then her father nodding said,

'Ay, ay, the diamond: wit ye well, my child,  
Right fain were I to learn this knight were whole,



Being our greatest: yea, and you  
must give it—  
And sure I think this fruit is hung too  
high  
For any mouth to gape for save a  
queen's—  
Nay, I mean nothing: so then, get  
you gone,  
Being so very wilful you must go.'

Lightly, her suit allow'd, she slipt  
away,  
And while she made her ready for her  
ride,  
Her father's latest word humm'd in  
her ear,  
'Being so very wilful you must go,'  
And changed itself and echo'd in her  
heart,  
'Being so very wilful you must die.'  
But she was happy enough and shook  
it off,  
As we shake off the bee that buzzes at  
us;  
And in her heart she answer'd it and  
said,  
'What matter, so I help him back to  
life?'  
Then far away with good Sir Torre  
for guide  
Rode o'er the long backs of the bush-  
less downs  
To Camelot, and before the city-gates  
Came on her brother with a happy face  
Making a roan horse caper and curvet  
For pleasure all about a field of flow-  
ers:  
Whom when she saw, 'Lavaine,' she  
cried, 'Lavaine,  
How fares my lord Sir Lancelot?'  
He amazed,  
'Torre and Elaine! why here? Sir  
Lancelot!  
How know ye my lord's name is  
Lancelot?'  
But when the maid had told him all  
her tale,  
Then turn'd Sir Torre, and being in  
his moods  
Left them, and under the strange-  
stated gate,  
Where Arthur's wars were render'd  
mystically,

Past up the still rich city to his kin,  
His own far blood, which dwelt at  
Camelot;  
And her, Lavaine across the poplar  
grove  
Led to the caves: there first she saw  
the casque  
Of Lancelot on the wall: her scarlet  
sleeve,  
Tho' carved and cut, and half the  
pearls away,  
Stream'd from it still; and in her  
heart she laugh'd,  
Because he had not loosed it from his  
helm,  
But meant once more perchance to  
tourney in it.  
And when they gain'd the cell wherein  
he slept,  
His battle-writhen arms and mighty  
hands  
Lay naked on the wolfskin, and a  
dream  
Of dragging down his enemy made  
them move.  
Then she that saw him lying unsleek,  
unshorn,  
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of him-  
self,  
Utter'd a little tender dolorous cry.  
The sound not wonted in a place so  
still  
Woke the sick knight, and while he  
roll'd his eyes  
Yet blank from sleep, she started to  
him, saying,  
'Your prize the diamond sent you by  
the King:'  
His eyes glisten'd: she fancied 'Is it  
for me?'  
And when the maid had told him all  
the tale  
Of King and Prince, the diamond  
sent, the quest  
Assign'd to her not worthy of it, she  
knelt  
Full lowly by the corners of his bed,  
And laid the diamond in his open  
hand.  
Her face was near, and as we kiss the  
child  
That does the task assign'd, he kiss'd  
her face.

At once she slipt like water to the floor.  
 'Alas,' he said, 'your ride hath wearied you.  
 Rest must you have.' 'No rest for me,' she said;  
 Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at rest.  
 What might she mean by that? his large black eyes,  
 Yet larger thro' his leanness, dwelt upon her,  
 Till all her heart's sad secret blazed itself  
 In the heart's colors on her simple face;  
 And Lancelot look'd and was perplex in mind,  
 And being weak in body said no more;  
 But did not love the color; woman's love,  
 Save one, he not regarded, and so turn'd  
 Sighing, and feign'd a sleep until he slept.

Then rose Elaine and glided thro' the fields,  
 And past beneath the weirdly-sculptured gates  
 Far up the dim rich city to her kin;  
 There bode the night: but woke with dawn, and past  
 Down thro' the dim rich city to the fields,  
 Thence to the cave: so day by day she past  
 In either twilight ghost-like to and fro  
 Gliding, and every day she tended him,  
 And likewise many a night: and Lancelot  
 Would, tho' he call'd his wound a little hurt  
 Whereof he should be quickly whole, at times  
 Brain-feverous in his heat and agony, seem  
 Uncourteous, even he: but the meek maid  
 Sweetly forbore him ever, being to him

Meeker than any child to a rough nurse,  
 Milder than any mother to a sick child,  
 And never woman yet, since man's first fall,  
 Did kindlier unto man, but her deep love  
 Upbore her; till the hermit, skill'd in all  
 The simples and the science of that time,  
 Told him that her fine care had saved his life.  
 And the sick man forgot her simple blush,  
 Would call her friend and sister, sweet Elaine,  
 Would listen for her coming and regret  
 Her parting step, and held her tenderly,  
 And loved her with all love except the love  
 Of man and woman when they love their best,  
 Closest and sweetest, and had died the death  
 In any knightly fashion for her sake.  
 And peradventure had he seen her first  
 She might have made this and that other world  
 Another world for the sick man; but now  
 The shackles of an old love straiten'd him,  
 His honor rooted in dishonor stood,  
 And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.

Yet the great knight in his mid-sickness made  
 Full many a holy vow and pure resolve.  
 These, as but born of sickness, could not live:  
 For when the blood ran lustier in him again,  
 Full often the bright image of one face,  
 Making a treacherous quiet in his heart,

Dispersed his resolution like a cloud.  
 Then if the maiden, while that  
 ghostly grace  
 Beam'd on his fancy, spoke, he  
 answer'd not,  
 Or short and coldly, and she knew  
 right well  
 What the rough sickness meant, but  
 what this meant  
 She knew not, and the sorrow dimm'd  
 her sight,  
 And drave her ere her time across the  
 fields  
 Far into the rich city, where alone  
 She murmur'd, 'Vain, in vain: it  
 cannot be.  
 He will not love me: how then?  
 must I die?'  
 Then as a little helpless innocent  
 bird,  
 That has but one plain passage of few  
 notes,  
 Will sing the simple passage o'er and  
 o'er  
 For all an April morning, till the ear  
 Wearies to hear it, so the simple  
 maid  
 Went half the night repeating, 'Must  
 I die?'  
 And now to right she turn'd, and now  
 to left,  
 And found no ease in turning or in  
 rest;  
 And 'Him or death,' she mutter'd,  
 'death or him,'  
 Again and like a burthen, 'Him or  
 death.'

But when Sir Lancelot's deadly  
 hurt was whole,  
 To Astolat returning rode the three.  
 There morn by morn, arraying her  
 sweet self  
 In that wherein she deem'd she look'd  
 her best,  
 She came before Sir Lancelot, for she  
 thought  
 'If I be loved, these are my festal  
 robes.  
 If not, the flowers before he  
 fall.'  
 And Lancelot ever prest upon the  
 maid

That she should ask some goodly gift  
 of him  
 For her own self or hers; 'and do  
 not shun  
 To speak the wish most near to your  
 true heart;  
 Such service have ye done me, that I  
 make  
 My will of yours, and Prince and  
 Lord am I  
 In mine own land, and what I will I  
 can.'  
 Then like a ghost she lifted up her face,  
 But like a ghost without the power to  
 speak.  
 And Lancelot saw that she withheld  
 her wish,  
 And bode among them yet a little  
 space  
 Till he should learn it; and one morn  
 it chanced  
 He found her in among the garden  
 yews,  
 And said, 'Delay no longer, speak  
 your wish,  
 Seeing I go to-day:' then out she  
 brake:  
 'Going? and we shall never see you  
 more.  
 And I must die for want of one bold  
 word.'  
 'Speak: that I live to hear,' he said,  
 'is yours.'  
 Then suddenly and passionately she  
 spoke:  
 'I have gone mad. I love you: let  
 me die.'  
 'Ah, sister,' answer'd Lancelot, 'what  
 is this?'  
 And innocently extending her white  
 arms,  
 'Your love,' she said, 'your love—to  
 be your wife.'  
 And Lancelot answer'd, 'Had I  
 chosen to wed,  
 I had been wedded earlier, sweet  
 Elaine:  
 But now there never will be wife of  
 mine.'  
 'No, no,' she cried, 'I care not to be  
 wife,  
 But to be with you still, to see your  
 face,

To serve you, and to follow you thro'  
the world.'  
And Lancelot answer'd, 'Nay, the  
world, the world,  
All ear and eye, with such a stupid  
heart  
To interpret ear and eye, and such a  
tongue  
To blare its own interpretation—nay,  
Full ill then should I quit your  
brother's love,  
And your good father's kindness.'  
And she said,  
'Not to be with you, not to see your  
face—  
Alas for me then, my good days are  
done.'  
'Nay, noble maid,' he answer'd, 'ten  
times nay!  
This is not love: but love's first flash  
in youth,  
Most common: yea, I know it of  
mine own self:  
And you yourself will smile at your  
own self  
Hereafter, when you yield your flower  
of life  
To one more fitly yours, not thrice  
your age:  
And then will I, for true you are and  
sweet  
Beyond mine old belief in womanhood,  
More specially should your good  
knight be poor,  
Endow you with broad land and terri-  
tory  
Even to the half my realm beyond the  
seas,  
So that would make you happy: fur-  
thermore,  
Ev'n to the death, as tho' ye were my  
blood,  
In all your quarrels will I be your  
knight.  
This will I do, dear damsel, for your  
sake,  
And more than this I cannot.'

While he spoke  
She neither blush'd nor shook, but  
deathly-pale  
Stood grasping what was nearest, then  
replied:

'Of all this will I nothing;' and so  
fell,  
And thus they bore her swooning to  
her tower.

Then spake, to whom thro' those  
black walls of yew  
Their talk had pierced, her father:  
'Ay, a flash,  
I fear me, that will strike my blossom  
dead.  
Too courteous are ye, fair Lord Lance-  
lot.  
I pray you, use some rough discour-  
tesy  
To blunt or break her passion.'

Lancelot said,  
'That were against me: what I can I  
will;'  
And there that day remain'd, and to-  
ward even  
Sent for his shield: full meekly rose  
the maid,  
Stript off the case, and gave the naked  
shield;  
Then, when she heard his horse upon  
the stones,  
Unclasping flung the casement back,  
and look'd  
Down on his helm, from which her  
sleeve had gone.  
And Lancelot knew the little clinking  
sound;  
And she by tact of love was well aware  
That Lancelot knew that she was look-  
ing at him.  
And yet he glanced not up, nor waved  
his hand,  
Nor bad farewell, but sadly rode  
away.  
This was the one discourtesy that he  
used.

So in her tower alone the maiden sat:  
His very shield was gone; only the  
case,  
Her own poor work, her empty labor,  
left.  
But still she heard him, still his pic-  
ture form'd  
And grew between her and the pict-  
ured wall.

Then came her father, saying in low tones,  
 'Have comfort,' whom she greeted quietly.  
 Then came her brethren saying, 'Peace to thee,  
 Sweet sister,' whom she answer'd with all calm.  
 But when they left her to herself again,  
 Death, like a friend's voice from a distant field  
 Approaching thro' the darkness, call'd; the owls  
 Wailing had power upon her, and she mixt  
 Her fancies with the sallow-rifted glooms  
 Of evening, and the moanings of the wind.

And in those days she made a little song,  
 And call'd her song 'The Song of Love and Death,'  
 And sang it: sweetly could she make and sing.

'Sweet is true love tho' given in vain, in vain;  
 And sweet is death who puts an end to pain:  
 I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

'Love, art thou sweet? then bitter death must be:  
 Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death to me.  
 O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

'Sweet love, that seems not made to fade away,  
 Sweet death, that seems to make us loveless clay,  
 I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

'I fain would follow love, if that could be;  
 I needs must follow death, who calls for me;  
 Call and I follow, I follow! let me die.'

High with the last line scaled her voice, and this,  
 All in a fiery dawning wild with wind  
 That shook her tower, the brothers heard, and thought  
 With shuddering, 'Hark the Phantom of the house  
 That ever shrieks before a death,' and call'd  
 The father, and all three in hurry and fear  
 Ran to her, and lo! the blood-red light of dawn  
 Flared on her face, she shrilling, 'Let me die!'

As when we dwell upon a word we know,  
 Repeating, till the word we know so well  
 Becomes a wonder, and we know not why,  
 So dwelt the father on her face, and thought  
 'Is this Elaine?' till back the maiden fell,  
 Then gave a languid hand to each, and lay,  
 Speaking a still good-morrow with her eyes.  
 At last she said, 'Sweet brothers, yesternight  
 I seem'd a curious little maid again,  
 As happy as when we dwelt among the woods,  
 And when ye used to take me with the flood  
 Up the great river in the boatman's boat.  
 Only ye would not pass beyond the cape  
 That has the poplar on it: there ye fixt  
 Your limit, oft returning with the tide.  
 And yet I cried because ye would not pass  
 Beyond it, and far up the shining flood  
 Until we found the palace of the King.  
 And yet ye would not; but this night I dream'd  
 That I was all alone upon the flood,  
 And then I said, "Now shall I have my will:"

And there I woke, but still the wish  
remain'd.  
So let me hence that I may pass at  
last  
Beyond the poplar and far up the  
flood,  
Until I find the palace of the King.  
There will I enter in among them all,  
And no man there will dare to mock  
at me;  
But there the fine Gawain will wonder  
at me,  
And there the great Sir Lancelot  
muse at me;  
Gawain, who bad a thousand farewells  
to me,  
Lancelot, who coldly went, nor bad  
me one:  
And there the King will know me and  
my love,  
And there the Queen herself will pity  
me,  
And all the gentle court will welcome  
me,  
And after my long voyage I shall  
rest!

'Peace,' said her father, 'O my  
child, ye seem  
Light-headed, for what force is yours  
to go  
So far, being sick? and wherefore  
would ye look  
On this proud fellow again, who scorns  
us all?'

Then the rough Torre began to  
heave and move,  
And bluster into stormy sobs and say,  
'I never loved him: an I meet with  
him,  
I care not howsoever great he be,  
Then will I strike at him and strike  
him down,  
Give me good fortune, I will strike  
him dead,  
For this discomfort he hath done the  
house.'

To whom the gentle sister made  
reply,  
'Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor  
be wroth,

Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's  
fault  
Not to love me, than it is mine to love  
Him of all men who seems to me the  
highest.'

'Highest?' the father answer'd,  
echoing 'highest?'  
(He meant to break the passion in  
her) 'nay,  
Daughter, I know not what you call  
the highest;  
But this I know, for all the people  
know it,  
He loves the Queen, and in an open  
shame:  
And she returns his love in open  
shame;  
If this be high, what is it to be low?'

Then spake the lily maid of Asto-  
lat:  
'Sweet father, all too faint and sick  
am I  
For anger: these are slanders: never  
yet  
Was noble man but made ignoble  
talk.  
He makes no friend who never made  
a foe.  
But now it is my glory to have loved  
One peerless, without stain: so let me  
pass,  
My father, howso'er I seem to you,  
Not all unhappy, having loved God's  
best  
And greatest, tho' my love had no  
return:  
Yet, seeing you desire your child to  
live,  
Thanks, but you work against your  
own desire;  
For if I could believe the things you  
say  
I should but die the sooner; where-  
fore cease,  
Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly  
man  
Hither, and let me shrive me clean,  
and die.'

So when the ghostly man had come  
and gone,

She with a face, bright as for sin for-  
 given,  
 Besought Lavaine to write as she  
 devised  
 A letter, word for word; and when he  
 ask'd  
 'Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear  
 lord?  
 Then will I bear it gladly;' she  
 replied,  
 'For Lancelot and the Queen and all  
 the world,  
 But I myself must bear it.' Then he  
 wrote  
 The letter she devised; which being  
 writ  
 And folded, 'O sweet father, tender  
 and true,  
 Deny me not,' she said—'ye never yet  
 Denied my fancies—this, however  
 strange,  
 My latest: lay the letter in my hand  
 A little ere I die, and close the hand  
 Upon it; I shall guard it even in  
 death.  
 And when the heat is gone from out  
 my heart,  
 Then take the little bed on which I  
 died  
 For Lancelot's love, and deck it like  
 the Queen's  
 For richness, and me also like the  
 Queen  
 In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.  
 And let there be prepared a chariot-  
 bier  
 To take me to the river, and a barge  
 Be ready on the river, clothed in black.  
 I go in state to court, to meet the  
 Queen.  
 There surely I shall speak for mine  
 own self,  
 And none of you can speak for me so  
 well.  
 And therefore let our dumb old man  
 alone  
 Go with me, he can steer and row, and  
 he  
 Will guide me to that palace, to the  
 doors.'

She ceased: her father promised;  
 whereupon

She grew so cheerful that they deem'd  
 her death  
 Was rather in the fantasy than the  
 blood.  
 But ten slow mornings past, and on  
 the eleventh  
 Her father laid the letter in her hand,  
 And closed the hand upon it, and she  
 died.  
 So that day there was dole in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from  
 underground,  
 Then, those two brethren slowly with  
 bent brows  
 Accompanying, the sad chariot-bier  
 Past like a shadow thro' the field, that  
 shone  
 Full-summer, to that stream whereon  
 the barge,  
 Pall'd all its length in blackest samite,  
 lay.  
 There sat the lifelong creature of the  
 house,  
 Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,  
 Winking his eyes, and twisted all his  
 face.  
 So those two brethren from the chariot  
 took  
 And on the black decks laid her in her  
 bed,  
 Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung  
 The silken case with braided blazon-  
 ings,  
 And kiss'd her quiet brows, and say-  
 ing to her  
 'Sister, farewell for ever,' and again  
 'Farewell, sweet sister,' parted all in  
 tears.  
 Then rose the dumb old servitor, and  
 the dead,  
 Oar'd by the dumb, went upward with  
 the flood—  
 In her right hand the lily, in her left  
 The letter—all her bright hair stream-  
 ing down—  
 And all the coverlid was cloth of gold  
 Drawn to her waist, and she herself in  
 white  
 All but her face, and that clear-feat-  
 ured face  
 Was lovely, for she did not seem as  
 dead,

But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she  
smiled.

That day Sir Lancelot at the palace  
craved  
Audience of Guinevere, to give at  
last  
The price of half a realm, his costly  
gift,  
Hard-won and hardly won with bruise  
and blow,  
With deaths of others, and almost his  
own,  
The nine-years-fought-for diamonds:  
for he saw  
One of her house, and sent him to the  
Queen  
Bearing his wish, whereto the Queen  
agreed  
With such and so unmoved a majesty  
She might have seem'd her statue, but  
that he,  
Low-drooping till he wellnigh kiss'd  
her feet  
For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye  
The shadow of some piece of pointed  
lace,  
In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the  
walls,  
And parted, laughing in his courtly  
heart.

All in an oriel on the summer side,  
Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward  
the stream,  
They met, and Lancelot kneeling  
utter'd, 'Queen,  
Lady, my liege, in whom I have my  
joy,  
Take, what I had not won except for  
you,  
These jewels, and make me happy,  
making them  
An armlet for the roundest arm on  
earth,  
Or necklace for a neck to which the  
swan's  
Is tawnier than her cygnet's: these  
are words:  
Your beauty is your beauty, and I  
sin  
In speaking, yet O grant my worship  
of it

Words, as we grant grief tears. Such  
sin in words  
Perchance, we both can pardon: but,  
my Queen,  
I hear of rumors flying thro' your  
court.  
Our bond, as not the bond of man  
and wife,  
Should have in it an absoluter trust  
To make up that defect: let rumors  
be:  
When did not rumors fly? these, as I  
trust  
That you trust me in your own noble-  
ness,  
I may not well believe that you  
believe.'

While thus he spoke, half turn'd  
away, the Queen  
Brake from the vast oriel-embowering  
vine  
Leaf after leaf, and tore, and cast  
them off,  
Till all the place whereon she stood  
was green;  
Then, when he ceased, in one cold  
passive hand  
Received at once and laid aside the  
gems  
There on a table near her, and  
replied:

'It may be, I am quicker of belief  
Than you believe me, Lancelot of the  
Lake.  
Our bond is not the bond of man and  
wife.  
This good is in it, whatso'er of  
ill,  
It can be broken easier. I for you  
This many a year have done despite  
and wrong  
To one whom ever in my heart of  
hearts  
I did acknowledge nobler. What are  
these?  
Diamonds for me! they had been  
thrice their worth  
Being your gift, had you not lost your  
own.  
To loyal hearts the value of all  
gifts





"THEY BORE UP THE BROAD STAIRS."—Page 79.



Must vary as the giver's. Not for  
me!  
For her! for your new fancy. Only  
this  
Grant me, I pray you: have your  
joys apart.  
I doubt not that however changed,  
you keep  
So much of what is graceful: and  
myself  
Would shun to break those bounds of  
courtesy  
In which as Arthur's Queen I move  
and rule:  
So cannot speak my mind. An end to  
this!  
A strange one! yet I take it with  
Amen.  
So pray you, add my diamonds to her  
pearls;  
Deck her with these; tell her, she  
shines me down:  
An armlet for an arm to which the  
Queen's  
Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck  
O as much fairer—as a faith once  
fair  
Was richer than these diamonds—  
hers not mine—  
Nay, by the mother of our Lord him-  
self,  
Or hers or mine, mine now to work  
my will—  
She shall not have them.'

Saying which she seized,  
And, thro' the casement standing  
wide for heat,  
Flung them, and down they flash'd,  
and smote the stream.  
Then from the smitten surface flash'd,  
as it were,  
Diamonds to meet them, and they  
past away.  
Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half  
disdain  
At love, life, all things, on the window  
ledge,  
Close underneath his eyes, and right  
across  
Where these had fallen, slowly past  
the barge  
Whereon the hily maid of Astolat

Lay smiling, like a star in blackest  
night.

But the wild Queen, who saw not,  
burst away  
To weep and wail in secret; and the  
barge,  
On to the palace-doorway sliding,  
paused.  
There two stood arm'd, and kept the  
door; to whom,  
All up the marble stair, tier over tier,  
Were added mouths that gaped, and  
eyes that ask'd  
'What is it?' but that oarsman's  
haggard face,  
As hard and still as is the face that  
men  
Shape to their fancy's eye from  
broken rocks  
On some cliff-side, appall'd them, and  
they said,  
'He is enchanted, cannot speak—and  
she,  
Look how she sleeps—the Fairy  
Queen, so fair!  
Yea, but how pale! what are they?  
flesh and blood?  
Or come to take the King to Fairy-  
land?  
For some do hold our Arthur cannot  
die,  
But that he passes into Fairyland.'

While thus they babbled of the  
King, the King  
Came girt with knights: then turn'd  
the tongueless man  
From the half-face to the full eye,  
and rose  
And pointed to the damsel, and the  
doors.  
So Arthur bad the meek Sir Percivale  
And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the  
maid;  
And reverently they bore her into  
hall.  
Then came the fine Gawain and  
wonder'd at her,  
And Lancelot later came and mused  
at her,  
And last the Queen herself, and pitied  
her:

But Arthur spied the letter in her hand,  
Stoop'd, took, brake seal, and read it;  
this was all:

'Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the Lake,  
I, sometime call'd the maid of Astolat,  
Come, for you left me taking no farewell,  
Hither, to take my last farewell of you.  
I loved you, and my love had no return,  
And therefore my true love has been my death.  
And therefore to our Lady Guinevere,  
And to all other ladies, I make moan:  
Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.  
Pray for my soul thou too, Sir Lancelot,  
As thou art a knight peerless.'

Thus he read;  
And ever in the reading, lords and dames  
Wept, looking often from his face who read  
To hers which lay so silent, and at times,  
So touch'd were they, half-thinking that her lips,  
Who had devised the letter, moved again.

Then freely spoke Sir Lancelot to them all:  
'My lord liege Arthur, and all ye that hear,  
Know that for this most gentle maiden's death  
Right heavy am I; for good she was and true,  
But loved me with a love beyond all love  
In women, whomsoever I have known.  
Yet to be loved makes not to love again;  
Not at my years, however it hold in youth.

I swear by truth and knighthood that I gave  
No cause, not willingly, for such a love:  
To this I call my friends in testimony,  
Her brethren, and her father, who himself  
Besought me to be plain and blunt, and use,  
To break her passion, some discourtesy  
Against my nature: what I could, I did.  
I left her and I bad her no farewell;  
Tho', had I dreamt the damsel would have died,  
I might have put my wits to some rough use,  
And help'd her from herself.'

Then said the Queen (Sea was her wrath, yet working after storm)  
'Ye might at least have done her so much grace,  
Fair lord, as would have help'd her from her death.'  
He raised his head, their eyes met and hers fell,  
He adding,  
'Queen, she would not be content Save that I wedded her, which could not be.  
Then might she follow me thro' the world, she ask'd;  
It could not be. I told her that her love  
Was but the flash of youth, would darken down  
To rise hereafter in a stiller flame  
Toward one more worthy of her— then would I,  
More specially were he, she wedded, poor,  
Estate them with large land and territory  
In mine own realm beyond the narrow seas,  
To keep them in all joyance: more than this  
I could not; this she would not, and she died.'

He pausing, Arthur answer'd, 'O  
my knight,  
It will be to thy worship, as my  
knight,  
And mine, as head of all our Table  
Round,  
To see that she be buried worship-  
fully.'

So toward that shrine which then in  
all the realm  
Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly  
went  
The marshall'd Order of their Table  
Round,  
And Lancelot sad beyond his wont, to  
see  
The maiden buried, not as one  
unknown,  
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obse-  
quies,  
And mass, and rolling music, like a  
queen.  
And when the knights had laid her  
comely head  
Low in the dust of half-forgotten  
kings,  
Then Arthur spake among them, 'Let  
her tomb  
Be costly, and her image thereupon,  
And let the shield of Lancelot at her  
feet  
Be carven, and her lily in her hand.  
And let the story of her dolorous  
voyage  
For all true hearts be blazon'd on her  
tomb  
In letters gold and azure!' which was  
wrought  
Thereafter; but when now the lords  
and dames  
And people, from the high door  
streaming, brake  
Disorderly, as homeward each, the  
Queen,  
Who mark'd Sir Lancelot where he  
moved apart,  
Drew near, and sigh'd in passing,  
'Lancelot,  
Forgive me; mine was jealousy in  
love.'  
He answer'd with his eyes upon the  
ground,

'That is love's curse; pass on, my  
Queen, forgiven.'  
But Arthur, who beheld his cloudy  
brows,  
Approach'd him, and with full affec-  
tion said,

'Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in  
whom I have  
Most joy and most affiance, for I know  
What thou hast been in battle by my  
side,  
And many a time have watch'd thee  
at the tilt  
Strike down the lusty and long prac-  
tised knight,  
And let the younger and unskill'd go  
by  
To win his honor and to make his  
name,  
And loved thy courtesies and thee, a  
man  
Made to be loved; but now I would  
to God,  
Seeing the homeless trouble in thine  
eyes,  
Thou couldst have loved this maiden,  
shaped, it seems,  
By God for thee alone, and from her  
face,  
If one may judge the living by the  
dead,  
Delicately pure and marvellously fair,  
Who might have brought thee, now a  
lonely man  
Wifeless and heirless, noble issue,  
sons  
Born to the glory of thy name and  
fame,  
My knight, the great Sir Lancelot of  
the Lake.'

Then answer'd Lancelot, 'Fair she  
was, my King,  
Pure, as you ever wish your knights  
to be.  
To doubt her fairness were to want an  
eye,  
To doubt her pureness were to want a  
heart—  
Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love  
Could bind him, but free love will not  
be bound.'

'Free love, so bound, were freest,'  
said the King.  
'Let love be free; free love is for the  
best:  
And, after heaven, on our dull side of  
death,  
What should be best, if not so pure a  
love  
Clothed in so pure a loveliness? yet  
thee  
She fail'd to bind, tho' being, as I  
think,  
Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I  
know.'

And Lancelot answer'd nothing, but  
he went,  
And at the inrunning of a little brook  
Sat by the river in a cove, and  
watch'd  
The high reed wave, and lifted up his  
eyes  
And saw the barge that brought her  
moving down,  
Far-off, a blot upon the stream, and  
said  
Low in himself, 'Ah simple heart and  
sweet,  
Ye loved me, damsel, surely with a  
love  
Far tenderer than my Queen's. Pray  
for thy soul?  
Ay, that will I. Farewell too—now at  
last—  
Farewell, fair lily. "Jealousy in  
love?"  
Not rather dead love's harsh heir,  
jealous pride?  
Queen, if I grant the jealousy as of  
love,  
May not your crescent fear for name  
and fame  
Speak, as it waxes, of a love that  
wanes?  
Why did the King dwell on my name  
to me?  
Mine own name shames me, seeming a  
reproach,  
Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake  
Caught from his mother's arms—the  
wondrous one  
Who passes thro' the vision of the  
night—

She chanted snatches of mysterious  
hymns  
Heard on the winding waters, eve and  
morn  
She kiss'd me saying, "Thou art fair,  
my child,  
As a king's son," and often in her  
arms  
She bare me, pacing on the dusky  
mere.  
Would she had drown'd me in it,  
where'er it be!  
For what am I? what profits me my  
name  
Of greatest knight? I fought for it,  
and have it:  
Pleasure to have it, none; to lose it,  
pain;  
Now grown a part of me: but what  
use in it?  
To make men worse by making my  
sin known?  
Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming  
great?  
Alas for Arthur's greatest knight, a  
man  
Not after Arthur's heart! I needs  
must break  
These bonds that so defame me: not  
without  
She wills it: would I, if she will'd it?  
nay,  
Who knows? but if I would not, then  
may God,  
I pray him, send a sudden Angel down  
To seize me by the hair and bear me  
far,  
And fling me deep in that forgotten  
mere,  
Among the tumbled fragments of the  
hills.'

So groan'd Sir Lancelot in remorse-  
ful pain,  
Not knowing he should die a holy  
man.

#### THE HOLY GRAIL.

FROM noiseful arms, and acts of  
prowess done  
In tournament or tilt, Sir Percivale,

Whom Arthur and his knighthood  
call'd The Pure,  
Had pass'd into the silent life of  
prayer,  
Praise, fast, and alms; and leaving for  
the cowl  
The helmet in an abbey far away  
From Camelot, there, and not long  
after, died.

And one, a fellow-monk among the  
rest,  
Ambrosius, loved him much beyond  
the rest,  
And honor'd him, and wrought into  
his heart  
A way by love that waken'd love within,  
To answer that which came: and as  
they sat  
Beneath a world-old yew-tree, darken-  
ing half  
The cloisters, on a gustful April morn  
That puff'd the swaying branches  
into smoke  
Above them, ere the summer when he  
died,  
The monk Ambrosius question'd Perci-  
vale:

'O brother, I have seen this yew-  
tree smoke,  
Spring after spring, for half a hun-  
dred years:  
For never have I known the world  
without,  
Nor ever stray'd beyond the pale:  
but thee,  
When first thou camest—such a  
courtesy  
Spake thro' the limbs and in the  
voice—I knew  
For one of those who eat in Arthur's  
hall;  
For good ye are and bad, and like to  
coins,  
Some true, some light, but every one  
of you  
Stamp'd with the image of the King;  
and now  
Tell me, what drove thee from the  
Table Round,  
My brother? was it earthly passion  
crost?'

'Nay,' said the knight; 'for no  
such passion mine.  
But the sweet vision of the Holy  
Grail  
Drove me from all vainglorious, rival-  
ries,  
And earthly heats that spring and  
sparkle out  
Among us in the jousts, while women  
watch  
Who wins, who falls; and waste the  
spiritual strength  
Within us, better offer'd up to  
Heaven.'

To whom the monk: 'The Holy  
Grail!—I trust  
We are green in Heaven's eyes; but  
here too much  
We moulder—as to things without I  
mean—  
Yet one of your own knights, a guest of  
ours,  
Told us of this in our refectory,  
But spake with such a sadness and so  
low  
We heard not half of what he said.  
What is it?  
The phantom of a cup that comes and  
goes?'

'Nay, monk! what phantom?' an-  
swer'd Percivale.  
'The cup, the cup itself, from which  
our Lord  
Drank at the last sad supper with his  
own.  
This, from the blessed land of Aro-  
mat—  
After the day of darkness, when the  
dead  
Went wandering o'er Moriah—the  
good saint  
Arimathæan Joseph, journeying  
brought  
To Glastonbury, where the winter  
thorn  
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of  
our Lord.  
And there awhile it bode; and if a  
man  
Could touch or see it, he was heal'd  
at once,

By faith, of all his ills. But then the  
times  
Grew to such evil that the holy cup  
Was caught away to Heaven, and  
disappear'd.'

To whom the monk: 'From our  
old books I know  
That Joseph came of old to Glaston-  
bury,  
And there the heathen Prince, Arvi-  
ragus,  
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to  
build;  
And there he built with wattles from  
the marsh  
A little lonely church in days of  
yore,  
For so they say, these books of ours,  
but seem  
Mute of this miracle, far as I have  
read.  
But who first saw the holy thing to-  
day?'

'A woman,' answer'd Percivale, 'a  
nun,  
And one no further off in blood from  
me  
Than sister; and if ever holy maid  
With knees of adoration wore the  
stone,  
A holy maid; tho' never maiden  
glow'd,  
But that was in her earlier maiden-  
hood,  
With such a fervent flame of human  
love,  
Which being rudely blunted, glanced  
and shot  
Only to holy things; to prayer and  
praise  
She gave herself, to fast and alms.  
And yet,  
Nun as she was, the scandal of the  
Court,  
Sin against Arthur and the Table  
Round,  
And the strange sound of an adulter-  
ous race,  
Across the iron grating of her cell  
Beat, and she pray'd and fasted all  
the more.

'And he to whom she told her sins,  
or what  
Her all but utter whiteness held for  
sin,  
A man wellnigh a hundred winters  
old,  
Spake often with her of the Holy  
Grail,  
A legend handed down thro' five or  
six,  
And each of these a hundred winters  
old,  
From our Lord's time. And when  
King Arthur made  
His Table Round, and all men's  
hearts became  
Clean for a season, surely he had  
thought  
That now the Holy Grail would come  
again;  
But sin broke out. Ah, Christ, that  
it would come,  
And heal the world of all their wicked-  
ness!  
"O Father!" asked the maiden,  
"might it come  
To me by prayer and fasting?"  
"Nay," said he,  
"I know not, for thy heart is pure as  
snow."  
And so she pray'd and fasted, till the  
sun  
Shone, and the wind blew, thro' her,  
and I thought  
She might have risen and floated when  
I saw her.

'For on a day she sent to speak  
with me.  
And when she came to speak, behold  
her eyes  
Beyond my knowing of them, beauti-  
ful,  
Beyond all knowing of them, wonder-  
ful,  
Beautiful in the light of holiness.  
And "O my brother Percivale," she  
said,  
"Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy  
Grail:  
For, waked at dead of night, I heard  
a sound  
As of a silver horn from o'er the hills



Blown, and I thought, 'It is not  
Arthur's use  
To hunt by moonlight;' and the  
slender sound  
As from a distance beyond distance  
grew  
Coming upon me—O never harp nor  
horn,  
Nor aught we blow with breath, or  
touch with hand,  
Was like that music as it came; and  
then  
Stream'd thro' my cell a cold and  
silver beam,  
And down the long beam stole the  
Holy Grail,  
Rose-red with beatings in it, as if  
alive,  
Till all the white walls of my cell were  
dyed  
With rosy colors leaping on the wall :  
And then the music faded, and the  
Grail  
Past, and the beam decay'd, and from  
the walls  
The rosy quiverings died into the  
night.  
So now the Holy Thing is here again  
Among us, brother, fast thou too and  
pray,  
And tell thy brother knights to fast  
and pray,  
That so perchance the vision may be  
seen  
By thee and those, and all the world  
be heal'd."

'Then leaving the pale nun, I  
spake of this  
To all men; and myself fasted and  
pray'd  
Always, and many among us many a  
week  
Fasted and pray'd even to the utter-  
most,  
Expectant of the wonder that would  
be.

'And one there was among us,  
ever moved  
Among us in white armor, Galahad.  
"God make thee good as thou art  
beautiful,"

Said Arthur, when he dubb'd him  
knight; and none,  
In so young youth, was ever made a  
knight  
Till Galahad; and this Galahad, when  
he heard  
My sister's vision, fill'd me with  
amaze;  
His eyes became so like her own,  
they seem'd  
Hers, and himself her brother more  
than I.

'Sister or brother none had he;  
but some  
Call'd him a son of Lancelot, and  
some said  
Begotten by enchantment—chatterers  
they,  
Like birds of passage piping up and  
down,  
That gape for flies—we know not  
whence they come;  
For when was Lancelot wanderingly  
lewd?

'But she, the wan sweet maiden,  
shore away  
Clean from her forehead all that  
wealth of hair  
Which made a silken mat-work for her  
feet;  
And out of this she plaited broad and  
long  
A strong sword-belt, and wove with  
silver thread  
And crimson in the belt a strange  
device,  
A crimson grail within a silver beam,  
And saw the bright boy-knight, and  
bound it on him,  
Saying, "My knight, my love, my  
knight of heaven,  
O thou, my love, whose love is one  
with mine,  
I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind  
my belt.  
Go forth, for thou shalt see what I  
have seen,  
And break thro' all, till one will crown  
thee king  
Far in the spiritual city : " and as she  
spake

She sent the deathless passion in her  
 eyes  
 Thro' him, and made him hers, and  
 laid her mind  
 On him, and he believed in her belief.

' Then came a year of miracle : O  
 brother,  
 In our great hall there stood a vacant  
 chair,

Fashion'd by Merlin ere he past away,  
 And carven with strange figures ; and  
 in and out

The figures, like a serpent, ran a scroll  
 Of letters in a tongue no man could  
 read.

And Merlin call'd it " The Siege per-  
 ilous,"

Perilous for good and ill ; " for there,"  
 he said,

" No man could sit but he should lose  
 himself : "

And once by misadventure Merlin  
 sat

In his own chair, and so was lost ;  
 but he,

Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's  
 doom,

Cried, " If I lose myself, I save my-  
 self ! "

' Then on a summer night it came  
 to pass,

While the great banquet lay along the  
 hall,

That Galahad would sit down in Mer-  
 lin's chair.

' And all at once, as there we sat,  
 we heard

A cracking and a riving of the roofs,  
 And rending, and a blast, and over-  
 head

Thunder, and in the thunder was a  
 cry.

And in the blast there smote along the  
 hall

A beam of light seven times more  
 clear than ' day :

And down the long beam stole the  
 Holy Grail

All over cover'd with a luminous  
 cloud,

And none might see who bare it, and  
 it past.

But every knight beheld his fellow's  
 face

As in a glory, and all the knights  
 arose,

And staring each at other like dumb  
 men

Stood, till I found a voice and sware  
 a vow.

' I sware a vow before them all, that  
 I,

Because I had not seen the Grail,  
 would ride

A twelvemonth and a day in quest of  
 it,

Until I found and saw it, as the  
 nun

My sister saw it; and Galahad sware  
 the vow,

And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot's  
 cousin, sware,

And Lancelot sware, and many among  
 the knights,

And Gawain sware, and louder than  
 the rest.'

Then spake the monk Ambrosius,  
 asking him,

' What said the King? Did Arthur  
 take the vow?'

' Nay, for my lord,' said Percivale,  
 ' the King,

Was not in hall : for early that same  
 day,

Scaped thro' a cavern from a bandit  
 hold,

An outraged maiden sprang into the  
 hall

Crying on help: for all her shining  
 hair

Was smear'd with earth, and either  
 milky arm

Red-rent with hooks of bramble, and  
 all she wore

Torn as a sail that leaves the rope is  
 torn

In tempest: so the King arose and  
 went

To smoke the scandalous hive of  
 those wild bees

That made such honey in his realm.  
 Howbeit  
 Some little of this marvel he too  
 saw,  
 Returning o'er the plain that then  
 began  
 To darken under Camelot; whence  
 the King  
 Look'd up, calling aloud, "Lo, there!  
 the roofs  
 Of our great hall are roll'd in thunder-  
 smoke!  
 Pray Heaven, they be not smitten by  
 the bolt."  
 For dear to Arthur was that hall of  
 ours,  
 As having there so oft with all his  
 knights  
 Feasted, and as the stateliest under  
 heaven.

'O brother, had you known our  
 mighty hall,  
 Which Merlin built for Arthur long  
 ago!  
 For all the sacred mount of Came-  
 lot,  
 And all the dim rich city, roof by  
 roof,  
 Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,  
 By grove, and garden-lawn, and rush-  
 ing brook,  
 Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin  
 built.  
 And four great zones of sculpture, set  
 betwixt  
 With many a mystic symbol, gird the  
 hall:  
 And in the lowest beasts are slaying  
 men,  
 And in the second men are slaying  
 beasts,  
 And on the third are warriors, perfect  
 men,  
 And on the fourth are men with grow-  
 ing wings,  
 And over all one statue in the mould  
 Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a  
 crown,  
 And peak'd wings pointed to the  
 Northern Star.  
 And eastward fronts the statue, and  
 the crown

And both the wings are made of gold,  
 and flame  
 At sunrise till the people in far fields,  
 Wasted so often by the heathen  
 hordes,  
 Behold it, crying, "We have still a  
 King."

'And, brother, had you known our  
 hall within,  
 Broader and higher than any in all the  
 lands!  
 Where twelve great windows blazon  
 Arthur's wars,  
 And all the light that falls upon the  
 board  
 Streams thro' the twelve great battles  
 of our King.  
 Nay, one there is, and at the eastern  
 end,  
 Wealthy with wandering lines of  
 mount and mere,  
 Where Arthur finds the brand Excali-  
 bur.  
 And also one to the west, and counter  
 to it,  
 And blank: and who shall blazon it?  
 when and how?—  
 O there, perchance, when all our wars  
 are done,  
 The brand Excalibur will be cast  
 away.

'So to this hall full quickly rode the  
 King,  
 In horror lest the work by Merlin  
 wrought,  
 Dreamlike, should on the sudden  
 vanish, wrapt  
 In unremorseful folds of rolling fire.  
 And in he rode, and up I glanced, and  
 saw  
 The golden dragon sparkling over all:  
 And many of those who burnt the  
 hold, their arms  
 Hack'd, and their foreheads grimed  
 with smoke, and sear'd,  
 Follow'd, and in among bright faces,  
 ours,  
 Full of the vision, prest: and then  
 the King  
 Spake to me, being nearest, "Perci-  
 vale."

(Because the hall was all in tumult—  
some  
Vowing, and some protesting), "what  
is this?"

"O brother, when I told him what  
had chanced,  
My sister's vision, and the rest, his  
face  
Darken'd, as I have seen it more than  
once,  
When some brave deed seem'd to be  
done in vain,  
Darken; and "Woe is me, my  
knights," he cried,  
"Had I been here, ye had not sworn  
the vow."  
Bold was mine answer, "Had thyself  
been here,  
My King, thou wouldst have sworn."  
"Yea, yea," said he,  
"Art thou so bold and hast not seen  
the Grail?"

"Nay, lord, I heard the sound, I  
saw the light,  
But since I did not see the Holy  
Thing,  
I swear a vow to follow it till I saw."

"Then when he ask'd us, knight by  
knight, if any  
Had seen it, all their answers were as  
one:  
"Nay, lord, and therefore have we  
sworn our vows."

"Lo now," said Arthur, "have ye  
seen a cloud?  
What go ye into the wilderness to  
see?"

"Then Galahad on the sudden, and  
in a voice  
Shrilling along the hall to Arthur,  
call'd,

"But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy  
Grail,  
I saw the Holy Grail and heard a  
cry—  
'O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow  
me.'"

"Ah, Galahad, Galahad," said the  
King, "for such  
As thou art is the vision, not for  
these.

Thy holy nun and thou have seen a  
sign—  
Holier is none, my Percivale, than  
she—  
A sign to main this Order which I  
made.  
But ye, that follow but the leader's  
bell"

(Brother, the King was hard upon his  
knights)

"Taliessin is our fullest throat of  
song,

And one hath sung and all the dumb  
will sing.

Lancelot is Lancelot, and hath over-  
borne

Five knights at once, and every  
younger knight,

Unproven, holds himself as Lance-  
lot,

Till overborne by one, he learns—and  
ye,

What are ye? Galahads?—no, nor  
Percivales"

(For thus it pleased the King to  
range me close

After Sir Galahad); "nay," said he,  
"but men

With strength and will to right the  
wrong'd, of power

To lay the sudden heads of violence  
flat,

Knights that in twelve great battles  
splash'd and dyed

The strong White Horse in his own  
heathen blood—

But one hath seen, and all the blind  
will see.

Go, since your vows are sacred, being  
made:

Yet—for ye know the cries of all my  
realm

Pass thro' this hall—how often, O my  
knights,

Your places being vacant at my side,  
This chance of noble deeds will come  
and go

Unchanged, while ye follow wan-  
dering fires

Lost in the quagmire! Many of you,  
yea most,  
Return no more: ye think I show  
myself  
Too dark a prophet: come now, let  
us meet  
The morrow morn once more in one  
full field  
Of gracious pastime, that once more  
the King,  
Before ye leave him for this Quest,  
may count  
The yet-unbroken strength of all his  
knights,  
Rejoicing in that Order which he  
made."

' So when the sun broke next from  
under ground,  
All the great table of our Arthur  
closed  
And clash'd in such a tourney and so  
full,  
So many lances broken—never yet  
Had Camelot seen the like, since  
Arthur came;  
And I myself and Galahad, for a  
strength  
Was in us from the vision, overthrew  
So many knights that all the people  
cried,  
And almost burst the barriers in their  
heat,  
Shouting, "Sir Galahad and Sir Per-  
civale!"

' But when the next day brake from  
under ground—  
O brother, had you known our Cam-  
elot,  
Built by old kings, age after age, so  
old  
The King himself had fears that it  
would fall,  
So strange, and rich, and dim; for  
where the roofs  
Totter'd toward each other in the sky,  
Met foreheads all along the street of  
those  
Who watch'd us pass; and lower,  
and where the long  
Rich galleries, lady-laden, weigh'd the  
necks

Of dragons clinging to the crazy walls,  
Thicker than drops from thunder,  
showers of flowers  
Fell as we past; and men and boys  
astride  
On wyvern, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,  
At all the corners, named us each by  
name,  
Calling "God speed!" but in the  
ways below  
The knights and ladies wept, and rich  
and poor  
Wept, and the King himself could  
hardly speak  
For grief, and all in middle street the  
Queen,  
Who rode by Lancelot, wail'd and  
shriek'd aloud,  
"This madness has come on us for  
our sins."  
So to the Gate of the three Queens  
we came,  
Where Arthur's wars are render'd  
mystically,  
And thence departed every one his  
way.

' And I was lifted up in heart, and  
thought  
Of all my late-shown prowess in the  
lists,  
How my strong lance had beaten  
down the knights,  
So many and famous names; and  
never yet  
Had heaven appear'd so blue, nor  
earth so green,  
For all my blood danced in me, and I  
knew  
That I should light upon the Holy  
Grail.

' Thereafter, the dark warning of  
our King,  
That most of us would follow wander-  
ing fires,  
Came like a driving gloom across my  
mind.  
Then every evil word I had spoken  
once,  
And every evil thought I had thought  
of old,  
And every evil deed I ever did,

Awoke and cried, "This Quest is not  
for thee."  
And lifting up mine eyes, I found my-  
self  
Alone, and in a land of sand and  
thorns,  
And I was thirsty even unto death;  
And I, too, cried, "This Quest is not  
for thee."

'And on I rode, and when I thought  
my thirst  
Would slay me, saw deep lawns, and  
then a brook,  
With one sharp rapid, where the crisp-  
ing white  
Play'd ever back upon the sloping  
wave,  
And took both ear and eye; and o'er  
the brook  
Were apple-trees, and apples by the  
brook  
Fallen, and on the lawns. "I will  
rest here,"  
I said, "I am not worthy of the  
Quest;"  
But even while I drank the brook,  
and ate  
The goodly apples, all these things at  
once  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone,  
And thirsting, in a land of sand and  
thorns.

'And then behold a woman at a  
door  
Spinning; and fair the house whereby  
she sat,  
And kind the woman's eyes and inno-  
cent,  
And all her bearing gracious; and she  
rose  
Opening her arms to meet me, as who  
should say,  
"Rest here;" but when I touch'd her,  
lo! she, too,  
Fell into dust and nothing, and the  
house  
Became no better than a broken  
shed,  
And in it a dead babe; and also  
this  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone.

'And on I rode, and greater was  
my thirst.  
Then flash'd a yellow gleam across  
the world,  
And where it smote the plowshare in  
the field,  
The plowman left his plowing, and  
fell down  
Before it; where it glitter'd on her  
pail,  
The milkmaid left her milking, and  
fell down  
Before it, and I knew not why, but  
thought  
"The sun is rising," tho' the sun had  
risen.  
Then was I ware of one that on me  
moved  
In golden armor with a crown of  
gold  
About a casque all jewels; and his  
horse  
In golden armor jewell'd everywhere:  
And on the splendor came, flashing  
me blind;  
And seem'd to me the Lord of all the  
world,  
Being so huge. But when I thought  
he meant  
To crush me, moving on me, lo! he,  
too,  
Open'd his arms to embrace me as he  
came,  
And up I went and touch'd him, and  
he, too,  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone  
And wearying in a land of sand and  
thorns.

'And I rode on and found a mighty  
hill,  
And on the top, a city wall'd: the  
spires  
Prick'd with incredible pinnacles into  
heaven.  
And by the gateway stirr'd a crowd;  
and these  
Cried to me climbing, "Welcome,  
Percivale!  
Thou mightiest and thou purest  
among men!"  
And glad was I and clomb, but found  
at top

No man, nor any voice. And thence  
 I past  
 Far thro' a ruinous city, and I saw  
 That man had once dwelt there; but  
 there I found  
 Only one man of an exceeding age.  
 "Where is that goodly company,"  
 said I,  
 "That so cried out upon me?" and  
 he had  
 Scarce any voice to answer, and yet  
 gasp'd,  
 "Whence and what art thou?" and  
 even as he spoke  
 Fell into dust, and disappear'd, and  
 I  
 Was left alone once more, and cried  
 in grief,  
 "Lo, if I find the Holy Grail itself  
 And touch it, it will crumble into  
 dust."

'And thence I dropt into a lowly  
 vale,  
 Low as the hill was high, and where  
 the vale  
 Was lowest, found a chapel, and  
 thereby  
 A holy hermit in a hermitage,  
 To whom I told my phantoms, and he  
 said :

"O son, thou hast not true humil-  
 ity,  
 The highest virtue, mother of them  
 all;  
 For when the Lord of all things made  
 Himself  
 Naked of glory for His mortal change,  
 'Take thou my robe,' she said, 'for  
 all is thine,'  
 And all her form shone forth with  
 sudden light  
 So that the angels were amazed, and  
 she  
 Follow'd Him down, and like a flying  
 star  
 Led on the gray-hair'd wisdom of the  
 east;  
 But her thou hast not known: for  
 what is this  
 Thou thoughtest of thy prowess and  
 thy sins?"

Thou hast not lost thyself to save thy-  
 self  
 As Galahad." When the hermit  
 made an end,  
 In silver armor suddenly Galahad  
 shone  
 Before us, and against the chapel door  
 Laid lance, and enter'd, and we knelt  
 in prayer.  
 And there the hermit slaked my burn-  
 ing thirst,  
 And at the sacring of the mass I  
 saw  
 The holy elements alone; but he,  
 "Saw ye no more? I, Galahad, saw  
 the Grail,  
 The Holy Grail, descend upon the  
 shrine:  
 I saw the fiery face as of a child  
 That smote itself into the bread, and  
 went;  
 And hither am I come; and never yet  
 Hath what thy sister taught me first  
 to see,  
 This Holy Thing, fail'd from my side,  
 nor come  
 Cover'd, but moving with me night  
 and day,  
 Fainter by day, but always in the night  
 Blood-red, and sliding down the  
 blacken'd marsh  
 Blood-red, and on the naked moun-  
 tain top  
 Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere  
 below  
 Blood-red. And in the strength of  
 this I rode,  
 Shattering all evil customs every-  
 where,  
 And past thro' Pagan realms, and  
 made them mine,  
 And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and  
 bore them down,  
 And broke thro' all, and in the  
 strength of this  
 Come victor. But my time is hard at  
 hand,  
 And hence I go; and one will crown  
 me king  
 Far in the spiritual city; and come  
 thou, too,  
 For thou shalt see the vision when I  
 go."

'While thus he spake, his eye,  
dwelling on mine,  
Drew me, with power upon me, till I  
grew  
One with him, to believe as he  
believed.  
Then, when the day began to wane,  
we went.

'There rose a hill that none but man  
could climb,  
Scarr'd with a hundred wintry water-  
courses—  
Storm at the top, and when we gain'd  
it, storm  
Round us and death; for every  
moment glanced  
His silver arms and gloom'd: so quick  
and thick  
The lightnings here and there to left  
and right  
Struck, till the dry old trunks about  
us, dead,  
Yea, rotten with a hundred years of  
death,  
Sprang into fire: and at the base we  
found  
On either hand, as far as eye could  
see,  
A great black swamp and of an evil  
smell,  
Part black, part whiten'd with the  
bones of men,  
Not to be crost, save that some  
ancient king  
Had built a way, where, link'd with  
many a bridge,  
A thousand piers ran into the great  
Sea.  
And Galahad fled along them bridge  
by bridge,  
And every bridge as quickly as he  
crost  
Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I  
yearn'd  
To follow; and thrice above him all  
the heavens  
Open'd and blazed with thunder such  
as seem'd  
Shoutings of all the sons of God:  
and first  
At once I saw him far on the great  
Sea,

In silver-shining armor starry-clear;  
And o'er his head the Holy Vessel  
hung  
Clothed in white samite or a lumi-  
nous cloud.  
And with exceeding swiftness ran the  
boat,  
If boat it were—I saw not whence it  
came.  
And when the heavens open'd and  
blazed again  
Roaring, I saw him like a silver star—  
And had he set the sail, or had the  
boat  
Become a living creature clad with  
wings?  
And o'er his head the Holy Vessel  
hung  
Redder than any rose, a joy to me,  
For now I knew the veil had been  
withdrawn.  
Then in a moment when they blazed  
again  
Opening, I saw the least of little stars  
Down on the waste, and straight  
beyond the star  
I saw the spiritual city and all her  
spires  
And gateways in a glory like one  
pearl—  
No larger, tho' the goal of all the  
saints—  
Strike from the sea; and from the  
star there shot  
A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there  
Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy  
Grail,  
Which never eyes on earth again shall  
see.  
Then fell the floods of heaven drown-  
ing the deep.  
And how my feet recrost the deathful  
ridge  
No memory in me lives; but that I  
touch'd  
The chapel-doors at dawn I know;  
and thence  
Taking my war-horse from the holy  
man,  
Glad that no phantom vex't me more,  
return'd  
To whence I came, the gate of  
Arthur's wars.'



‘O brother,’ ask’d Ambrosius,—‘for  
 in sooth  
 These ancient books—and they would  
 win thee—teem,  
 Only I find not there this Holy Grail,  
 With miracles and marvels like to  
 these,  
 Not all unlike; which oftentime I  
 read,  
 Who read but on my breviary with  
 ease,  
 Till my head swims; and then go  
 forth and pass  
 Down to the liltle thorpe that lies so  
 close,  
 And almost plaster’d like a martin’s  
 nest  
 To these old walls—and mingle with  
 our folk;  
 And knowing every honest face of  
 theirs  
 As well as ever shepherd knew his  
 sheep,  
 And every homely secret in their  
 hearts,  
 Delight myself with gossip and old  
 wives,  
 And ills and aches, and teethings,  
 lyings-in,  
 And mirthful sayings, children of the  
 place,  
 That have no meaning half a league  
 away:  
 Or lulling random squabbles when  
 they rise,  
 Chafferings and chatterings at the  
 market-cross,  
 Rejoice, small man, in this small  
 world of mine,  
 Yea, even in their hens and in their  
 eggs—  
 O brother, saving this Sir Galahad,  
 Came ye on none but phantoms in  
 your quest,  
 No man, no woman?’

Then Sir Percivale:  
 ‘All men, to one so bound by such a  
 vow,  
 And women were as phantoms. O,  
 my brother,  
 Why wilt thou shame me to confess  
 to thee

How far I falter’d from my quest and  
 vow?  
 For after I had lain so many nights,  
 A bedmate of the snail and eft and  
 snake,  
 In grass and burdock, I was changed  
 to wan  
 And meagre, and the vision had not  
 come;  
 And then I chanced upon a goodly  
 town  
 With one great dwelling in the mid-  
 dle of it;  
 Thither I made, and there was I dis-  
 arm’d  
 By maidens each as fair as any flower:  
 But when they led me into hall,  
 behold,  
 The Princess of that castle was the  
 one,  
 Brother, and that one only, who had  
 ever  
 Made my heart leap; for when I  
 moved of old  
 A slender page about her father’s  
 hall,  
 And she a slender maiden, all my  
 heart  
 Went after her with longing: yet we  
 twain  
 Had never kiss’d a kiss, or vow’d a  
 vow.  
 And now I came upon her, once  
 again,  
 And one had wedded her, and he was  
 dead,  
 And all his land and wealth and state  
 were hers.  
 And while I tarried, every day she  
 set  
 A banquet richer than the day be-  
 fore  
 By me; for all her longing and her  
 will  
 Was toward me as of old; till one  
 fair morn,  
 I walking to and fro beside a stream  
 That flash’d across her orchard  
 underneath  
 Her castle-walls, she stole upon my  
 walk,  
 And calling me the greatest of all  
 knights,

Embraced me, and so kiss'd me the  
first time,  
And gave herself and all her wealth  
to me.  
Then I remember'd Arthur's warning  
word,  
That most of us would follow wander-  
ing fires,  
And the Quest faded in my heart.  
Anon,  
The heads of all her people drew to  
me,  
With supplication both of knees and  
tongue :  
" We have heard of thee: thou art  
our greatest knight,  
Our lady says it, and we well believe :  
Wed thou our Lady, and rule over us,  
And thou shalt be as Arthur in our  
land."  
O me, my brother! but one night my  
vow  
Burnt me within, so that I rose and  
fled,  
But wail'd and wept, and hated mine  
own self,  
And ev'n the Holy Quest, and all but  
her ;  
Then after I was join'd with Galahad  
Cared not for her, nor anything upon  
earth.'

Then said the monk, ' Poor men,  
when yule is cold,  
Must be content to sit by little fires.  
And this am I, so that ye care for  
me  
Ever so little; yea, and blest be  
Heaven  
That brought thee here to this poor  
house of ours  
Where all the brethren are so hard,  
to warm  
My cold heart with a friend; but O  
the pity  
To find thine own first love once  
more—to hold,  
Hold her a wealthy bride within thine  
arms,  
Or all but hold, and then—cast her  
aside,  
Foregoing all her sweetness, like a  
weed.

For we that want the warmth of  
double life,  
We that are plagued with dreams of  
something sweet  
Beyond all sweetness in a life so  
rich,—  
Ah, blessed Lord, I speak too earthly-  
wise,  
Seeing I never stray'd beyond the  
cell,  
But live like an old badger in his  
earth,  
With earth about him everywhere,  
despite  
All fast and penance. Saw ye none  
beside,  
None of your knights?'

' Yea so,' said Percivale :  
' One night my pathway swerving  
east, I saw  
The pelican on the casque of our Sir  
Bors  
All in the middle of the rising moon :  
And toward him spurr'd, and hail'd  
him, and he me,  
And each made joy of either; then  
he ask'd,  
" Where is he? hast thou seen him—  
Lancelot?—Once,"  
Said good Sir Bors, " he dash'd across  
me—mad,  
And maddening what he rode: and  
when I cried,  
' Ridest thou then so hotly on a  
quest  
So holy,' Lancelot shouted, ' Stay me  
not!  
I have been the sluggard, and I ride  
apace,  
For now there is a lion in the way.'  
So vanish'd."

' Then Sir Bors had ridden on  
Softly, and sorrowing for our Lance-  
lot,  
Because his former madness, once the  
talk  
And scandal of our table, had re-  
turn'd;  
For Lancelot's kith and kin so wor-  
ship him  
That ill to him is ill to them; to Bors.

Beyond the rest: he well had been  
content  
Not to have seen, so Lancelot might  
have seen,  
The Holy Cup of healing; and, indeed,  
Being so clouded with his grief and  
love,  
Small heart was his after the Holy  
Quest:  
If God would send the vision, well: if  
not,  
The Quest and he were in the hands  
of Heaven.

'And then, with small adventure  
met, Sir Bors  
Rode to the lonest tract of all the  
realm,  
And found a people there among  
their crags,  
Our race and blood, a remnant that  
were left  
Paynim amid their circles, and the  
stones  
They pitch up straight to heaven: and  
their wise men  
Were strong in that old magic which  
can trace  
The wandering of the stars, and  
scoff'd at him  
And this high Quest as at a simple  
thing:  
Told him he follow'd—almost Arthur's  
words—  
A mocking fire: "what other fire  
than he,  
Whereby the blood beats, and the  
blossom blows,  
And the sea rolls, and all the world is  
warm'd?"  
And when his answer chafed them,  
the rough crowd,  
Hearing he had a difference with their  
priests,  
Seized him, and bound and plunged  
him into a cell  
Of great piled stones; and lying  
bounden there  
In darkness thro' innumerable hours  
He heard the hollow-ringing heavens  
sweep  
Over him till by miracle—what else?—

Heavy as it was, a great stone slipt  
and fell,  
Such as no wind could move: and  
thro' the gap  
Glimmer'd the streaming scud: then  
came a night  
Still as the day was loud; and thro'  
the gap  
The seven clear stars of Arthur's  
Table Round—  
For, brother, so one night, because  
they roll  
Thro' such a round in heaven, we  
named the stars,  
Rejoicing in ourselves and in our  
King—  
And these, like bright eyes of familiar  
friends,  
In on him shone: "And then to me,  
to me,"  
Said good Sir Bors, "beyond all hopes  
of mine,  
Who scarce had pray'd or ask'd it for  
myself—  
Across the seven clear stars—O grace  
to me—  
In color like the fingers of a hand  
Before a burning taper, the sweet Grail  
Glided and past, and close upon it  
peal'd  
A sharp quick thunder." Afterwards,  
a maid,  
Who kept our holy faith among her  
kin  
In secret, entering, loosed and let him  
go."

To whom the monk: "And I re-  
member now  
That pelican on the casque: Sir Bors  
it was  
Who spake so low and sadly at our  
board;  
And mighty reverent at our grace was  
he:  
A square-set man and honest; and his  
eyes,  
An out-door sign of all the warmth  
within,  
Smiled with his lips—a smile beneath  
a cloud,  
But heaven had meant it for a sunny  
one:

Ay, ay, Sir Bors, who else? But  
 when ye reach'd  
 The city, found ye all your knights re-  
 turn'd,  
 Or was there sooth in Arthur's proph-  
 ecy,  
 Tell me, and what said each, and what  
 the King?'

Then answer'd Percivale: 'And  
 that can I,  
 Brother, and truly; since the living  
 words  
 Of so great men as Lancelot and our  
 King  
 Pass not from door to door and out  
 again,  
 But sit within the house. O, when we  
 reach'd  
 The city, our horses stumbling as they  
 trode  
 On heaps of ruin, hornless unicorns,  
 Crack'd basilisks, and splinter'd cocka-  
 trices,  
 And shatter'd talbots, which had left  
 the stones  
 Raw, that they fell from, brought us  
 to the hall.

'And there sat Arthur on the daïs-  
 throne,  
 And those that had gone out upon the  
 Quest,  
 Wasted and worn, and but a tithe of  
 them,  
 And those that had not, stood before  
 the King,  
 Who, when he saw me, rose, and bad  
 me hail,  
 Saying, "A welfare in thine eye re-  
 proves  
 Our fear of some disastrous chance for  
 thee  
 On hill, or plain, at sea, or flooding  
 ford.  
 So fierce a gale made havoc here of  
 late  
 Among the strange devices of our  
 kings;  
 Yea, shook this newer, stronger hall of  
 ours,  
 And from the statue Merlin moulded  
 for us

Half-wrench'd a golden wing; but  
 now—the Quest,  
 This vision—hast thou seen the Holy  
 Cup,  
 That Joseph brought of old to Glas-  
 tonbury?"

'So when I told him all thyself hast  
 heard,  
 Ambrosius, and my fresh but fixt re-  
 solve  
 To pass away into the quiet life,  
 He answer'd not, but, sharply turning,  
 ask'd  
 Of Gawain, "Gawain, was this Quest  
 for thee?"

"Nay, lord," said Gawain, "not  
 for such as I.  
 Therefore I communed with a saintly  
 man,  
 Who made me sure the Quest was not  
 for me;  
 For I was much aweared of the Quest:  
 But found a silk pavilion in a field.  
 And merry maidens in it; and then  
 this gale  
 Tore my pavilion from the tenting-pin,  
 And blew my merry maidens all  
 about  
 With all discomfort; yea, and but for  
 this,  
 My twelvemonth and a day were  
 pleasant to me."

'He ceased; and Arthur turn'd to  
 whom at first  
 He saw not, for Sir Bors, on entering,  
 push'd  
 Athwart the throng to Lancelot,  
 caught his hand,  
 Held it, and there, half-hidden by  
 him, stood,  
 Until the King espied him, saying to  
 him,  
 "Hail, Bors! if ever loyal man and  
 true  
 Could see it, thou hast seen the  
 Grail;" and Bors,  
 "Ask me not, for I may not speak of  
 it:  
 I saw it;" and the tears were in his  
 eyes.

'Then there remain'd but Lancelot, for the rest  
Spake but of sundry perils in the storm;  
Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy Writ,  
Our Arthur kept his best until the last;  
"Thou, too, my Lancelot," ask'd the King, "my friend,  
Our mightiest, hath this Quest avail'd for thee?"

"Our mightiest!" answer'd Lancelot, with a groan;  
"O King!"—and when he paused, methought I spied  
A dying fire of madness in his eyes—  
"O King, my friend, if friend of thine I be,  
Happier are those that welter in their sin,  
Swine in the mud, that cannot see for slime,  
Slime of the ditch: but in me lived a sin  
So strange, of such a kind, that all of pure,  
Noble, and knightly in me twined and clung  
Round that one sin, until the wholesome flower  
And poisonous grew together, each as each,  
Not to be pluck'd asunder; and when thy knights  
Swore, I swore with them only in the hope  
That could I touch or see the Holy Grail  
They might be pluck'd asunder. Then I spake  
To one most holy saint, who wept and said,  
That save they could be pluck'd asunder, all  
My quest were but in vain; to whom I vow'd  
That I would work according as he will'd.  
And forth I went, and while I yearn'd and strove  
To tear the twain asunder in my heart,

My madness came upon me as of old,  
And whipt me into waste fields far away;  
There was I beaten down by little men,  
Mean knights, to whom the moving of my sword  
And shadow of my spear had been enow  
To scare them from me once; and then I came  
All in my folly to the naked shore,  
Wide flats, where nothing but coarse grasses grew;  
But such a blast, my King, began to blow,  
So loud a blast along the shore and sea,  
Ye could not hear the waters for the blast,  
Tho' heapt in mounds and ridges all the sea  
Drove like a cataract, and all the sand  
Swept like a river, and the clouded heavens  
Were shaken with the motion and the sound.  
And blackening in the sea-foam sway'd a boat,  
Half-swallow'd in it, anchor'd with a chain;  
And in my madness to myself I said,  
'I will embark and I will lose myself,  
And in the great sea wash away my sin.'  
I burst the chain, I sprang into the boat.  
Seven days I drove along the dreary deep,  
And with me drove the moon and all the stars;  
And the wind fell, and on the seventh night  
I heard the shingle grinding in the surge,  
And felt the boat shock earth, and looking up,  
Behold, the enchanted towers of Carbonek,  
A castle like a rock upon a rock,  
With chasm-like portals open to the sea,

And steps that met the breaker!  
 there was none  
 Stood near it but a lion on each side  
 That kept the entry, and the moon  
 was full.

Then from the boat I leapt, and up  
 the stairs.

There drew my sword. With sud-  
 den-flaring manes

Those two great beasts rose upright  
 like a man,

Each gript a shoulder, and I stood be-  
 tween;

And, when I would have smitten  
 them, heard a voice,

'Doubt not, go forward; if thou  
 doubt, the beasts

Will tear thee piecemeal.' Then with  
 violence

The sword was dash'd from out my  
 hand, and fell.

And up into the sounding hall I past;  
 But nothing in the sounding hall I

saw,  
 No bench nor table, painting on the

wall  
 Or shield of knight; only the rounded

moon  
 Thro' the tall oriel on the rolling sea.

But always in the quiet house I heard,  
 Clear as a lark, high o'er me as a

lark,  
 A sweet voice singing in the topmost

tower  
 To the eastward: up I climb'd a

thousand steps  
 With pain: as in a dream I seem'd to

climb  
 For ever: at the last I reach'd a

door,  
 A light was in the crannies, and I

heard,  
 'Glory and joy and honor to our

Lord  
 And to the Holy Vessel of the Grail.'

Then in my madness I essay'd the  
 door;

It gave; and thro' a stormy glare, a  
 heat

As from a seventimes-heated furnace,  
 I,

Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I  
 was,

With such a fierceness that I swoon'd  
 away—

O, yet methought I saw the Holy Grail,  
 All pall'd in crimson samite, and

around  
 Great angels, awful shapes, and wings

and eyes.  
 And but for all my madness and my

sin,  
 And then my swooning, I had sworn

I saw  
 That which I saw; but what I saw

was veil'd  
 And cover'd; and this Quest was not

for me."

'So speaking, and here ceasing,  
 Lancelot left

The hall long silent, till Sir Gawain—  
 nay,

Brother, I need not tell thee foolish  
 words,—

A reckless and irreverent knight was  
 he,

Now bolden'd by the silence of his  
 King,—

Well, I will tell thee: "O King, my  
 liege," he said,

"Hath Gawain fail'd in any quest of  
 thine?

When have I stinted stroke in  
 foughten field?

But as for thine, my good friend Per-  
 cival,

Thy holy nun and thou have driven  
 men mad,

Yea, made our mightiest madder than  
 our least.

But by mine eyes and by mine ears I  
 swar,

I will be deafer than the blue-eyed  
 cat,

And thrice as blind as any noonday  
 owl,

To holy virgins in their ecstasies,  
 Henceforward."

"Deafer," said the blameless  
 King,

"Gawain, and blinder unto holy  
 things

Hope not to make thyself by idle  
 vows,

Being too blind to have desire to see.  
But if indeed there came a sign from  
heaven,  
Blessed are Bors, Lancelot and Percivale,  
For these have seen according to their  
sight.

For every fiery prophet in old times,  
And all the sacred madness of the  
bard,  
When God made music thro' them,  
could but speak  
His music by the framework and the  
chord;  
And as ye saw it ye have spoken  
truth.

“Nay—but thou errest, Lancelot:  
never yet  
Could all of true and noble in knight  
and man  
Twine round one sin, whatever it  
might be,  
With such a closeness, but apart  
there grew,  
Save that he were the swine thou  
spakest of,  
Some root of knighthood and pure  
nobleness;  
Whereto see thou; that it may bear  
its flower.

“And spake I not too truly, O my  
knights?  
Was I too dark a prophet when I  
said  
To those who went upon the Holy  
Quest,  
That most of them would follow wan-  
dering fires,  
Lost in the quagmire?—lost to me  
and gone,  
And left me gazing at a barren board,  
And a lean Order—scarce return'd a  
tithe—  
And out of those to whom the vision  
came  
My greatest hardly will believe he  
saw;  
Another hath beheld it afar off,  
And leaving human wrongs to right  
themselves,  
Cares but to pass into the silent life.

And one hath had the vision face to  
face,  
And now his chair desires him here in  
vain,  
However they may crown him other-  
where.

“And some among you held, that  
if the King  
Had seen the sight he would have  
sworn the vow:  
Not easily, seeing that the King must  
guard  
That which he rules, and is but as the  
hind  
To whom a space of land is given to  
plow.  
Who may not wander from the allot-  
ted field  
Before his work be done; but, being  
done,  
Let visions of the night or of the day  
Come, as they will; and many a time  
they come,  
Until this earth he walks on seems  
not earth,  
This light that strikes his eyeball is  
not light,  
This air that smites his forehead is  
not air  
But vision—yea, his very hand and  
foot—  
In moments when he feels he cannot  
die,  
And knows himself no vision to him-  
self,  
Nor the high God a vision, nor that  
One  
Who rose again: ye have seen what  
ye have seen.”

“So spake the King: I knew not  
all he meant.”

## PELLEAS AND ETTARRE.

KING ARTHUR made new knights to  
fill the gap  
Left by the Holy Quest; and as he sat  
In hall at old Caerleon, the high  
doors

Were softly sunder'd, and thro' these  
 a youth,  
 Pelleas, and the sweet smell of the  
 fields  
 Past, and the sunshine came along with  
 him.

'Make me thy knight, because I  
 know, Sir King,  
 All that belongs to knighthood, and I  
 love.'  
 Such was his cry: for having heard  
 the King  
 Had let proclaim a tournament—the  
 prize  
 A golden circlet and a knightly  
 sword,  
 Full fain had Pelleas for his lady won  
 The golden circlet, for himself the  
 sword:  
 And there were those who knew him  
 near the King,  
 And promised for him: and Arthur  
 made him knight.

And this new knight, Sir Pelleas of  
 the isles—  
 But lately come to his inheritance,  
 And lord of many a barren isle was  
 he—  
 Riding at noon, a day or twain before,  
 Across the forest call'd of Dean, to  
 find  
 Caerleon and the King, had felt the  
 sun  
 Beat like a strong knight on his helm,  
 and reel'd  
 Almost to falling from his horse; but  
 saw  
 Near him a mound of even-sloping  
 side,  
 Whereon a hundred stately beeches  
 grew,  
 And here and there great hollies  
 under them;  
 But for a mile all round was open  
 space,  
 And fern and heath: and slowly  
 Pelleas drew  
 To that dim day, then binding his  
 good horse  
 To a tree, cast himself down; and as  
 he lay

At random looking over the brown  
 earth  
 Thro' that green-glooming twilight of  
 the grove,  
 It seem'd to Pelleas that the fern  
 without  
 Burnt as a living fire of emeralds,  
 So that his eyes were dazzled looking  
 at it.  
 Then o'er it cross the dimness of a  
 cloud  
 Floating, and once the shadow of a  
 bird  
 Flying, and then a fawn; and his eyes  
 closed.  
 And since he loved all maidens, but  
 no maid  
 In special, half-awake he whisper'd,  
 'Where?  
 O where? I love thee, tho' I know  
 thee not.  
 For fair thou art and pure as Guin-  
 evere,  
 And I will make thee with my spear  
 and sword  
 As famous—O my Queen, my Guin-  
 evere,  
 For I will be thine Arthur when we  
 meet.'

Suddenly waken'd with a sound of  
 talk  
 And laughter at the limit of the wood,  
 And glancing thro' the hoary boles,  
 he saw,  
 Strange as to some old prophet might  
 have seem'd  
 A vision hovering on a sea of fire,  
 Damsels in divers colors like the  
 cloud  
 Of sunset and sunrise, and all of them  
 On horses, and the horses richly trapt  
 Breast-high in that bright line of  
 bracken stood:  
 And all the damsels talk'd confu-  
 sedly,  
 And one was pointing this way, and  
 one that,  
 Because the way was lost.

And Pelleas rose,  
 And loosed his horse, and led him to  
 the light.



There she that seem'd the chief  
among them said,  
'In happy time behold our pilot-star!  
Youth, we are damsels-errant, and we  
ride,  
Arm'd as ye see, to tilt against the  
knights  
There at Caerleon, but have lost our  
way:  
To right? to left? straight forward?  
back again?  
Which? tell us quickly.'

Pelleas gazing thought,  
'Is Guinevere herself so beautiful?'  
For large her violet eyes look'd, and  
her bloom  
A rosy dawn kindled in stainless  
heavens,  
And round her limbs, mature in  
womanhood;  
And slender was her hand and small  
her shape;  
And but for those large eyes, the  
haunts of scorn,  
She might have seem'd a toy to trifle  
with,  
And pass and care no more. But  
while he gazed  
The beauty of her flesh abash'd the  
boy,  
As tho' it were the beauty of her soul:  
For as the base man, judging of the  
good,  
Puts his own baseness in him by  
default  
Of will and nature, so did Pelleas lend  
All the young beauty of his own soul  
to hers,  
Believing her; and when she spake to  
him,  
Stammer'd, and could not make her a  
reply.  
For out of the waste islands had he  
come,  
Where saving his own sisters he had  
known  
Scarce any but the women of his  
isles,  
Rough wives, that laugh'd and  
scream'd against the gulls,  
Makers of nets, and living from the  
sea.

Then with a slow smile turn'd the  
lady round  
And look'd upon her people; and as  
when  
A stone is flung into some sleeping  
tarn,  
The circle widens till it lip the  
marge,  
Spread the slow smile thro' all her  
company.  
Three knights were thereamong; and  
they too smiled,  
Scorning him; for the lady was  
Ettarre,  
And she was a great lady in her land.

Again she said, 'O wild and of the  
woods,  
Knowest thou not the fashion of our  
speech?  
Or have the Heavens but given thee a  
fair face,  
Lacking a tongue?'

'O damsel,' answer'd he,  
'I woke from dreams; and coming  
out of gloom  
Was dazzled by the sudden light,  
and crave  
Pardon: but will ye to Caerleon? I  
Go likewise: shall I lead you to the  
King?'

'Lead then,' she said; and thro'  
the woods they went.  
And while they rode, the meaning in  
his eyes,  
His tenderness of manner, and chaste  
awe,  
His broken utterances and bashful-  
ness,  
Were all a burthen to her, and in her  
heart  
She mutter'd, 'I have lighted on a  
fool,  
Raw, yet so stale!' But since her  
mind was bent  
On hearing, after trumpet blown, her  
name  
And title, 'Queen of Beauty,' in the  
lists  
Cried—and beholding him so strong,  
she thought

That peradventure he will fight for  
me,  
And win the circlet : therefore flatter'd  
him,  
Being so gracious, that he wellnigh  
deem'd  
His wish by hers was echo'd; and her  
knights  
And all her damsels too were gracious  
to him,  
For she was a great lady.

And when they reach'd  
Caerleon, ere they past to lodging,  
she,  
Taking his hand, 'O the strong hand,'  
she said,  
'See! look at mine! but wilt thou  
fight for me,  
And win me this fine circlet, Pel-  
leas,  
That I may love thee?'

Then his helpless heart  
Lapt, and he cried, 'Ay! wilt thou if  
I win?'  
'Ay, that will I,' she answer'd, and  
she laugh'd,  
And straitly nipt the hand, and flung  
it from her;  
Then glanced askew at those three  
knights of hers,  
Till all her ladies laugh'd along with  
her.

'O happy world,' thought Pelleas,  
'all, meseems,  
Are happy; I the happiest of them  
all.'  
Nor slept that night for pleasure in his  
blood,  
And green wood-ways, and eyes among  
the leaves;  
Then being on the morrow knighted,  
sware  
To love one only. And as he came  
away,  
The men who met him rounded on  
their heels  
And wonder'd after him, because his  
face  
Shone like the countenance of a priest  
of old

Against the flame about a sacrifice  
Kindled by fire from heaven: so glad  
was he.

Then Arthur made vast banquets,  
and strange knights  
From the four winds came in: and  
each one sat,  
Tho' served with choice from air,  
land, stream, and sea,  
Oft in mid-banquet measuring with his  
eyes  
His neighbor's make and might: and  
Pelleas look'd  
Noble among the noble, for he  
dream'd  
His lady loved him, and he knew him-  
self  
Loved of the King: and him his new-  
made knight  
Worshipt, whose lightest whisper  
moved him more  
Than all the ranged reasons of the  
world.

Then blush'd and brake the morn-  
ing of the jousts,  
And this was call'd 'The Tournament  
of Youth':  
For Arthur, loving his young knight,  
withheld  
His older and his mightier from the  
lists,  
That Pelleas might obtain his lady's  
love,  
According to her promise, and re-  
main  
Lord of the tourney. And Arthur had  
the jousts  
Down in the flat field by the shore of  
Usk  
Holden: the gilded parapets were  
crown'd  
With faces, and the great tower fill'd  
with eyes  
Up to the summit, and the trumpets  
blew.  
There all day long Sir Pelleas kept the  
field  
With honor: so by that strong hand  
of his  
The sword and golden circlet were  
achieved.

Then rang the shout his lady loved :  
 the heat  
 Of pride and glory fired her face ; her  
 eye  
 Sparkled ; she caught the circlet from  
 his lance,  
 And there before the people crown'd  
 herself :  
 So for the last time she was gracious  
 to him.

Then at Caerleon for a space—her  
 look  
 Bright for all others, cloudier on her  
 knight—  
 Linger'd Ettarre : and seeing Pelleas  
 droop,  
 Said Guinevere, ' We marvel at thee  
 much,  
 O damsel, wearing this unsunny face  
 To him who won thee glory ! ' And  
 she said,  
 ' Had ye not held your Lancelot in  
 your bower,  
 My Queen, he had not won.' Where-  
 at the Queen,  
 As one whose foot is bitten by an  
 ant,  
 Glanced down upon her, turn'd and  
 went her way.

But after, when her damsels, and  
 herself,  
 And those three knights all set their  
 faces home,  
 Sir Pelleas follow'd. She that saw  
 him cried,  
 ' Damsels—and yet I should be  
 shamed to say it—  
 I cannot bide Sir Baby. Keep him  
 back  
 Among yourselves. Would rather  
 that we had  
 Some rough old knight who knew the  
 worldly way,  
 Albeit grizzlier than a bear, to ride  
 And jest with : take him to you, keep  
 him off,  
 And pamper him with papmeat, if ye  
 will,  
 Old milky fables of the wolf and sheep,  
 Such as the wholesome mothers tell  
 their boys.

Nay, should ye try him with a merry  
 one  
 To find his mettle, good : and if he fly  
 us,  
 Small matter ! let him.' This her  
 damsels heard,  
 And mindful of her small and cruel  
 hand,  
 They, closing round him thro' the  
 journey home,  
 Acted her hest, and always from her  
 side  
 Restrain'd him with all manner of de-  
 vice,  
 So that he could not come to speech  
 with her.  
 And when she gain'd her castle,  
 upsprang the bridge,  
 Down rang the grate of iron thro' the  
 groove,  
 And he was left alone in open field.

' These be the ways of ladies,'  
 Pelleas thought,  
 ' To those who love them, trials of our  
 faith.  
 Yea, let her prove me to the utter-  
 most,  
 For loyal to the uttermost am I.'  
 So made his moan ; and, darkness  
 falling, sought  
 A priory not far off, there lodged, but  
 rose  
 With morning every day, and, moist or  
 dry,  
 Full-arm'd upon his charger all day  
 long  
 Sat by the walls, and no one open'd to  
 him.

And this persistence turn'd her  
 scorn to wrath.  
 Then calling her three knights, she  
 charged them, ' Out !  
 And drive him from the walls.' And  
 out they came,  
 But Pelleas overthrew them as they  
 dash'd  
 Against him one by one ; and these  
 return'd,  
 But still he kept his watch beneath  
 the wall.

Thereon her wrath became a hate;  
and once,  
A week beyond, while walking on the  
walls  
With her three knights, she pointed  
downward, 'Look,  
He haunts me—I cannot breathe—  
besieges me;  
Down! strike him! put my hate into  
your strokes,  
And drive him from my walls.' And  
down they went,  
And Pelleas overthrew them one by  
one;  
And from the tower above him cried  
Ettarre,  
'Bind him and bring him in.'

He heard her voice;  
Then let the strong hand, which had  
overthrown  
Her minion-knights, by those he over-  
threw  
Be bounden straight, and so they  
brought him in.

Then when he came before Ettarre,  
the sight  
Of her rich beauty made him at one  
glance  
More bondsman in his heart than in  
his bonds.  
Yet with good cheer he spake,  
'Behold me, Lady,  
A prisoner, and the vassal of thy will;  
And if thou keep me in thy donjon  
here,  
Content am I so that I see thy face  
But once a day: for I have sworn my  
vows,  
And thou hast given thy promise, and  
I know  
That all these pains are trials of my  
faith,  
And that thyself, when thou hast seen  
me strain'd  
And sifted to the utmost, wilt at length  
Yield me thy love and know me for  
thy knight.'

Then she began to rail so bitterly,  
With all her damsels, he was stricken  
mute;

But when she mock'd his vows and  
the great King,  
Lighted on words: 'For pity of thine  
own self,  
Peace, Lady, peace: is he not thine  
and mine?'  
'Thou fool,' she said, 'I never heard  
his voice  
But long'd to break away. Unbind  
him now,  
And thrust him out of doors; for save  
he be  
Fool to the midmost marrow of his  
bones,  
He will return no more.' And those,  
her three,  
Laugh'd, and unbound, and thrust him  
from the gate.

And after this, a week beyond,  
again  
She call'd them, saying, 'There he  
watches yet,  
There like a dog before his master's  
door!  
Kick'd, he returns: do ye not hate  
him, ye?  
Ye know yourselves: how can ye bide  
at peace,  
Affronted with his fulsome innocence?  
Are ye but creatures of the board and  
bed,  
No men to strike? Fall on him all at  
once,  
And if ye slay him I reckon not: if ye  
fail,  
Give ye the slave mine order to be  
bound,  
Bind him as heretofore, and bring  
him in:  
It may be ye shall slay him in his  
bonds.'

She spake; and at her will they  
couch'd their spears,  
Three against one: and Gawain pass-  
ing by,  
Bound upon solitary adventure, saw  
Low down beneath the shadow of those  
towers  
A villainy, three to one: and thro' his  
heart  
The fire of honor and all noble deeds

Flash'd, and he call'd, 'I strike upon  
thy side—  
The catiffs!' 'Nay,' said Pelleas,  
'but forbear;  
He needs no aid who doth his lady's  
will.'

So Gawain, looking at the villainy  
done,  
Forbore, but in his heat and eagerness  
Trembled and quiver'd, as the dog,  
withheld  
A moment from the vermin that he  
sees  
Before him, shivers, ere he springs and  
kills.

And Pelleas overthrew them, one to  
three;  
And they rose up, and bound, and  
brought him in.  
Then first her anger, leaving Pelleas,  
burn'd  
Full on her knights in many an evil  
name  
Of craven, weakling, and thrice-beaten  
hound:  
'Yet, take him, ye that scarce are fit  
to touch,  
Far less to bind, your victor, and  
thrust him out,  
And let who will release him from his  
bonds.  
And if he comes again—there she  
brake short;  
And Pelleas answer'd, 'Lady, for  
indeed  
I loved you and I deem'd you beauti-  
ful,  
I cannot brook to see your beauty  
marr'd  
Thro' evil spite: and if ye love me  
not,  
I cannot bear to dream you so for-  
sworn:  
I had liefer ye were worthy of my  
love,  
Than to be loved again of you—fare-  
well;  
And tho' ye kill my hope, not yet my  
love,  
Vex not yourself: ye will not see me  
more.'

While thus he spake, she gazed  
upon the man  
Of princely bearing, tho' in bonds,  
and thought,  
'Why have I push'd him from me?  
this man loves,  
If love there be: yet him I loved not.  
Why?  
I deem'd him fool? yea, so? or that  
in him  
A something—was it nobler than my-  
self?—  
Seem'd my reproach? He is not of  
my kind.  
He could not love me, did he know  
me well.  
Nay, let him go—and quickly.' And  
her knights  
Laugh'd not, but thrust him bounden  
out of door.

Forth sprang Gawain, and loosed  
him from his bonds,  
And flung them o'er the walls; and  
afterward,  
Shaking his hands, as from a lazar's  
rag,  
'Faith of my body,' he said, 'and art  
thou not—  
Yea thou art he, whom late our Arthur  
made  
Knight of his table; yea and he that  
won  
The circlet? wherefore hast thou so  
defamed  
Thy brotherhood in me and all the  
rest,  
As let these catiffs on thee work their  
will?'

And Pelleas answer'd, 'O, their  
wills are hers  
For whom I won the circlet; and  
mine, hers,  
Thus to be bounden, so to see her face,  
Marr'd tho' it be with spite and mock-  
ery now,  
Other than when I found her in the  
woods;  
And tho' she hath me bounden but in  
spite,  
And all to flout me, when they bring  
me in,

Let me be bounden, I shall see her  
face;  
Else must I die thro' mine unhappi-  
ness.'

And Gawain answer'd kindly tho' in  
scorn,  
'Why, let my lady bind me if she  
will,

And let my lady beat me if she  
will:

But an she send her delegate to thrall  
These fighting hands of mine—Christ  
kill me then

But I will slice him handless by the  
wrist,

And let my lady sear the stump for  
him,

Howl as he may. But hold me for  
your friend:

Come, ye know nothing: here I pledge  
my troth,

Yea, by the honor of the Table  
Round,

I will be leal to thee and work thy  
work,

And tame thy jailing princess to thine  
hand.

Lend me thine horse and arms, and I  
will say

That I have slain thee. She will let  
me in

To hear the manner of thy fight and  
fall;

Then, when I come within her  
counsels, then

From prime to vespers will I chant  
thy praise

As prowest knight and truest lover,  
more

Than any have sung thee living, till  
she long

To have thee back in lusty life again,  
Not to be bound, save by white bonds

and warm,  
Dearer than freedom. Wherefore

now thy horse  
And armor: let me go: be com-  
forted:

Give me three days to melt her fancy,  
and hope

The third night hence will bring thee  
news of gold.'

Then Pelleas lent his horse and all  
his arms,  
Saving the goodly sword, his prize,  
and took  
Gawain's, and said, 'Betray me not,  
but help—  
Art thou not he whom men call light-  
of-love?'

'Ay,' said Gawain, 'for women be so  
light.'

Then bounded forward to the castle  
walls,

And raised a bugle hanging from his  
neck,

And winded it, and that so music-  
ally

That all the old echoes hidden in the  
wall

Rang out like hollow woods at hunt-  
ing-tide.

Up ran a score of damsels to the  
tower;

'Avaunt,' they cried, 'our lady loves  
thee not.'

But Gawain lifting up his vizor said,  
'Gawain am I, Gawain of Arthur's

court,  
And I have slain this Pelleas whom  
ye hate:

Behold his horse and armor. Open  
gates,

And I will make you merry.'

And down they ran,  
Her damsels, crying to their lady,

'Lo!  
Pelleas is dead—he told us—he that  
hath

His horse and armor: will ye let him  
in?'

He slew him! Gawain, Gawain of  
the court,

Sir Gawain—there he waits below the  
wall,

Blowing his bugle as who should say  
him nay.'

And so, leave given, straight on thro'  
open door

Rode Gawain, whom she greeted  
courteously.

'Dead, is it so?' she ask'd. 'Ay,  
ay,' said he,  
'And oft in dying cried upon your  
name.'  
'Pity on him,' she answer'd, 'a good  
knight,  
But never let me bide one hour at  
peace.'  
'Ay,' thought Gawain, 'and you be  
fair enow:  
But I to your dead man have given  
my troth,  
That whom ye loathe, him will I  
make you love.'

So those three days, aimless about  
the land,  
Lost in a doubt, Pelleas wandering  
Waited, until the third night brought  
a moon  
With promise of large light on woods  
and ways.

Hot was the night and silent; but a  
sound  
Of Gawain ever coming, and this  
lay—  
Which Pelleas had heard sung before  
the Queen,  
And seen her sadden listening—vext  
his heart,  
And marr'd his rest—'A worm within  
the rose.'

'A rose, but one, none other rose  
had I,  
A rose, one rose, and this was won-  
drous fair,  
One rose, a rose that gladden'd earth  
and sky,  
One rose, my rose, that sweeten'd all  
mine air—  
I cared not for the thorns; the thorns  
were there.

'One rose, a rose to gather by and  
by,  
One rose, a rose, to gather and to  
wear,  
No rose but one—what other rose  
had I?  
One rose, my rose; a rose that will  
not die,—

He dies who loves it,—if the worm be  
there.'

This tender rhyme, and evermore the  
doubt,  
'Why lingers Gawain with his golden  
news?'  
So shook him that he could not rest,  
but rode  
Ere midnight to her walls, and bound  
his horse  
Hard by the gates. Wide open were  
the gates,  
And no watch kept; and in thro'  
these he past,  
And heard but his own steps, and his  
own heart  
Beating, for nothing moved but his  
own self,  
And his own shadow. Then he crost  
the court,  
And spied not any light in hall or  
bower,  
But saw the postern portal also wide  
Yawning; and up a slope of garden,  
all  
Of roses white and red, and brambles  
mixt  
And overgrowing them, went on, and  
found,  
Here too, all hush'd below the mellow  
moon,  
Save that one rivulet from a tiny  
cave  
Came lightening downward, and so  
spilt itself  
Among the roses, and was lost again.

Then was he ware of three pavilions  
rear'd  
Above the bushes, gilden-peakt: in  
one,  
Red after revel, droned her lurdane  
knights  
Slumbering, and their three squires  
across their feet:  
In one, their malice on the placid lip  
Froz'n by sweet sleep, four of her  
damsels lay:  
And in the third, the circlet of the  
jousts  
Bound on her brow, were Gawain and  
Ettarre.

Back, as a hand that pushes thro'  
the leaf  
To find a nest and feels a snake, he  
drew:  
Back, as a coward slinks from what he  
fears  
To cope with, or a traitor proven, or  
hound  
Beaten, did Pelleas in an utter  
shame  
Creep with his shadow thro' the court  
again,  
Fingering at his sword-handle until  
he stood  
There on the castle-bridge once more,  
and thought,  
'I will go back, and slay them where  
they lie.'

And so went back and seeing them  
yet in sleep  
Said, 'Ye, that so dishallow the holy  
sleep,  
Your sleep is death,' and drew the  
sword, and thought,  
'What! slay a sleeping knight? the  
King hath bound  
And sworn me to this brother-  
hood;' again,  
'Alas that ever a knight should be so  
false.'  
Then turn'd, and so return'd, and  
groaning laid  
The naked sword athwart their naked  
throats,  
There left it, and them sleeping; and  
she lay,  
The circlet of the tourney round her  
brows,  
And the sword of the tourney across  
her throat.

And forth he past, and mounting on  
his horse  
Stared at her towers that, larger than  
themselves  
In their own darkness, throug'd into  
the moon.  
Then crush'd the saddle with his  
thighs, and clench'd  
His hands, and madden'd with him-  
self and moan'd:

'Would they have risen against me  
in their blood  
At the last day? I might have an-  
swer'd them  
Even before high God. O towers so  
strong,  
Huge, solid, would that even while I  
gaze  
The crack of earthquake shivering  
to your base  
Split you, and Hell burst up your  
harlot roofs  
Bellowing, and charr'd you thro' and  
thro' within,  
Black as the harlot's heart—hollow  
as a skull!  
Let the fierce east scream thro' your  
eyelet-holes,  
And whirl the dust of harlots round  
and round  
In dung and nettles! hiss, snake—I  
saw him there—  
Let the fox bark, let the wolf yell.  
Who yells  
Here in the still sweet summer night,  
but I—  
I, the poor Pelleas whom she call'd  
her fool?  
Fool, beast—he, she, or I? myself  
most fool;  
Beast too, as lacking human wit—  
disgraced,  
Dishonor'd all for trial of true love—  
Love? we be all alike: only the  
King  
Hath made us fools and liars. O  
noble vows!  
O great and sane and simple race of  
brutes  
That own no lust because they have  
no law!  
For why should I have loved her to  
my shame?  
I loathe her, as I loved her to my  
shame.  
I never loved her, I but lusted for  
her—  
Away—'

He dash'd the rowel into his  
horse,  
And bounded forth and vanish'd thro'  
the night.



Then she, that felt the cold touch  
on her throat,  
Awaking knew the sword, and turn'd  
herself  
To Gawain: 'Liar, for thou hast not  
slain  
This Pelleas! here he stood, and might  
have slain  
Me and thyself.' And he that tells  
the tale  
Says that her ever-veering fancy  
turn'd  
To Pelleas, as the one true knight on  
earth,  
And only lover; and thro' her love  
her life  
Wasted and pined, desiring him in  
vain.

But he by wild and way, for half  
the night,  
And over hard and soft, striking the  
sod  
From out the soft, the spark from off  
the hard,  
Rode till the star above the wakening  
sun,  
Beside that tower where Percivale  
was cowl'd,  
Glanced from the rosy forehead of the  
dawn.  
For so the words were flash'd into his  
heart  
He knew not whence or wherefore: 'O  
sweet star,  
Pure on the virgin forehead of the  
dawn!'  
And there he would have wept, but  
felt his eyes  
Harder and drier than a fountain  
bed  
In summer: thither came the village  
girls  
And linger'd talking, and they come  
no more  
Till the sweet heavens have fill'd it  
from the heights  
Again with living waters in, the  
change  
Of seasons: hard his eyes; harder  
his heart  
Seem'd; but so weary were his  
limbs, that he,

Gasping, 'Of Arthur's hall am I, but  
here,  
Here let me rest and die,' cast him-  
self down,  
And gulf'd his griefs in inmost sleep;  
so lay,  
Till shaken by a dream, that Gawain  
fired  
The hall of Merlin, and the morning  
star  
Reel'd in the smoke, brake into  
flame, and fell.

He woke, and being ware of some  
one nigh,  
Sent hands upon him, as to tear him,  
crying,  
'False! and I held thee pure as  
Guinevere.'

But Percivale stood near him and  
replied,  
'Am I but false as Guinevere is pure?  
Or art thou mazed with dreams? or  
being one  
Of our free-spoken Table hast not  
heard  
That Lancelot'—there he check'd  
himself and paused.

Then fared it with Sir Pelleas as  
with one  
Who gets a wound in battle, and the  
sword  
That made it plunges thro' the wound  
again,  
And pricks it deeper: and he shrank  
and wail'd,  
'Is the Queen false?' and Percivale  
was mute.  
'Have any of our Round Table held  
their vows?'  
And Percivale made answer not a  
word,  
'Is the King true?' 'The King!'  
said Percivale.  
'Why then let men couple at once  
with wolves.  
What! art thou mad?'

But Pelleas, leaping up,  
Ran thro' the doors and vaulted on his  
horse

And fled: small pity upon his horse  
 had he,  
 Or on himself, or any, and when he  
 met  
 A cripple, one that held a hand for  
 alms—  
 Hunch'd as he was, and like an old  
 dwarf-elm  
 That turns its back on the salt blast,  
 the boy  
 Paused not, but overrode him, shout-  
 ing, 'False,  
 And false with Gawain!' and so left  
 him bruised  
 And batter'd, and fled on, and hill  
 and wood  
 Went ever streaming by him till the  
 gloom,  
 That follows on the turning of the  
 world,  
 Darken'd the common path: he  
 twitch'd the reins,  
 And made his beast that better knew  
 it, swerve  
 Now off it and now on; but when he  
 saw  
 High up in Heaven the hall that  
 Merlin built,  
 Blackening against the dead-green  
 stripes of even,  
 'Black nest of rats,' he groan'd 'ye  
 build too high.'

Not long thereafter from the city  
 gates  
 Issued Sir Lancelot riding airily,  
 Warm with a gracious parting from  
 the Queen,  
 Peace at his heart, and gazing at a star  
 And marvelling what it was: on whom  
 the boy,  
 Across the silent seeded meadow-  
 grass  
 Borne, clash'd: and Lancelot, saying,  
 'What name hast thou  
 That ridest here so blindly and so  
 hard?'  
 'No name, no name,' he shouted, 'a  
 scourge am I  
 To lash the treasons of the Table  
 Round.'  
 'Yea, but thy name?' 'I have many  
 names,' he cried:

'I am wrath and shame and hate and  
 evil fame,  
 And like a poisonous wind I pass to  
 blast  
 And blaze the crime of Lancelot and  
 the Queen.'  
 'First over me,' said Lancelot, 'shalt  
 thou pass.'  
 'Fight therefore,' yell'd the youth,  
 and either knight  
 Drew back a space, and when they  
 closed, at once  
 The weary steed of Pelleas flounder-  
 ing flung  
 His rider, who call'd out from the  
 dark field,  
 'Thou art false as Hell: slay me: I  
 have no sword.'  
 Then Lancelot, 'Yea, between thy  
 lips—and sharp;  
 But here will I disedge it by thy  
 death.'  
 'Slay then,' he shriek'd, 'my will is to  
 be slain,'  
 And Lancelot, with his heel upon the  
 fall'n,  
 Rolling his eyes, a moment stood,  
 then spake:  
 'Rise, weakling; I am Lancelot; say  
 thy say.'

And Lancelot slowly rode his war-  
 horse back  
 To Camelot, and Sir Pelleas in brief  
 while  
 Caught his unbroken limbs from the  
 dark field,  
 And follow'd to the city. It chanced  
 that both  
 Brake into hall together, worn and  
 pale.  
 There with her knights and dames  
 was Guinevere.  
 Full wonderingly she gazed on Lancelot  
 lot  
 So soon return'd, and then on Pelleas,  
 him  
 Who had not greeted her, but cast  
 himself  
 Down on a bench, hard-breathing.  
 'Have ye fought?'  
 She ask'd of Lancelot. 'Ay, my  
 Queen,' he said.

'And thou hast overthrown him?'  
 'Ay, my Queen.'  
 Then she, turning to Pelleas, 'O  
 young knight,  
 Hath the great heart of knighthood  
 in thee fail'd  
 So far thou canst not bide, unfro-  
 wardly,  
 A fall from *him*?' Then, for he an-  
 swer'd not,  
 'Or hast thou other griefs? If I, the  
 Queen,  
 May help them, loose thy tongue, and  
 let me know.'  
 But Pelleas lifted up an eye so fierce  
 She quail'd; and he, hissing 'I have  
 no sword,'  
 Sprang from the door into the dark.  
 The Queen  
 Look'd hard upon her lover, he on  
 her:  
 And each foresaw the dolorous day to  
 be:  
 And all talk died, as in a grove all  
 song  
 Beneath the shadow of some bird of  
 prey;  
 Then a long silence came upon the  
 hall,  
 And Modred thought, 'The time is  
 hard at hand.'

THE LAST TOURNAMENT.

DAGONET, the fool, whom Gawain in  
 his mood  
 Had made mock-knight of Arthur's  
 Table Round,  
 At Camelot, high above the yellowing  
 woods,  
 Danced like a wither'd leaf before the  
 hall.  
 And toward him from the hall, with  
 harp in hand,  
 And from the crown thereof a carca-  
 net  
 Of ruby swaying to and fro, the  
 prize  
 Of Tristram in the jousts of yester-  
 day,  
 Came Tristram, saying, 'Why skip ye  
 so. Sir Fool!'

For Arthur and Sir Lancelot riding  
 once  
 Far down beneath a winding wall of  
 rock  
 Heard a child wail. A stump of oak  
 half-dead,  
 From roots like some black coil of  
 carven snakes,  
 Clutch'd at the crag, and started thro'  
 mid air  
 Bearing an eagle's nest: and thro' the  
 tree  
 Rush'd ever a rainy wind, and thro'  
 the wind  
 Pierced ever a child's cry: and crag  
 and tree  
 Scaling, Sir Lancelot from the peril-  
 ous nest,  
 This ruby necklace thrice around her  
 neck,  
 And all unscarr'd from beak or talon,  
 brought  
 A maiden babe; which Arthur pitying  
 took,  
 Then gave it to his Queen to rear:  
 the Queen  
 But coldly acquiescing, in her white  
 arms  
 Received, and after loved it tenderly,  
 And named it Nestling; so forgot  
 herself  
 A moment, and her cares; till that  
 young life  
 Being smitten in mid heaven with  
 mortal cold  
 Past from her; and in time the carca-  
 net  
 Vext her with plaintive memories of  
 the child:  
 So she, delivering it to Arthur, said,  
 'Take thou the jewels of this dead in-  
 nocence,  
 And make them, an thou wilt, a tour-  
 ney-prize.'  
 To whom the King, 'Peace to thine  
 eagle-borne  
 Dead nestling, and this honor after  
 death,  
 Following thy will! but, O my Queen,  
 I muse  
 Why ye not wear on arm, or neck, or  
 zone

Those diamonds that I rescued from  
the tarn,  
And Lancelot won, methought, for  
thee to wear.'

'Would rather you had let them  
fall,' she cried,  
'Plunge and be lost—ill-fated as they  
were,  
A bitterness to me!—ye look amazed,  
Not knowing they were lost as soon  
as given—  
Slid from my hands, when I was lean-  
ing out  
Above the river—that unhappy child  
Past in her barge: but rosier luck will  
go  
With these rich jewels, seeing that  
they came  
Not from the skeleton of a brother-  
slayer,  
But the sweet body of a maiden babe.  
Perchance—who knows?—the purest  
of thy knights  
May win them for the purest of my  
maids.'

She ended, and the cry of a great  
jousts  
With trumpet-blowings ran on all the  
ways  
From Camelot in among the faded  
fields  
To furthest towers; and everywhere  
the knights  
Arn'd for a day of glory before the  
King.

But on the hither side of that loud  
morn  
Into the hall stagger'd, his visage  
ribb'd  
From ear to ear with dogwhip-weals,  
his nose  
Bridge-broken, one eye out, and one  
hand off,  
And one with shatter'd fingers dan-  
gling lame,  
A churl, to whom indignantly the  
King,

'My churl, for whom Christ died,  
what evil beast

Hath drawn his claws athwart thy  
face? or fiend?  
Man was it who marr'd heaven's im-  
age in thee thus?'

Then, sputtering thro' the hedge of  
splinter'd teeth,  
Yet strangers to the tongue, and with  
blunt stump  
Pitch-blacken'd sawing the air, said  
the maim'd churl,

'He took them and he drave them  
to his tower—  
Some hold he was a table-knight of  
thine—  
A hundred goodly ones—the Red  
Knight, he—  
Lord, I was tending swine, and the  
Red Knight  
Brake in upon me and drave them to  
his tower;  
And when I call'd upon thy name as  
one  
That doest right by gentle and by  
churl,  
Maim'd me and maul'd, and would  
outright have slain,  
Save that he sware me to a message,  
saying,  
"Tell thou the King and all his liars,  
that I  
Have founded my Round Table in the  
North,  
And whatsoever his own knights have  
sworn  
My knights have sworn the counter to  
it—and say  
My tower is full of harlots, like his  
court,  
But mine are worthier, seeing they  
profess  
To be none other than themselves—  
and say  
My knights are all adulterers like his  
own,  
But mine are truer, seeing they pro-  
fess  
To be none other; and say his hour  
is come,  
The heathen are upon him, his long  
lance  
Broken, and his Excalibur a straw."'

Then Arthur turn'd to Kay the  
seneschal,  
'Take thou my churl, and tend him  
curiously  
Like a king's heir, till all his hurts be  
whole.  
The heathen—but that ever-climbing  
wave,  
Hurl'd back again so often in empty  
foam,  
Hath lain for years at rest—and rene-  
gades,  
Thieves, bandits, leavings of confu-  
sion, whom  
The wholesome realm is purged of  
otherwhere,  
Friends, thro' your manhood and your  
fidelity,—now  
Make their last head like Satan in the  
North.  
My younger knights, new-made, in  
whom your flower  
Waits to be solid fruit of golden  
deeds,  
Move with me toward their quelling,  
which achieved,  
The loneliest ways are safe from  
shore to shore.  
But thou, Sir Lancelot, sitting in my  
place  
Enchair'd to-morrow, arbitrate the  
field;  
For wherefore shouldst thou care to  
mingle with it,  
Only to yield my Queen her own  
again?  
Speak, Lancelot, thou art silent: is it  
well?'

Thereto Sir Lancelot answer'd, 'It  
is well:  
Yet better if the King abide, and leave  
The leading of his younger knights to  
me.  
Else, for the King has will'd it, it is  
well.'

Then Arthur rose and Lancelot fol-  
low'd him,  
And while they stood without the  
doors, the King  
Turn'd to him saying, 'Is it then so  
well?'

Or mine the blame that oft I seem as  
he  
Of whom was written, "A sound is in  
his ears"?  
The foot that loiters, bidden go,—the  
glance  
That only seems half-loyal to com-  
mand,—  
A manner somewhat fall'n from rever-  
ence—  
Or have I dream'd the bearing of our  
knights  
Tells of a manhood ever less and  
lower?  
Or whence the fear lest this my realm,  
uprear'd,  
By noble deeds at one with noble  
vows,  
From flat confusion and brute vio-  
lences,  
Reel back into the beast, and be no  
more?'

He spoke, and taking all his  
younger knights,  
Down the slope city rode, and sharply  
turn'd  
North by the gate. In her high  
bower the Queen,  
Working a tapestry, lifted up her head,  
Watch'd her lord's pass, and knew not  
that she sigh'd.  
Then ran across her memory the  
strange rhyme  
Of bygone Merlin, 'Where is he who  
knows?  
From the great deep to the great  
deep he goes.'

But when the morning of a tour-  
nament,  
By these in earnest those in mockery  
call'd  
The Tournament of the Dead Inno-  
cence,  
Brake with a wet wind blowing, Lan-  
celot,  
Round whose sick head all night, like  
birds of prey,  
The words of Arthur flying shriek'd,  
arose,  
And down a streetway hung with  
folds of pure

White samite, and by fountains running wine,  
 Where children sat in white with cups of gold,  
 Moved to the lists, and there, with slow sad steps  
 Ascending, fill'd his double-dragon'd chair.

He glanced and saw the stately galleries,  
 Dame, damsel, each thro' worship of their Queen  
 White-robed in honor of the stainless child,  
 And some with scatter'd jewels, like a bank  
 Of maiden snow mingled with sparks of fire.  
 He look'd but once, and veil'd his eyes again.

The sudden trumpet sounded as in a dream  
 To ears but half-awaked, then one low roll  
 Of Autumn thunder, and the jousts began:  
 And ever the wind blew, and yellowing leaf  
 And gloom and gleam, and shower and shorn plume  
 Went down it. Sighing wearily, as one  
 Who sits and gazes on a faded fire,  
 When all the goodlier guests are past away,  
 Sat their great umpire, looking o'er the lists.  
 He saw the laws that ruled the tournament  
 Broken, but spake not; once, a knight cast down  
 Before his throne of arbitration cursed  
 The dead babe and the follies of the King;  
 And once the laces of a helmet crack'd,  
 And show'd him, like a vermin in its hole,  
 Modred, a narrow face: anon he heard  
 The voice that billow'd round the barriers roar

An ocean-sounding welcome to one knight,  
 But newly-enter'd, taller than the rest,  
 And armor'd all in forest green, whereon  
 There tript a hundred tiny silver deer,  
 And wearing but a holly-spray for crest,  
 With ever-scattering berries, and on shield  
 A spear, a harp, a bugle—Tristram—late  
 From overseas in Brittany return'd,  
 And marriage with a princess of that realm,  
 Isolte the White—Sir Tristram of the Woods—  
 Whom Lancelot knew, had held sometime with pain  
 His own against him, and now yearn'd to shake  
 The burthen off his heart in one full shock  
 With Tristram ev'n to death: his strong hands gript  
 And dinted the gilt dragons right and left,  
 Until he groan'd for wrath—so many of those,  
 That ware their ladies' colors on the casque,  
 Drew from before Sir Tristram to the bounds,  
 And there with gibes and flickering mockeries  
 Stood, while he mutter'd, 'Craven crests! O shame!  
 What faith have these in whom they swear to love?  
 The glory of our Round Table is no more.'

So Tristram won, and Lancelot gave, the gems,  
 Not speaking other word than 'Hast thou won?  
 Art thou the purest, brother? See, the hand  
 Wherewith thou takest this, is red!' to whom  
 Tristram, half plagued by Lancelot's languorous mood,

Made answer, 'Ay, but wherefore toss  
me this  
Like a dry bone cast to some hungry  
hound?  
Let be thy fair Queen's fantasy.  
Strength of heart  
And might of limb, but mainly use  
and skill,  
Are winners in this pastime of our  
King.  
My hand—belike the lance hath dript  
upon it—  
No blood of mine, I trow; but O  
chief knight,  
Right arm of Arthur in the battlefield,  
Great brother, thou nor I have made  
the world;  
Be happy in thy fair Queen as I in  
mine.'

And Tristram round the gallery  
made his horse  
Caracole; then bow'd his homage,  
bluntly saying,  
'Fair damsels, each to him who wor-  
ships each  
Sole Queen of Beauty and of love, be-  
hold  
This day my Queen of Beauty is not  
here.'  
And most of these were mute, some  
anger'd, one  
Murmuring, 'All courtesy is dead,'  
and one,  
'The glory of our Round Table is no  
more.'

Then fell thick rain, plume droopt  
and mantle clung,  
And pettish cries awoke, and the wan  
day  
Went glooming down in wet and  
weariness:  
But under her black brows a swarthy  
one  
Laugh'd shrilly, crying, 'Praise the  
patient saints,  
Our one white day of Innocence hath  
past,  
Tho' somewhat draggled at the skirt.  
So be it.  
The snowdrop only, flowering thro'  
the year,

Would make the world as blank as  
Winter-tide.  
Come—let us gladden their sad eyes,  
our Queen's  
And Lancelot's, at this night's so-  
lemnity  
With all the kindlier colors of the  
field.'

So dame and damsel glitter'd at the  
feast  
Variously gay: for he that tells the  
tale  
Liken'd them, saying, as when an  
hour of cold  
Falls on the mountain in midsummer  
snows,  
And all the purple slopes of mountain  
flowers  
Pass under white, till the warm hour  
returns  
With veer of wind, and all are flow-  
ers again;  
So dame and damsel cast the simple  
white,  
And glowing in all colors, the live  
grass,  
Rose-campion, bluebell, kingcup,  
poppy, glanced  
About the revels, and with mirth so  
loud  
Beyond all use, that, half-amazed, the  
Queen,  
And wroth at Tristram and the law-  
less jousts,  
Brake up their sports, then slowly to  
her bower  
Parted, and in her bosom pain was  
lord.

And little Dagonet on the morrow  
morn,  
High over all the yellowing Autumn-  
tide,  
Danced like a wither'd leaf before the  
hall.  
Then Tristram saying, 'Why skip ye  
so, Sir Fool?'  
Wheel'd round on either heel, Dag-  
onet replied,  
'Belike for lack of wiser company;  
Or being fool, and seeing too much  
wit

Makes the world rotten, why, belike I  
skip

To know myself the wisest knight of  
all.'

'Ay, fool,' said Tristram, 'but 'tis eat-  
ing dry

To dance without a catch, a rounde-  
lay

To dance to.' Then he twangled on  
his harp,

And while he twangled little Dagonet  
stood

Quiet as any water-sodden log  
Stay'd in the wandering warble of a  
brook;

But when the twangling ended, skipt  
again;

And being ask'd, 'Why skipt ye not,  
Sir Fool?'

Made answer, 'I had liefer twenty  
years

Skip to the broken music of my  
brains

Than any broken music thou canst  
make.'

Then Tristram, waiting for the quip  
to come,

'Good now, what music have I  
broken, fool?'

And little Dagonet, skipping, 'Ar-  
thur, the King's;

For when thou playest that air with  
Queen Isolt,

Thou makest broken music with thy  
bride,

Her daintier namesake down in Brit-  
tany—

And so thou breakest Arthur's music  
too.'

'Save for that broken music in thy  
brains,

Sir Fool,' said Tristram, "I would  
break thy head.

Fool, I came late, the heathen wars  
were o'er,

The life had flown, we sware but by  
the shell—

I am but a fool to reason with a fool—  
Come, thou art crabb'd and sour: but

lean me down,

Sir Dagonet, one of thy long asses'  
ears,

And harken if my music be not true.

"Free love—free field—we love  
but while we may:

The woods are hush'd, their music is  
no more:

The leaf is dead, the yearning past  
away:

New leaf, new life—the days of frost  
are o'er:

New life, new love, to suit the newer  
day:

New loves are sweet as those that  
went before:

Free love—free field—we love but  
while we may."

'Ye might have moved slow-meas-  
ure to my tune,

Not stood stockstill. I made it in the  
woods,

And heard it ring as true as tested  
gold.'

But Dagonet with one foot poised  
in his hand,

'Friend, did ye mark that fountain  
yesterday

Made to run wine?—but this had run  
itself

All out like a long life to a sour  
end—

And them that round it sat with  
golden cups

To hand the wine to whosoever  
came—

The twelve small damosels white as  
Innocence,

In honor of poor Innocence the  
babe,

Who left the gems which Innocence  
the Queen

Lent to the King, and Innocence the  
King

Gave for a prize—and one of those  
white slips

Handed her cup and piped, the pretty  
one,

"Drink, drink, Sir Fool," and there-  
upon I drank,

Spat—pish—the cup was gold, the  
draught was mud.'

And Tristram, 'Was it muddier  
than thy gibes?'



Is all the laughter gone dead out of thee?—

Not marking how the knighthood mock thee, fool—

“Fear God: honor the King—his one true knight—

Sole follower of the vows”—for here be they

Who knew thee swine enow before I came,

Smuttier than blasted grain: but when the King

Had made thee fool, thy vanity so shot up

It frightened all free fool from out thy heart;

Which leit thee less than fool, and less than swine,

A naked aught—yet swine I hold thee still,

For I have flung thee pearls and find thee swine.’

And little Dagonet mincing with his feet,

‘Knight, an ye fling those rubies round my neck

In lieu of hers, I’ll hold thou hast some touch

Of music, since I care not for thy pearls.

Swine? I have wallow’d, I have wash’d—the world

Is flesh and shadow—I have had my day.

The dirty nurse, Experience, in her kind

Hath foul’d me—an I wallow’d, then I wash’d—

I have had my day and my philosophies—

And thank the Lord I am King Arthur’s fool.

Swine, say ye? swine, goats, asses, rams and geese

Troop’d round a Paynim harper once, who thrumm’d

On such a wire as musically as thou Some such fine song—but never a king’s fool.’

And Tristram, ‘Then were swine, goats, asses, geese

The wiser fools, seeing thy Paynim bard

Had such a mastery of his mystery That he could harp his wife up out of hell.’

Then Dagonet, turning on the ball of his foot,

‘And whither harp’st thou thine? down! and thyself

Down! and two more: a helpful harper thou,

That harpest downward! Dost thou know the star

We call the harp of Arthur up in heaven?’

And Tristram, ‘Ay, Sir Fool, for when our King

Was victor wellnigh day by day, the knights,

Glorying in each new glory, set his name

High on all hills, and in the signs of heaven.’

And Dagonet answer’d, ‘Ay, and when the land

Was freed, and the Queen false, ye set yourself

To babble about him, all to show your wit—

And whether he were King by court-esy,

Or King by right—and so went harping down

The black king’s highway, got so far, and grew

So witty that ye play’d at ducks and drakes

With Arthur’s vows on the great lake of fire.

Tuwhoo! do ye see it? do ye see the star?’

‘Nay, fool,’ said Tristram, ‘not in open day.’

And Dagonet, ‘Nay, nor will: I see it and hear.

It makes a silent music up in heaven,

And I, and Arthur and the angels hear,

And then we skip.' 'Lo, fool,' he  
said, 'ye talk  
Fool's treason: is the King thy  
brother fool?'  
Then little Dagonet clapt his hands  
and shrill'd,  
'Ay, ay, my brother fool, the king of  
fools!  
Conceits himself as God that he can  
make  
Figs out of thistles, silk from bristles,  
milk  
From burning spurge, honey from  
hornet-combs,  
And men from beasts—Long live the  
king of fools!'

And down the city Dagonet danced  
away;  
But thro' the slowly-mellowing  
avenues  
And solitary passes of the wood  
Rode Tristram toward Lyonesse and  
the west.  
Before him fled the face of Queen  
Isolt  
With ruby-circled neck, but evermore  
Past, as a rustle or twitter in the  
wood  
Made dull his inner, keen his outer  
eye  
For all that walk'd, or crept, or perch'd,  
or flew.  
Anon the face, as, when a gust hath  
blown,  
Unruffling waters re-collect the  
shape  
Of one that in them sees himself, re-  
turn'd;  
But at the slot or fewmets of a deer,  
Or ev'n a fall'n feather, vanish'd  
again.

So on for all that day from lawn to  
lawn  
Thro' many a league-long bower he  
rode. At length  
A lodge of intertwined beechen-  
boughs  
Furze-cramm'd, and bracken-rooft,  
the which himself  
Built for a summer day with Queen  
Isolt

Against a shower, dark in the golden  
grove  
Appearing, sent his fancy back to  
where  
She lived a moon in that low lodge  
with him:  
Till Mark her lord had past, the Cor-  
nish King,  
With six or seven, when Tristram was  
away,  
And snatch'd her thence; yet dreading  
worse than shame  
Her warrior Tristram, spake not any  
word,  
But bode his hour, devising wretched-  
ness.

And now that desert lodge to  
Tristram lookt  
So sweet, that halting, in he past, and  
sank  
Down on a drift of foliage random-  
blown;  
But could not rest for musing how to  
smoothe  
And sieek his marriage over to the  
Queen.  
Perchance in lone Tintagil far from all  
The tonguesters of the court she had  
not heard.  
But then what folly had sent him over-  
seas  
After she left him lonely here? a  
name?  
Was it the name of one in Brittany,  
Isolt, the daughter of the King?  
'Isolt  
Of the white hands' they call'd her:  
the sweet name  
Allured him first, and then the maid  
herself,  
Who served him well with those white  
hands of hers,  
And loved him well, until himself had  
thought  
He loved her also, wedded easily,  
But left her all as easily, and return'd.  
The black-blue Irish hair and Irish  
eyes  
Had drawn him home—what marvel?  
then he laid  
His brows upon the drifted leaf and  
dream'd.



"THE VOICE OF THE DEAD WAS A LIVING VOICE TO ME."—Page 106.



He seem'd to pace the strand of  
Brittany  
Between Isolt of Britain and his  
bride,  
And show'd them both the ruby-  
chain, and both  
Began to struggle for it, till his Queen  
Graspt it so hard, that all her hand  
was red.  
Then cried the Breton, 'Look, her  
hand is red!  
These be no rubies, this is frozen  
blood,  
And melts within her hand—her hand  
is hot  
With ill desires, but this I gave thee,  
look,  
Is all as cool and white as any flower.'  
Follow'd a rush of eagle's wings, and  
then  
A whimpering of the spirit of the  
child,  
Because the twain had spoil'd her car-  
canet.

He dream'd; but Arthur with a  
hundred spears  
Rode far, till o'er the illimitable reed,  
And many a glancing plash and sal-  
lowy isle,  
The wide-wing'd sunset of the misty  
marsh  
Glared on a huge machicolated tower  
That stood with open doors, whereout  
was roll'd  
A roar of riot, as from men secure  
Amid their marshes, ruffians at their  
ease  
Among their harlot-brides, an evil  
song,  
'Lo there,' said one of Arthur's  
youth, for there,  
High on a grim dead tree before the  
tower,  
A goodly brother of the Table Round  
Swung by the neck: and on the  
boughs a shield  
Showing a shower of blood in a field  
noir,  
And therebeside a horn, inflamed the  
knights  
At that dishonor done the gilded  
spur,

Till each would clash the shield, and  
blow the horn.  
But Arthur waved them back. Alone  
he rode.  
Then at the dry harsh roar of the  
great horn,  
That sent the face of all the marsh  
aloft  
An ever upward-rushing storm and  
cloud  
Of shriek and plume, the Red Knight  
heard, and all,  
Even to tipmost lance and topmost  
helm,  
In blood-red armor, sallying, howl'd  
to the King,

'The teeth of Hell—flay bare and  
gnash thee flat!—  
Lo! art thou not that eunuch-hearted  
King  
Who fain had clipt free manhood  
from the world—  
The woman-worshipper? Yea, God's  
curse, and I!  
Slain was the brother of my para-  
mour  
By a knight of thine, and I that heard  
her whine  
And snivel, being eunuch-hearted too,  
Sware by the scorpion-worm that  
twists in hell,  
And stings itself to everlasting death,  
To hang whatever knight of thine I  
fought  
And tumbled. Art thou King?—Look  
to thy life!'

He ended: Arthur knew the voice;  
the face  
Wellnigh was helmet-hidden, and the  
name  
Went wandering somewhere darkling  
in his mind.  
And Arthur deign'd not use of word  
or sword,  
But let the drunkard, as he stretch'd  
from horse  
To strike him, overbalancing his bulk,  
Down from the causeway heavily to  
the swamp  
Fall, as the crest of some slow-arch-  
ing wave,

Heard in dead night along that table-  
 shore,  
 Drops flat, and after the great waters  
 break  
 Whitening for half a league, and thin  
 themselves,  
 Far over sands marbled with moon  
 and cloud,  
 From less and less to nothing; thus  
 he fell  
 Head-heavy; then the knights, who  
 watch'd him, roar'd  
 And shouted and leapt down upon the  
 fall'n;  
 There trampled out his face from be-  
 ing known,  
 And sank his head in mire, and  
 slimed themselves:  
 Nor heard the King for their own  
 cries, but sprang  
 Thro' open doors, and swording right  
 and left  
 Men, women, on their sodden faces,  
 hur'l'd  
 The tables over and the wines, and  
 slew  
 Till all the rafters rang with woman-  
 yells,  
 And all the pavement stream'd with  
 massacre;  
 Then, echoing yell with yell, they  
 fired the tower,  
 Which half that autumn night, like  
 the live North,  
 Red-pulsing up thro' Alioth and  
 Alcor,  
 Made all above it, and a hundred  
 meres  
 About it, as the water Moab saw  
 Come round by the East, and out be-  
 yond them flush'd  
 The long low dune, and lazy-plunging  
 sea.

So all the ways were safe from shore  
 to shore,  
 But in the heart of Arthur pain was  
 lord.

Then, out of Tristram waking, the  
 red dream  
 Fled with a shout, and that low lodge  
 return'd,

Mid-forest, and the wind among the  
 boughs.  
 He whistled his good warhorse left to  
 graze  
 Among the forest greens, vaulted  
 upon him,  
 And rode beneath an ever-showering  
 leaf,  
 Till one lone woman, weeping near a  
 cross,  
 Stay'd him. 'Why weep ye?' 'Lord,'  
 she said, 'my man  
 Hath left me or is dead;' whereon he  
 thought—  
 'What, if she hate me now? I would  
 not this.  
 What, if she love me still? I would  
 not that.  
 I know not what I would'—but said  
 to her,  
 'Yet weep not thou, lest, if thy mate  
 return,  
 He find thy favor changed and love  
 thee not'—  
 Then pressing day by day thro' Lyon-  
 nesse  
 Last in a roky hollow, belling, heard  
 The hounds of Mark, and felt the  
 goodly hounds  
 Yelp at his heart, but turning, past  
 and gain'd  
 Tintagil, half in sea, and high on land,  
 A crown of towers.

Down in a casement sat,  
 A low sea-sunset glorying round her  
 hair  
 And glossy-throated grace, Isolt the  
 Queen.  
 And when she heard the feet of Tris-  
 tram grind  
 The spiring stone that scaled about  
 her tower,  
 Flush'd, started, met him at the doors,  
 and there  
 Belted his body with her white em-  
 brace,  
 Crying aloud, 'Not Mark—not Mark,  
 my soul!  
 The footstep flutter'd me at first: not  
 he:  
 Catlike thro' his own castle steals my  
 Mark,

But warrior-wise thou stridest thro'  
his halls  
Who hates thee, as I him—ev'n to  
the death.  
My soul, I felt my hatred for my  
Mark  
Quicken within me, and knew that  
thou wert nigh.'  
To whom Sir Tristram smiling, 'I am  
here.  
Let be thy Mark, seeing he is not  
thine.'

And drawing somewhat backward  
she replied,  
'Can he be wrong'd who is not ev'n  
his own,  
But save for dread of thee had beaten  
me,  
Scratch'd, bitten, blinded, marr'd me  
somehow—Mark?  
What rights are his that dare not  
strike for them?  
Not lift a hand—not, tho' he found  
me thus!  
But harken! have ye met him? hence  
he went  
To-day for three days' hunting—as he  
said—  
And so returns belike within an hour.  
Mark's way, my soul!—but eat not  
thou with Mark,  
Because he hates thee even more than  
fears;  
Nor drink: and when thou passest  
any wood  
Close vizer, lest an arrow from the  
bush  
Should leave me all alone with Mark  
and hell.  
My God, the measure of my hate for  
Mark  
Is as the measure of my love for thee.'

So, pluck'd one way by hate and one  
by love,  
Drain'd of her force, again she sat,  
and spake  
To Tristram, as he knelt before her,  
saying,  
'O hunter, and O blower of the horn,  
Harper, and thou hast been a rover  
too,

For, ere I mated with my shambling  
king,  
Ye twain had fallen out about the  
bride  
Of one—his name is out of me—the  
prize,  
If prize she were—(what marvel—she  
could see)—  
Thine, friend; and ever since my  
craven seeks  
To wreck thee villainously: but, O Sir  
Knight,  
What dame or damsel have ye kneel'd  
to last?'

And Tristram, 'Last to my Queen  
Paramount,  
Here now to my Queen Paramount of  
love  
And loveliness—ay, lovelier than  
when first  
Her light feet fell on our rough Lyon-  
nesse,  
Sailing from Ireland.'

Softly laugh'd Isolt;  
'Flatter me not, for hath not our great  
Queen  
My dole of beauty trebled?' and he  
said,  
'Her beauty is her beauty, and thine  
thine,  
And thine is more to me—soft, gra-  
cious, kind—  
Save when thy Mark is kindled on  
thy lips  
Most gracious; but she, haughty, ev'n  
to him,  
Lancelot; for I have seen him wan  
enow  
To make one doubt if ever the great  
Queen  
Have yielded him her love.'

To whom Isolt,  
'Ah then, false hunter and false har-  
per, thou  
Who brakest thro' the scruple of my  
bond,  
Calling me thy white hind, and saying  
to me  
That Guinevere had sinn'd against  
the highest,

And I—mis-yoked with such a want  
of man—  
That I could hardly sin against the  
lowest.'

He answer'd, 'O my soul, be com-  
forted!  
If this be sweet, to sin in leading-  
strings,  
If here be comfort, and if ours be sin,  
Crown'd warrant had we for the  
crowning sin  
That made us happy: but how ye  
greet me—fear  
And fault and doubt—no word of that  
fond tale—  
Thy deep heart-yearnings, thy sweet  
memories  
Of Tristram in that year he was away.'

And, saddening on the sudden,  
spake Isolt,  
I had forgotten all in my strong joy  
To see thee—yearnings?—ay! for,  
hour by hour,  
Here in the never-ended afternoon,  
O sweeter than all memories of thee,  
Deeper than any yearnings after thee  
Seem'd those far-rolling, westward-  
smiling seas,  
Watch'd from this tower. Isolt of  
Britain dash'd  
Before Isolt of Brittany on the strand,  
Would that have chill'd her bride-  
kiss? Wedded her?  
Fought in her father's battles?  
wounded there?  
The King was all fulfill'd with grate-  
fulness,  
And she, my namesake of the hands,  
that heal'd  
Thy hurt and heart with unguent and  
caress—  
Well—can I wish her any huger  
wrong  
Than having known thee? her too  
hast thou left  
To pine and waste in those sweet  
memories.  
O were I not my Mark's, by whom all  
men  
Are noble, I should hate thee more  
than love.'

And Tristram, fondling her light  
hands, replied,  
'Grace, Queen, for being loved: she  
loved me well.

Did I love her? the name at least I  
loved.

Isolt?—I fought his battles, for Isolt!  
The night was dark; the true star set.  
Isolt!

The name was ruler of the dark—  
Isolt?

Care not for her! patient, and prayer-  
ful, meek,  
Pale-blooded, she will yield herself to  
God.'

And Isolt answer'd, 'Yea, and why  
not I?

Mine is the larger need, who am not  
meek,

Pale-blooded, prayerful. Let me tell  
thee now,

Here one black, mute midsummer  
night I sat,

Lonely, but musing on thee, wonder-  
ing where,

Murmuring a light song I had heard  
thee sing,

And once or twice I spake thy name  
aloud.

Then flash'd a levin-brand; and near  
me stood,

In fuming sulphur blue and green, a  
fiend—

Mark's way to steal behind one in the  
dark—

For there was Mark: "He has wed-  
ded her," he said,

Not said, but hiss'd it: then this  
crown of towers

So shook to such a roar of all the  
sky,

That here in utter dark I swoon'd  
away,

And woke again in utter dark, and  
cried,

"I will flee hence and give myself to  
God"—

And thou wert lying in thy new le-  
man's arms.'

Then Tristram, ever dallying with  
her hand,



' May God be with thee, sweet, when  
 old and gray,  
 And past desire!' a saying that angered her.  
 " May God be with thee, sweet, when  
 thou art old,  
 And sweet no more to me!" I need  
 Him now.  
 For when had Lancelot utter'd aught  
 so gross  
 Ev'n to the swineherd's malkin in the  
 mast?  
 The greater man, the greater courtesy.  
 Far other was the Tristram, Arthur's  
 knight!  
 But thou, thro' ever harrying thy wild  
 beasts—  
 Save that to touch a harp, tilt with a  
 lance  
 Becomes thee well—art grown wild  
 beast thyself.  
 How darest thou, if lover, push me  
 even  
 In fancy from thy side, and set me far  
 In the gray distance, half a life away,  
 Her to be loved no more? Unsay it,  
 unswear!  
 Flatter me rather, seeing me so weak,  
 Broken with Mark and hate and soli-  
 tude,  
 Thy marriage and mine own, that I  
 should suck  
 Lies like sweet wines: lie to me: I  
 believe.  
 Will ye not lie? not swear, as there  
 ye kneel,  
 And solemnly as when ye sware to  
 him,  
 The man of men, our King—My God,  
 the power  
 Was once in vows when men believed  
 the King!  
 They lied not then, who sware, and  
 thro' their vows  
 The King prevailing made his  
 realm:—I say,  
 Swear to me thou wilt love me ev'n  
 when old,  
 Gray-hair'd, and past desire, and in  
 despair.'

Then Tristram, pacing moodily up  
 and down,

' Vows! did you keep the vow you  
 made to Mark  
 More than I mine? Lied, say ye?  
 Nay, but learnt,  
 The vow that binds too strictly snaps  
 itself—  
 My knighthood taught me this—ay,  
 being snapt—  
 We run more counter to the soul  
 thereof  
 Than had we never sworn. I swear  
 no more.  
 I swore to the great King, and am  
 forsworn.  
 For once—ev'n to the height—I hon-  
 or'd him.  
 " Man, is he man at all?" methought,  
 when first  
 I rode from our rough Lyonesse, and  
 beheld  
 That victor of the Pagan throned in  
 hall—  
 His hair, a sun that ray'd from off a  
 brow  
 Like hillsnow high in heaven, the  
 steel-blue eyes,  
 The golden beard that clothed his lips  
 with light—  
 Moreover, that weird legend of his  
 birth,  
 With Merlin's mystic babble about  
 his end  
 Amazed me; then, his foot was on a  
 stool  
 Shaped as a dragon; he seem'd to me  
 no man,  
 But Michaël trampling Satan; so I  
 sware,  
 Being amazed: but this went by—The  
 vows!  
 O ay—the wholesome madness of an  
 hour—  
 They served their use, their time; for  
 every knight  
 Believed himself a greater than him-  
 self,  
 And every follower eyed him as a God;  
 Till he, being lifted up beyond him-  
 self,  
 Did mightier deeds than otherwise he  
 had done,  
 And so the realm was made; but then  
 their vows—

First mainly thro' that sullyng of our  
Queen—  
Began to gall the knighthood, asking  
whence  
Had Arthur right to bind them to  
himself?  
Dropt down from heaven? wash'd up  
from out the deep?  
They fail'd to trace him thro' the  
flesh and blood  
Of our old kings: whence then? a  
doubtful lord  
To bind them by inviolable vows,  
Which flesh and blood perforce  
would violate:  
For feel this arm of mine—the tide  
within  
Red with free chase and heather-  
scented air,  
Pulsing full man; can Arthur make  
me pure  
As any maiden child? lock up my  
tongue  
From uttering freely what I freely  
hear?  
Bind me to one? The wide world  
laughs at it.  
And worldling of the world am I, and  
know  
The ptarmigan that whitens ere his  
hour  
Woos his own end; we are not angels  
here  
Nor shall be: vows—I am woodman  
of the woods,  
And hear the garnet-headed yaffin-  
gale  
Mock them: my soul, we love but  
while we may;  
And therefore is my love so large for  
thee,  
Seeing it is not bounded save by love.'

Here ending, he moved toward her,  
and she said,  
'Good: an I turn'd away my love for  
thee  
To some one thrice as courteous as  
thyself—  
For courtesy wins woman all as well  
As valor may, but he that closes both  
Is perfect, he is Lancelot—taller  
indeed,

Rosier and comelier, thou—but say I  
loved  
This knightliest of all knights, and  
cast thee back  
Thine own small saw, "We love but  
while we may,"  
Well then, what answer?'

He that while she spake,  
Mindful of what he brought to adorn  
her with,  
The jewels, had let one finger lightly  
touch  
The warm white apple of her throat,  
replied,  
'Press this a little closer, sweet, until—  
Come, I am hunger'd and half-anger'd  
—meat,  
Wine, wine—and I will love thee to  
the death,  
And out beyond into the dream to  
come.'

So then, when both were brought  
to full accord,  
She rose, and set before him all he  
will'd;  
And after these had comforted the  
blood  
With meats and wines, and satiated  
their hearts—  
Now talking of their woodland para-  
dise,  
The deer, the dews, the fern, the  
founts, the lawns;  
Now mocking at the much ungainli-  
ness,  
And craven shifts, and long crane  
legs of Mark—  
Then Tristram laughing caught the  
harp, and sang:

'Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bend  
the brier!  
A star in heaven, a star within the  
mere!  
Ay, ay, O ay—a star was my desire,  
And one was far apart, and one was  
near:  
Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bow the  
grass!  
And one was water and one star was  
fire,

And one will ever shine and one will pass.  
Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that move the mere.'

Then in the light's last glimmer  
Tristram show'd  
And swung the ruby carcanet. She  
cried,  
'The collar of some Order, which our  
King  
Hath newly founded, all for thee, my  
soul,  
For thee, to yield thee grace beyond  
thy peers.'

'Not so, my Queen,' he said, 'but  
the red fruit  
Grown on a magic oak-tree in mid-  
heaven,  
And won by Tristram as a tourney-  
prize,  
And hither brought by Tristram for  
his last  
Love-offering and peace-offering unto  
thee.'

He spoke, he turn'd, then, flinging  
round her neck,  
Claspt it, and cried 'Thine Order, O  
my Queen !'  
But, while he bow'd to kiss the jewell'd  
throat,  
Out of the dark, just as the lips had  
touch'd,  
Behind him rose a shadow and a  
shriek—  
'Mark's way,' said Mark, and clove  
him thro' the brain.

That night came Arthur home, and  
while he climb'd,  
All in a death-dumb autumn-dripping  
gloom,  
The stairway to the hall, and look'd  
and saw  
The great Queen's bower was dark,—  
about his feet  
A voice clung sobbing till he ques-  
tion'd it,  
'What art thou?' and the voice  
about his feet

Sent up an answer, sobbing, ' I am  
thy fool,  
And I shall never make thee smile  
again.'

GUINEVERE.

QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the  
court, and sat  
There in the holy house at Almes-  
bury  
Weeping, none with her save a little  
maid,  
A novice: one low light betwixt them  
burn'd  
Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all  
aboard,  
Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,  
The white mist, like a face-cloth to  
the face,  
Clung to the dead earth, and the  
land was still.

For hither had she fled, her cause  
of flight  
Sir Modred; he that like a subtle  
beast  
Lay couchant with his eyes upon the  
throne,  
Ready to spring, waiting a chance:  
for this  
He chill'd the popular praises of the  
King  
With silent smiles of slow disparage-  
ment;  
And tamper'd with the Lords of the  
White Horse,  
Heathen, the brood by Hengist left;  
and sought  
To make disruption in the Table  
Round  
Of Arthur, and to splinter it into  
feuds  
Serving his traitorous end; and all  
his aims  
Were sharpen'd by strong hate for  
Lancelot.

For thus it chanced one morn when  
all the court,  
Green-suited, but with plumes that  
mock'd the may,

Had been, their wot, a-maying and  
return'd,  
That Modred still in green, all ear  
and eye,  
Climb'd to the high top of the gar-  
den-wall  
To spy some secret scandal if he  
might,  
And saw the Queen who sat betwixt  
her best  
Enid, and lissome Vivien, of her  
court  
The wildest and the worst; and more  
than this  
He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing  
by  
Spied where he couch'd, and as the  
gardener's hand  
Picks from the colewort a green cater-  
pillar,  
So from the high wall and the flower-  
ing grove  
Of grasses Lancelot pluck'd him by  
the heel,  
And cast him as a worm upon the  
way;  
But when he knew the Prince tho'  
marr'd with dust,  
He, reverencing king's blood in a bad  
man,  
Made such excuses as he might, and  
these  
Full knightly without scorn; for in  
those days  
No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt  
in scorn;  
But, if a man were halt or hunch'd, in  
him  
By those whom God had made full-  
limb'd and tall,  
Scorn was allow'd as part of his  
defect,  
And he was answer'd softly by the  
King  
And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot  
holp  
To raise the Prince, who rising twice  
or thrice  
Full sharply smote his knees, and  
smiled, and went:  
But, ever after, the small violence done  
Rankled in him and ruffled all his  
heart,

As the sharp wind that ruffles all day  
long  
A little bitter pool about a stone  
On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told  
This matter to the Queen, at first she  
laugh'd  
Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty  
fall,  
Then shudder'd as the village wife  
who cries  
'I shudder, some one steps across my  
grave;'  
Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for  
indeed  
She half-foresaw that he, the subtle  
beast,  
Would track her guilt until he found,  
and hers  
Would be for evermore a name of  
scorn.  
Henceforward rarely could she front  
in hall,  
Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy  
face,  
Heart-hiding smile, and gray persist-  
ent eye:  
Henceforward too, the Powers that  
tend the soul,  
To help it from the death that cannot  
die,  
And save it even in extremes, began  
To vex and plague her. Many a time  
for hours,  
Beside the placid breathings of the  
King,  
In the dead night, grim faces came  
and went  
Before her, or a vague spiritual  
fear—  
Like to some doubtful noise of creak-  
ing doors,  
Heard by the watcher in a haunted  
house,  
That keeps the rust of murder on the  
walls—  
Held her awake: or if she slept she  
dream'd  
An awful dream; for then she seem'd  
to stand  
On some vast plain before a setting  
sun,

And from the sun there swiftly made  
 at her  
 A ghastly something, and its shadow  
 flew  
 Before it, till it touch'd her, and she  
 turn'd—  
 When lo! her own, that broadening  
 from her feet,  
 And blackening, swallow'd all the  
 land, and in it  
 Far cities burnt, and with a cry she  
 woke.  
 And all this trouble did not pass but  
 grew;  
 Till ev'n the clear face of the guileless  
 King,  
 And trustful courtesies of household  
 life,  
 Became her bane; and at the last she  
 said,  
 'O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine  
 own laud,  
 For if thou tarry we shall meet again,  
 And if we meet again, some evil  
 chance  
 Will make the smouldering scandal  
 break and blaze  
 Before the people, and our lord the  
 King.'  
 And Lancelot ever promised, but re-  
 main'd,  
 And still they met and met. Again  
 she said,  
 'O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee  
 hence.'  
 And then they were agreed upon a  
 night  
 (When the good King should not be  
 there) to meet  
 And part for ever. Vivien, lurking,  
 heard.  
 She told Sir Modred. Passion-pale  
 they met  
 And greeted. Hands in hands, and  
 eye to eye  
 Low on the border of her couch they  
 sat  
 Stammering and staring. It was  
 their last hour,  
 A madness of farewells. And Mod-  
 red brought  
 His creatures to the basement of the  
 tower

For testimony; and crying with full  
 voice  
 'Traitor, come out, ye are trapt at  
 last,' aroused  
 Lancelot, who rushing outward lion-  
 like  
 Leapt on him, and hurl'd him head-  
 long, and he fell  
 Stunn'd, and his creatures took and  
 bare him off,  
 And all was still: then she, 'The end  
 is come,  
 And I am shamed for ever;' and he  
 said,  
 'Mine be the shame; mine was the  
 sin: but rise,  
 And fly to my strong castle overseas:  
 There will I hide thee, till my life shall  
 end,  
 There hold thee with my life against  
 the world.'  
 She answer'd, 'Lancelot, wilt thou  
 hold me so?  
 Nay, friend, for we have taken our  
 farewells.  
 Would God that thou couldst hide  
 me from myself!  
 Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and  
 thou  
 Unwedded; yet rise now, and let us fly,  
 For I will draw me into sanctuary,  
 And bide my doom.' So Lancelot  
 got her horse,  
 Set her thereon, and mounted on his  
 own,  
 And then they rode to the divided  
 way,  
 There kiss'd, and parted weeping: for  
 he past,  
 Love-loyal to the least wish of the  
 Queen,  
 Back to his land; but she to Almes-  
 bury  
 Fled all night long by glimmering  
 waste and weald,  
 And heard the Spirits of the waste  
 and weald  
 Moan as she fled, or thought she  
 heard them moan:  
 And in herself she moan'd 'Too late,  
 too late!  
 Till in the cold wind that foreruns the  
 morn,

A blot in heaven, the Raven, flying  
 high,  
 Croak'd, and she thought, 'He spies a  
 field of death;  
 For now the Heathen of the Northern  
 Sea,  
 Lured by the crimes and frailties of  
 the court,  
 Begin to slay the folk, and spoil the  
 land.'

And when she came to Almesbury  
 she spake  
 There to the nuns, and said, 'Mine  
 enemies  
 Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sister-  
 hood,  
 Receive, and yield me sanctuary, nor  
 ask  
 Her name to whom ye yield it, till her  
 time  
 To tell you:' and her beauty, grace  
 and power,  
 Wrought as a charm upon them, and  
 they spared  
 To ask it.

So the stately Queen abode  
 For many a week, unknown, among  
 the nuns;  
 Nor with them mix'd, nor told her  
 name, nor sought,  
 Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for  
 shrift,  
 But communed only with the little  
 maid,  
 Who pleased her with a babbling  
 heedlessness  
 Which often lured her from herself;  
 but now,  
 This night, a rumor wildly blown about  
 Came, that Sir Modred had usurp'd  
 the realm,  
 And leagued him with the heathen,  
 while the King  
 Was waging war on Lancelot: then  
 she thought,  
 'With what a hate the people and  
 the King  
 Must hate me,' and bow'd down upon  
 her hands  
 Silent, until the little maid, who  
 brook'd

No silence, brake it, uttering 'Late!  
 so late!

What hour, I wonder, now?' and  
 when she drew

No answer, by and by began to hum  
 An air the nuns had taught her; 'Late,  
 so late!'

Which when she heard, the Queen  
 look'd up, and said,  
 'O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing,  
 Sing, and unbind my heart that I may  
 weep.'  
 Whereat full willingly sang the little  
 maid.

'Late, late, so late! and dark the  
 night and chill!

Late, late, so late! but we can enter  
 still.

Too late, too late! ye cannot enter  
 now.

'No light had we: for that we do  
 repent;

And learning this, the bridegroom  
 will relent.

Too late, too late! ye cannot enter  
 now.

'No light: so late! and dark and  
 chill the night!

O let us in, that we may find the  
 light!

Too late, too late: ye cannot enter  
 now.

'Have we not heard the bridegroom  
 is so sweet?

O let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet!  
 No, no, too late! ye cannot enter  
 now.'

So sang the novice, while full pas-  
 sionately,

Her head upon her hands, remember-  
 ing

Her thought when first she came,  
 wept the sad Queen.

Then said the little novice prattling  
 to her,

'O pray you, noble lady, weep no  
 more;

But let my words, the words of one so  
 small,  
 Who knowing nothing knows but to  
 obey,  
 And if I do not there is penance  
 given—  
 Comfort your sorrows; for they do  
 not flow  
 From evil done; right sure am I of  
 that,  
 Who see your tender grace and state-  
 liness.  
 But weigh your sorrows with our lord  
 the King's,  
 And weighing find them less; for  
 gone is he  
 To wage grim war against Sir Lance-  
 lot there,  
 Round that strong castle where he  
 holds the Queen;  
 And Modred whom he left in charge  
 of all,  
 The traitor—Ah sweet lady, the  
 King's grief  
 For his own self, and his own Queen,  
 and realm,  
 Must needs be thrice as great as any of  
 ours.  
 For me, I thank the saints, I am not  
 great.  
 For if there ever come a grief to me  
 I cry my cry in silence, and have  
 done.  
 None knows it, and my tears have  
 brought me good:  
 But even were the griefs of little ones  
 As great as those of great ones, yet  
 this grief  
 Is added to the griefs the great must  
 bear,  
 That howsoever much they may de-  
 sire  
 Silence, they cannot weep behind a  
 cloud:  
 As even here they talk at Almesbury  
 About the good King and his wicked  
 Queen,  
 And were I such a King with such a  
 Queen,  
 Well might I wish to veil her wicked-  
 ness,  
 But were I such a King, it could not  
 be.'

Then to her own sad heart mut-  
 ter'd the Queen,  
 'Will the child kill me with her inno-  
 cent talk?'  
 But openly she answer'd, 'Must not I,  
 If this false traitor have displaced his  
 lord,  
 Grieve with the common grief of all  
 the realm?'

'Yea,' said the maid, 'this is all  
 woman's grief,  
 That *she* is woman, whose disloyal  
 life  
 Hath wrought confusion in the Table  
 Round  
 Which good King Arthur founded,  
 years ago,  
 With signs and miracles and wonders,  
 there  
 At Camelot, ere the coming of the  
 Queen.'

Then thought the Queen within  
 herself again,  
 'Will the child kill me with her fool-  
 ish prate?'  
 But openly she spake and said to  
 her,  
 'O little maid, shut in by nunnery  
 walls,  
 What canst thou know of Kings and  
 Tables Round,  
 Or what of signs and wonders, but the  
 signs  
 And simple miracles of thy nunnery?'

To whom the little novice garru-  
 lously,  
 'Yea, but I know: the land was full of  
 signs  
 And wonders ere the coming of the  
 Queen.  
 So said my father, and himself was  
 knight  
 Of the great Table—at the founding of  
 it;  
 And rode thereto from Lyonesse, and  
 he said  
 That as he rode, an hour or maybe  
 twain  
 After the sunset, down the coast, he  
 heard

Strange music, and he paused, and  
 turning—there,  
 All down the lonely coast of Lyon-  
 nesse,  
 Each with a beacon-star upon his  
 head,  
 And with a wild sea-light about his  
 feet,  
 He saw them—headland after head-  
 land flame  
 Far on into the rich heart of the west :  
 And in the light the white mermaid  
 swam,  
 And strong man-breasted things stood  
 from the sea,  
 And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the  
 land,  
 To which the little elves of chasm and  
 cleft  
 Made answer, sounding like a distant  
 horn.  
 So said my father—yea, and further-  
 more,  
 Next morning, while he past the dim-  
 lit woods,  
 Himself beheld three spirits mad with  
 joy  
 Come dashing down on a tall wayside  
 flower,  
 That shook beneath them, as the thistle  
 shakes  
 When three gray linnets wrangle for  
 the seed :  
 And still at evenings on before his  
 horse  
 The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and  
 broke  
 Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd  
 and broke  
 Flying, for all the land was full of  
 life.  
 And when at last he came to Came-  
 lot,  
 A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand  
 Swung round the lighted lantern of  
 the hall ;  
 And in the hall itself was such a feast  
 As never man had dream'd ; for every  
 knight  
 Had whatsoever meat he long'd for  
 served  
 By hands unseen ; and even as he  
 said

Down in the cellars merry bloated  
 things  
 Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on  
 the butts  
 While the wine ran : so glad were  
 spirits and men  
 Before the coming of the sinful  
 Queen.'

Then spake the Queen and some-  
 what bitterly,  
 'Were they so glad? ill prophets  
 were they all,  
 Spirits and men : could none of them  
 foresee,  
 Not even thy wise father with his signs  
 And wonders, what has fall'n upon  
 the realm?'

To whom the novice garrulously  
 again,  
 'Yea, one, a bard ; of whom my fa-  
 ther said,  
 Full many a noble war-song had he  
 sung,  
 Ev'n in the presence of an enemy's  
 fleet,  
 Between the steep cliff and the com-  
 ing wave ;  
 And many a mystic lay of life and  
 death  
 Had chanted on the smoky mountain-  
 tops,  
 When round him bent the spirits of  
 the hills  
 With all their dewy hair blown back  
 like flame :  
 So said my father—and that night the  
 bard  
 Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang  
 the King  
 As wellnigh more than man, and  
 rail'd at those  
 Who call'd him the false son of Gor-  
 lois :  
 For there was no man knew from  
 whence he came ;  
 But after tempest, when the long  
 wave broke  
 All down the thundering shores of  
 Bude and Bos,  
 There came a day as still as heaven,  
 and then



They found a naked child upon the sands  
 Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea;  
 And that was Arthur; and they foster'd him  
 Till he by miracle was approv'n  
 King:  
 And that his grave should be a mystery  
 From all men, like his birth; and could he find  
 A woman in her womanhood as great  
 As he was in his manhood, then, he sang,  
 The twain together well might change the world.  
 But even in the middle of his song  
 He falter'd, and his hand fell from the harp,  
 And pale he turn'd, and reel'd, and would have fall'n,  
 But that they stay'd him up; nor would he tell  
 His vision; but what doubt that he foresaw  
 This evil work of Lancelot and the Queen?'

Then thought the Queen, 'Lo! they have set her on,  
 Our simple-seeming Abbess and her nuns,  
 To play upon me,' and bow'd her head nor spake.  
 Whereat the novice crying, with clasp'd hands,  
 Shame on her own garrulity garrulously,  
 Said the good nuns would check her gadding tongue  
 Full often, 'and, sweet lady, if I seem  
 To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,  
 Unmannerly, with prattling and the tales  
 Which my good father told me, check me too  
 Nor let me shame my father's memory, one  
 Of noblest manners, tho' himself would say  
 Sir Lancelot had the noblest; and he died,

Kill'd in a tilt, come next, five summers back,  
 And left me; but of others who remain,  
 And of the two first-famed for courtesy—  
 And pray you check me if I ask amiss—  
 But pray you, which had noblest, while you moved  
 Among them, Lancelot or our lord the King?'

Then the pale Queen look'd up and answer'd her,  
 'Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,  
 Was gracious to all ladies, and the same  
 In open battle or the tilting-field  
 Forbore his own advantage, and the King  
 In open battle or the tilting-field  
 Forbore his own advantage, and these two  
 Were the most nobly-manner'd men of all;  
 For manners are not idle, but the fruit  
 Of loyal nature, and of noble mind.'

'Yea,' said the maid, 'be manners such fair fruit?  
 Then Lancelot's needs must be a thousand-fold  
 Less noble, being, as all rumor runs,  
 The most disloyal friend in all the world.'

To which a mournful answer made the Queen:  
 'O closed about by narrowing nunnery-walls,  
 What knowest thou of the world, and all its lights  
 And shadows, all the wealth and all the woe?  
 If ever Lancelot, that most noble knight,  
 Were for one hour less noble than himself,  
 Pray for him that he scape the doom of fire,

And weep for her who drew him to  
his doom.'

'Yea,' said the little novice, 'I pray  
for both;  
But I should all as soon believe that  
his,  
Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the  
King's,  
As I could think, sweet lady, yours  
would be  
Such as they are, were you the sinful  
Queen.'

So she, like many another babbler,  
hurt  
Whom she would soothe, and harm'd  
where she would heal;  
For here a sudden flush of wrathful  
heat  
Fired all the pale face of the Queen,  
who cried,  
'Such as thou art be never maiden  
more  
For ever! thou their tool, set on to  
plague  
And play upon, and harry me, petty  
spy  
And traitress.' When that storm of  
anger brake  
From Guinevere, aghast the maiden  
rose,  
White as her veil, and stood before  
the Queen  
As tremulously as foam upon the  
beach  
Stands in a wind, ready to break and  
fly,  
And when the Queen had added 'Get  
thee hence,'  
Fled frighted. Then that other left  
alone  
Sigh'd, and began to gather heart  
again,  
Saying in herself, 'The simple, fear-  
ful child  
Meant nothing, but my own too-fear-  
ful guilt,  
Simpler than any child, betrays itself.  
But help me, heaven, for surely I re-  
pent.  
For what is true repentance but in  
thought—

Not ev'n in inmost thought to think  
again  
The sins that made the past so pleas-  
ant to us:  
And I have sworn never to see him  
more,  
To see him more.'

And ev'n in saying this,  
Her memory from old habit of the  
mind  
Went slipping back upon the golden  
days  
In which she saw him first, when  
Lancelot came,  
Reputed the best knight and goodliest  
man,  
Ambassador, to lead her to his lord  
Arthur, and led her forth, and far  
ahead  
Of his and her retinue moving, they,  
Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on  
love  
And sport and tilts and pleasure, (for  
the time  
Was maytime, and as yet no sin was  
dream'd,)  
Rode under groves that look'd a par-  
adise  
Of blossom, over sheets of hvacinth  
That seem'd the heavens upbreking  
thro' the earth,  
And on from hill to hill, and every  
day  
Beheld at noon in some delicious dale  
The silk pavilions of King Arthur  
raised  
For brief repast or afternoon repose  
By couriers gone before; and on  
again,  
Till yet once more ere set of sun they  
saw  
The Dragon of the great Pendragon-  
ship,  
That crown'd the state pavilion of the  
King,  
Blaze by the rushing brook or silent  
well.

But when the Queen immersed in  
such a trance,  
And moving thro' the past uncon-  
sciously,

Came to that point where first she  
 saw the King  
 Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd  
 to find  
 Her journey done, glanced at him,  
 thought him cold,  
 High, self-contain'd, and passionless,  
 not like him,  
 'Not like my Lancelot'—while she  
 brooded thus  
 And grew half-guilty in her thoughts  
 again,  
 There rode an armed warrior to the  
 doors.  
 A murmuring whisper thro' the nun-  
 nery ran,  
 Then on a sudden a cry, 'The King.'  
 She sat  
 Stiff-stricken, listening; but when  
 armed feet  
 Thro' the long gallery from the outer  
 doors  
 Rang coming, prone from off her seat  
 she fell,  
 And grovell'd with her face against  
 the floor:  
 There with her milkwhite arms and  
 shadowy hair  
 She made her face a darkness from  
 the King:  
 And in the darkness heard his armed  
 feet  
 Pause by her; then came silence, then  
 a voice,  
 Monotonous and hollow like a Ghost's  
 Denouncing judgment, but tho'  
 changed, the King's:

'Liest thou here so low, the child  
 of one  
 I honor'd, happy, dead before thy  
 shame?  
 Well is it that no child is born of thee.  
 The children born of thee are sword  
 and fire,  
 Red ruin, and the breaking up of  
 laws,  
 The craft of kindred and the Godless  
 hosts  
 Of heathen swarming o'er the North-  
 ern Sea;  
 Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my  
 right arm,

The mightiest of my knights, abode  
 with me,  
 Have everywhere about this land of  
 Christ  
 In twelve great battles ruining over-  
 thrown.  
 And knowest thou now from whence I  
 come—from him,  
 From waging bitter war with him: and  
 he,  
 That did not shun to smite me in  
 worse way,  
 Had yet that grace of courtesy in him  
 left,  
 He spared to lift his hand against the  
 King  
 Who made him knight: but many a  
 knight was slain;  
 And many more, and all his kith and  
 kin  
 Clave to him, and abode in his own  
 land.  
 And many more when Modred raised  
 revolt,  
 Forgetful of their troth and fealty,  
 clave  
 To Modred, and a remnant stays  
 with me.  
 And of this remnant will I leave a  
 part,  
 True men who love me still, for whom  
 I live,  
 To guard thee in the wild hour com-  
 ing on,  
 Lest but a hair of this low head be  
 harm'd.  
 Fear not: thou shalt be guarded till  
 my death.  
 Howbeit I know, if ancient prophecies  
 Have err'd not, that I march to meet  
 my doom.  
 Thou hast not made my life so sweet  
 to me,  
 That I the King should greatly care  
 to live;  
 For thou hast spoilt the purpose of  
 my life.  
 Bear with me for the last time while I  
 show,  
 Ev'n for thy sake, the sin which thou  
 hast sinn'd.  
 For when the Roman left us, and  
 their law

Relax'd its hold upon us, and the  
 ways  
 Were fill'd with rapine, here and there  
 a deed  
 Of prowess done redress'd a random  
 wrong.  
 But I was first of all the kings who  
 drew  
 The knighthood-errant of this realm  
 and all  
 The realms together under me, their  
 Head,  
 In that fair Order of my Table Round,  
 A glorious company, the flower of  
 men,  
 To serve as model for the mighty  
 world  
 And be the fair beginning of a time.  
 I made them lay their hands in mine  
 and swear  
 To reverence the King, as if he were  
 Their conscience, and their conscience  
 as their King,  
 To break the heathen and uphold the  
 Christ,  
 To ride abroad redressing human  
 wrongs,  
 To speak no slander, no, nor listen to  
 it,  
 To honor his own word as if his  
 God's,  
 To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,  
 To love one maiden only, cleave to  
 her,  
 And worship her by years of noble  
 deeds,  
 Until they won her; for indeed I knew  
 Of no more subtle master under  
 heaven  
 Than is the maiden passion for a  
 maid,  
 Not only to keep down the base in  
 man,  
 But teach high thought, and amiable  
 words  
 And courtliness, and the desire of  
 fame,  
 And love of truth, and all that makes  
 a man.  
 And all this throve before I wedded  
 thee,  
 Believing, "lo mine helpmate, one to  
 feel

My purpose and rejoicing in my joy."  
 Then came thy shameful sin with  
 Lancelot;  
 Then came the sin of Tristram and  
 Isolt;  
 Then others, following these my  
 mightiest knights,  
 And drawing foul ensample from fair  
 names,  
 Sinn'd also, till the loathsome oppo-  
 site  
 Of all my heart had destined did ob-  
 tain,  
 And all thro' thee! so that this life of  
 mine  
 I guard as God's high gift from scathe  
 and wrong,  
 Not greatly care to lose; but rather  
 think  
 How sad it were for Arthur, should  
 he live,  
 To sit once more within his lonely  
 hall,  
 And miss the wonted number of my  
 knights,  
 And miss to hear high talk of noble  
 deeds  
 As in the golden days before thy  
 sin.  
 For which of us, who might be left,  
 could speak  
 Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance  
 at thee?  
 And in thy bowers of Camelot or of  
 Usk  
 Thy shadow still would glide from  
 room to room,  
 And I should evermore be vext with  
 thee  
 In hanging robe or vacant ornament.  
 Or ghostly footfall echoing on the  
 stair.  
 For think not, tho' thou wouldst not  
 love thy lord,  
 Thy lord hast wholly lost his love for  
 thee,  
 I am not made of so slight elements.  
 Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy  
 shame.  
 I hold that man the worst of public  
 foes  
 Who either for his own or children's  
 sake,

To save his blood from scandal, lets  
 the wife  
 Whom he knows false, abide and rule  
 the house :  
 For being thro' his cowardice allow'd  
 Her station, taken everywhere for  
 pure,  
 She like a new disease, unknown to  
 men,  
 Creeps, no precaution used, among  
 the crowd,  
 Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes,  
 and saps  
 The fealty of our friends, and stirs the  
 pulse  
 With devil's leaps, and poisons half  
 the young.  
 Worst of the worst were that man he  
 that reigns !  
 Better the King's waste hearth and  
 aching heart  
 Than thou reseated in thy place of  
 light,  
 The mockery of my people, and their  
 bane.

He paused, and in the pause she  
 crept an inch  
 Nearer, and laid her hands about his  
 feet.  
 Far off a solitary trumpet blew.  
 Then waiting by the doors the war-  
 horse neigh'd  
 As at a friend's voice, and he spake  
 again :

' Yet think not that I come to urge  
 thy crimes,  
 I did not come to curse thee, Guine-  
 vere,  
 I, whose vast pity almost makes me die  
 To see thee, laying there thy golden  
 head,  
 My pride in happier summers, at my  
 feet.  
 The wrath which forced my thoughts  
 on that fierce law,  
 The doom of treason and the flaming  
 death,  
 (When first I learnt thee hidden here)  
 is past.  
 The pang—which while I weigh'd thy  
 heart with one

Too wholly true to dream untruth in  
 thee,  
 Made my tears burn—is also past—in  
 part.  
 And all is past, the sin is sinn'd,  
 and I,  
 Lo ! I forgive thee, as Eternal God  
 Forgives : do thou for thine own soul  
 the rest.  
 But how to take last leave of all I  
 loved ?  
 O golden hair, with which I used to  
 play  
 Not knowing ! O imperial-moulded  
 form,  
 And beauty such as never woman wore,  
 Until it came a kingdom's curse with  
 thee—  
 I cannot touch thy lips, they are not  
 mine,  
 But Lancelot's : nay, they never were  
 the King's.  
 I cannot take thy hand ; that too is  
 flesh,  
 And in the flesh thou hast sinn'd ; and  
 mine own flesh,  
 Here looking down on thine polluted,  
 cries  
 " I loathe thee : " yet not less, O  
 Guinevere,  
 For I was ever virgin save for thee,  
 My love thro' flesh hath wrought into  
 my life  
 So far, that my doom is, I love thee  
 still.  
 Let no man dream but that I love  
 thee still.  
 Perchance, and so thou purify thy  
 soul,  
 And so thou lean on our fair father  
 Christ,  
 Hereafter in that world where all are  
 pure  
 We two may meet before high God,  
 and thou  
 Wilt spring to me, and claim me  
 thine, and know  
 I am thine husband—not a smaller  
 soul,  
 Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave  
 me that,  
 I charge thee, my last hope. Now  
 must I hence.

Thro' the thick night I hear the trumpet blow:  
 They summon me their King to lead mine hosts  
 Far down to that great battle in the west,  
 Where I must strike against the man they call  
 My sister's son—no kin of mine, who leagues  
 With Lords of the White Horse, heathen, and knights,  
 Traitors—and strike him dead, and meet myself  
 Death, or I know not what mysterious doom.  
 And thou remaining here wilt learn the event;  
 But hither shall I never come again,  
 Never lie by thy side; see thee no more—  
 Farewell!

And while she grov'ell'd at his feet,  
 She felt the King's breath wander o'er her neck,  
 And in the darkness o'er her fallen head,  
 Perceived the waving of his hands that blest.

Then, listening till those armed steps were gone,  
 Rose the pale Queen, and in her anguish found  
 The casement: 'peradventure,' so she thought,  
 'If I might see his face, and not be seen.'  
 And lo, he sat on horseback at the door!  
 And near him the sad nuns with each a light  
 Stood, and he gave them charge about the Queen,  
 To guard and foster her for evermore.  
 And while he spake to these his helm was lower'd,  
 To which for crest the golden dragon clung  
 Of Britain; so she did not see the face,

Which then was as an angel's, but she saw,  
 Wet with the mists and smitten by the lights,  
 The Dragon of the great Pendragon-ship  
 Blaze, making all the night a steam of fire.  
 And even then he turn'd; and more and more  
 The moony vapor rolling round the King,  
 Who seem'd the phantom of a Giant in it,  
 Enwound him fold by fold, and made him gray  
 And grayer, till himself became as mist  
 Before her, moving ghostlike to his doom.

Then she stretch'd out her arms and cried aloud  
 'Oh Arthur!' there her voice brake suddenly,  
 Then—as a stream that spouting from a cliff  
 Fails in mid air, but gathering at the base  
 Re-makes itself, and flashes down the vale—  
 Went on in passionate utterance:

'Gone—my lord!  
 Gone thro' my sin to slay and to be slain!  
 And he forgave me, and I could not speak.  
 Farewell? I should have answer'd his farewell.  
 His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord the King,  
 My own true lord! how dare I call him mine?  
 The shadow of another cleaves to me,  
 And makes me one pollution: he, the King,  
 Call'd me polluted: shall I kill myself?  
 What help in that? I cannot kill my sin,  
 If soul be soul; nor can I kill my shame;

No, nor by living can I live it down.  
 The days will grow to weeks, the  
 weeks to months,  
 The months will add themselves and  
 make the years,  
 The years will roll into the centuries,  
 And mine will ever be a name of  
 scorn.  
 I must not dwell on that defeat of  
 fame.  
 Let the world be; that is but of  
 the world;  
 What else? what hope? I think  
 there was a hope,  
 Except he mock'd me when he spake  
 of hope;  
 His hope he call'd it; but he never  
 mocks,  
 For mockery is the fume of little  
 hearts.  
 And blessed be the King, who hath  
 forgiven  
 My wickedness to him, and left me  
 hope  
 That in mine own heart I can live  
 down sin  
 And be his mate hereafter in the  
 heavens  
 Before high God. Ah great and gen-  
 tle lord,  
 Who wast, as is the conscience of a  
 saint  
 Among his warring senses, to thy  
 knights—  
 To whom my false voluptuous pride,  
 that took  
 Full easily all impressions from  
 below,  
 Would not look up, or half-despised  
 the height  
 To which I would not or I could not  
 climb—  
 I thought I could not breathe in that  
 fine air  
 That pure severity of perfect light—  
 I yearn'd for warmth and color which  
 I found  
 In Lancelot—now I see thee what  
 thou art,  
 Thou art the highest and most human  
 too,  
 Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there  
 none

Will tell the King I love him tho' so  
 late?  
 Now—ere he goes to the great Battle?  
 none:  
 Myself must tell him in that purer  
 life,  
 But now it were too daring. Ah my  
 God,  
 What might I not have made of thy  
 fair world,  
 Had I but loved thy highest creature  
 here?  
 It was my duty to have loved the  
 highest:  
 It surely was my profit had I known:  
 It would have been my pleasure had  
 I seen.  
 We needs must love the highest when  
 we see it,  
 Not Lancelot, nor another.'

Here her hand  
 Grasp'd, made her veil her eyes: she  
 look'd and saw  
 The novice, weeping, suppliant, and  
 said to her,  
 'Yea, little maid, for am I not for-  
 given?'  
 Then glancing up beheld the holy  
 nuns  
 All round her, weeping; and her  
 heart was loosed  
 Within her, and she wept with these  
 and said, -

'Ye know me then, that wicked  
 one, who broke  
 The vast design and purpose of the  
 King.  
 O shut me round with narrowing  
 nunnery-walls,  
 Meek maidens, from the voices cry-  
 ing "shame."  
 I must not scorn myself: he loves me  
 still.  
 Let no one dream but that he loves  
 me still.  
 So let me, if you do not shudder at  
 me,  
 Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with  
 you;  
 Wear black and white, and be a nun  
 like you,

Fast with your fasts, not feasting with  
 your feasts;  
 Grieve with your griefs, not grieving  
 at your joys,  
 But not rejoicing; mingle with your  
 rites;  
 Pray and be pray'd for; lie before  
 your shrines;  
 Do each low office of your holy  
 house;  
 Walk your dim cloister, and distribute  
 dole  
 To poor sick people, richer in His eyes  
 Who ransom'd us and haler too than  
 I;  
 And treat their loathsome hurts and  
 heal mine own;  
 And so wear out in almsdeed and in  
 prayer  
 The sombre close of that voluptuous  
 day,

Which wrought the ruin of my lord  
 the King.'

She said: they took her to them-  
 selves; and she  
 Still hoping, fearing 'is it yet too  
 late?'  
 Dwelt with them, till in time their  
 Abbess died.  
 Then she, for her good deeds and her  
 pure life,  
 And for the power of ministration in  
 her,  
 And likewise for the high rank she  
 had borne,  
 Was chosen Abbess, there, an Abbess,  
 lived  
 For three brief years, and there, an  
 Abbess, past  
 To where beyond these voices there is  
 peace.

*End of 'The Round Table.'*

#### THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

THAT story which the bold Sir Bedi-  
 vere,  
 First made and latest left of all the  
 knights,  
 Told, when the man was no more than  
 a voice  
 In the white winter of his age, to  
 those  
 With whom he dwelt, new faces, other  
 minds.

For on their march to westward,  
 Bedivere,  
 Who slowly paced among the slum-  
 bering host,  
 Heard in his tent the moanings of the  
 King:

'I found Him in the shining of the  
 stars,  
 I mark'd Him in the flowering of His  
 fields,  
 But in His ways with men I find Him  
 not.  
 I waged His wars, and now I pass and  
 die.

O me! for why is all around us here  
 As if some lesser god had made the  
 world,  
 But had not force to shape it as he  
 would,  
 Till the High God behold it from be-  
 yond,  
 And enter it, and make it beautiful?  
 Or else as if the world were wholly  
 fair,  
 But that these eyes of men are dense  
 and dim,  
 And have not power to see it as  
 it is:  
 Perchance, because we see not to the  
 close;—  
 For I, being simple, thought to work  
 His will,  
 And have but stricken with the sword  
 in vain:  
 And all whereon I lean'd in wife and  
 friend  
 Is traitor to my peace, and all my  
 realm  
 Reels back into the beast, and is no  
 more.



My God, thou hast forgotten me in  
my death:  
Nay—God my Christ—I pass but  
shall not die.'

Then, ere that last weird battle in  
the west,  
There came on Arthur sleeping,  
Gawain kill'd  
In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain  
blown  
Along a wandering wind, and past his  
ear  
Went shrilling, 'Hollow, hollow all  
delight!  
Hail, King! to-morrow thou shalt pass  
away.  
Farewell! there is an isle of rest for  
thee.  
And I am blown along a wandering  
wind,  
And hollow, hollow, hollow all de-  
light.'  
And fainter onward, like wild birds  
that change  
Their season in the night and wail  
their way  
From cloud to cloud, down the long  
wind the dream  
Shrill'd; but in going mingled with  
dim cries  
Far in the moonlit haze among the  
hills,  
As of some lonely city sack'd by night,  
When all is lost, and wife and child  
with wail  
Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke  
and call'd,  
'Who spake? A dream. O light  
upon the wind,  
Thine, Gawain, was the voice—are  
these dim cries  
Thine? or doth all that haunts the  
waste and wild  
Mourn, knowing it will go along with  
me?'

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere  
and spake:  
'O me, my King, let pass whatever  
will,  
Elves, and the harmless glamour of  
the field;

But in their stead thy name and glory  
cling  
To all high places like a golden  
cloud  
For ever: but as yet thou shalt not  
pass.  
Light was Gawain in life, and light in  
death  
Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the  
man;  
And care not thou for dreams from  
him, but rise—  
I hear the steps of Modred in the  
west,  
And with him many of thy people, and  
knights  
Once thine, whom thou hast loved,  
but grosser grown  
Than heathen, spitting at their vows  
and thee.  
Right well in heart they know thee for  
the King.  
Arise, go forth and conquer as of old.'

Then spake King Arthur to Sir  
Bedivere:  
'Far other is this battle in the west  
Whereto we move, than when we  
strove in youth,  
And brake the petty kings, and fought  
with Rome,  
Or thrust the heathen from the  
Roman wall,  
And shook him thro' the north. Ill  
doom is mine  
To war against my people and my  
knights.  
The king who fights his people fights  
himself.  
And they my knights, who loved me  
once, the stroke  
That strikes them dead is as my death  
to me.  
Yet let us hence, and find or feel a  
way  
Thro' this blind haze, which ever since  
I saw  
One lying in the dust at Almesbury,  
Hath folded in the passes of the  
world.'

Then rose the King and moved his  
host by night,

And ever push'd Sir Modred, league  
     by league,  
 Back to the sunset bound of Lyon-  
     nesse—  
 A land of old upheaven from the  
     abyss  
 By fire, to sink into the abyss again ;  
 Where fragments of forgotten peoples  
     dwelt,  
 And the long mountains ended in a  
     coast  
 Of ever-shifting sand, and far away  
 The phantom circle of a moaning sea.  
 There the pursuer could pursue no  
     more,  
 And he that fled no further fly the  
     King ;  
 And there, that day when the great  
     light of heaven  
 Burn'd at his lowest in the rolling  
     year,  
 On the waste sand by the waste sea  
     they closed.  
 Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a  
     fight  
 Like this last, dim, weird battle of the  
     west.  
 A deathwhite mist slept over sand  
     and sea :  
 Whereof the chill, to him who  
     breathed it, drew  
 Down with his blood, till all his heart  
     was cold  
 With formless fear ; and ev'n on Ar-  
     thur fell  
 Confusion, since he saw not whom he  
     fought.  
 For friend and foe were shadows in  
     the mist,  
 And friend slew friend not knowing  
     whom he slew ;  
 And some had visions out of golden  
     youth,  
 And some beheld the faces of old  
     ghosts  
 Look in upon the battle ; and in the  
     mist  
 Was many a noble deed, many a base,  
 And chance and craft and strength in  
     single fights,  
 And ever and anon with host to host  
 Shocks, and the splintering spear, the  
     hard mail hewn,

Shield-breakings, and the clash of  
     brands, the crash  
 Of battleaxes on shatter'd helms, and  
     shrieks  
 After the Christ, of those who falling  
     down  
 Look'd up for heaven, and only saw  
     the mist ;  
 And shouts of heathen and the traitor  
     knights,  
 Oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous  
     blasphemies,  
 Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboring of  
     the lungs  
 In that close mist, and cryings for the  
     light,  
 Moans of the dying, and voices of the  
     dead.

Last, as by some one deathbed after  
     wail  
 Of suffering, silence follows, or thro'  
     death  
 Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that  
     shore,  
 Save for some whisper of the seething  
     seas,  
 A dead hush fell ; but when the dolor-  
     ous day,  
 Grew drearier toward twilight falling,  
     came  
 A bitter wind, clear from the North,  
     and blew  
 The mist aside, and with that wind the  
     tide  
 Rose, and the pale King glanced  
     across the field  
 Of battle : but no man was moving  
     there ;  
 Nor any cry of Christian heard  
     thereon,  
 Nor yet of heathen ; only the wan  
     wave  
 Brake in among dead faces, to and  
     fro  
 Swaying the helpless hands, and up  
     and down  
 Tumbling the hollow helmets of the  
     fallen,  
 And shiver'd brands that once had  
     fought with Rome,  
 And rolling far along the gloomy  
     shores

The voice of days of old and days to be.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,  
And whiter than the mist that all day long  
Had held the field of battle was the King:

'Hearst thou this great voice that shakes the world,  
And wastes the narrow realm whereon we move,  
And beats upon the faces of the dead,  
My dead, as tho' they had not died for me?—  
O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n  
Confusion, till I know not what I am,  
Nor whence I am, nor whether I be King.  
Behold, I seem but King among the dead.'

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere:  
'My King,  
King everywhere! and so the dead have kings,  
There also will I worship thee as King.  
Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live  
Who love thee; but who hates thee, he that brought  
The heathen back among us, yonder stands,  
Modred, unharm'd, the traitor of thine house.'

Then spake the King: 'My house hath been my doom.  
But call not thou this traitor of my house  
Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with me.  
My house are rather they who swear my vows,  
Yea, even while they brake them, own'd me King.  
And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,

When all the purport of my throne hath fail'd,  
That quick or dead thou holdest me for King.  
King am I, whatsoever be their cry;  
And one last act of kinghood shalt thou see  
Yet, ere I pass.' And uttering this the King  
Made at the man: then Modred smote his liege  
Hard on that helm which many a heathen sword  
Had beaten thin; while Arthur at one blow,  
Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,  
Slew him, and all but slain himself, he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd  
Among the mountains by the winter sea;  
Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,  
Had fall'n in Lyonesse about their lord,  
King Arthur. Then, because his wound was deep,  
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,  
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,  
A broken chancel with a broken cross,  
That stood on a dark strait of barren land:  
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one  
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:  
'The sequel of to-day unsolders all  
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights  
Whereof this world holds record.  
Such a sleep  
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we  
Shall never more, at any future time,  
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,

Walking about the gardens and the  
halls  
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.  
I perish by this people which I  
made,—  
Tho' Merlin sware that I should  
come again  
To rule once more; but, let what will  
be, be,  
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm  
That without help I cannot last till  
morn.  
Thou therefore take my brand Excali-  
bur,  
Which was my pride: for thou re-  
memberest how  
In those old days, one summer noon,  
Rose up from out the bosom of the  
lake,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful,  
Holding the sword—and how I row'd  
across  
And took it, and have worn it, like a  
king;  
And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
In aftertime, this also shall be known:  
But now delay not: take Excalibur,  
And fling him far into the middle  
mere:  
Watch what thou seest, and lightly  
bring me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedi-  
vere:  
'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee  
thus,  
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the  
helm—  
A little thing may harm a wounded  
man;  
Yet I thy hest will all perform at  
full,  
Watch what I see, and lightly bring  
thee word.'

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he  
stept  
And in the moon athwart the place of  
tombs,  
Where lay the mighty bones of an-  
cient men,

Old knights, and over them the sea-  
wind sang  
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He,  
stepping down  
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed  
rock,  
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Ex-  
calibur,  
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter  
moon,  
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,  
ran forth  
And sparkled keen with frost against  
the hilt:  
For all the haft twinkled with diamond  
sparks,  
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-  
work  
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so  
long  
That both his eyes were dazzled as he  
stood,  
This way and that dividing the swift  
mind,  
In act to throw: but at the last it  
seem'd  
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd  
There in the many-knotted waterflags,  
That whistled stiff and dry about the  
marge.  
So strode he back slow to the  
wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir  
Bedivere:  
'Hast thou perform'd my mission  
which I gave?  
What is it thou hast seen? or what  
hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-  
vere:  
'I heard the ripple washing in the  
reeds,  
And the wild water lapping on the  
crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur,  
faint and pale:  
'Thou hast betray'd thy care and  
thy name,

Not rendering true answer, as be-  
seen'd  
Thy féalty, nor like a noble knight:  
For surer sign had follow'd, either  
hand,  
Or voice, or else a motion of the  
mere.  
This is a shameful thing for men to  
lie.  
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go  
again,  
As thou art lief and dear, and do the  
thing  
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring  
me word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second  
time  
Across the ridge, and paced beside  
the mere,  
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in  
thought;  
But when he saw the wonder of the  
hilt,  
How curiously and strangely chased,  
he smote  
His palms together, and he cried  
aloud:

'And if indeed I cast the brand  
away,  
Surely a precious thing, one worthy  
note,  
Should thus be lost forever from the  
earth,  
Which might have pleased the eyes of  
many men.  
What good should follow this, if this  
were done?  
What harm, undone? Deep harm to  
disobey,  
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.  
Were it well to obey then, if a king  
demand  
An act unprofitable, against himself?  
The King is sick, and knows not  
what he does.  
What record, or what relic of my  
lord  
Should be to aftertime, but empty  
breath  
And rumors of a doubt? But were  
this kept.

Stored in some treasure-house of  
mighty kings,  
Some one might show it at a joust of  
arms,  
Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excal-  
ibur,  
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the  
Lake.  
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in  
the deeps  
Upon the hidden bases of the hills."  
So might some old man speak in the  
after-time  
To all the people, winning reverence.  
But now much honor and much fame  
were lost.'

So spake he, clouded with his own  
conceit,  
And hid Excalibur the second time,  
And so strode back slow to the  
wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing  
heavily:  
'What is it thou hast seen? or what  
hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bed-  
ivere:  
'I heard the water lapping on the  
crag,  
And the long ripple washing in the  
reefs.'

To whom replied King Arthur,  
much in wrath:  
'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,  
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is  
me!  
Authority forgets a dying king,  
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye  
That bow'd the will. I see thee what  
thou art,  
For thou, the latest-left of all my  
knights,  
In whom should meet the offices of  
all,  
Thou wouldst betray me for the  
precious hilt;  
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl  
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the  
eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,  
And the third time may prosper, get  
thee hence :

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,  
I will arise and slay thee with my  
hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere,  
and ran,  
And, leaping down the ridges lightly,  
plunged

Among the bulrush beds, and clutch'd  
the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it.

The great brand  
Made lightnings in the splendor of  
the moon,

And flashing round and round, and  
whirl'd in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern  
morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter  
shock

By night, with noises of the Northern  
Sea.

Só flash'd and fell the brand Excal-  
ibur :

But ere he dipt the surface, rose an  
arm

Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful,

And caught him by the hilt, and  
brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in  
the mere.

And lightly went the other to the  
King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing  
thicker breath :

' Now see I by thine eyes that this is  
done.

Speak out : what is it thou hast heard,  
or seen ?'

And answer made the bold Sir  
Bedivere :

' Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest  
the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never  
saw,

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I  
die,

Not tho' I live three lives of mortal  
men, .

So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him,  
wheeling him ;

But when I look'd again, behold an  
arm,

Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful,

That caught him by the hilt, and  
brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in  
the mere.'

And answer made King Arthur,  
breathing hard :

' My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I  
were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive  
my weight,

And bear me to the margin ; yet I  
fear

My wound hath taken cold, and I  
shall die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half  
rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his  
arm,

And looking wistfully with wide blue  
eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere  
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,

And would have spoken, but he found  
not words ;

Then took with care, and kneeling on  
one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the lan-  
guid hands,

And rising bore him thro' the place of  
tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur  
panted hard,

Like one that feels a nightmare on  
his bed

When all the house is mute. So  
sigh'd the King,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear,  
' Quick, quick !

I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'

But the other swiftly strode from  
ridge to ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking,  
as he walk'd,  
Larger than human on the frozen hills.  
He heard the deep behind him, and a  
cry  
Before. His own thought drove him  
like a goad.  
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy  
caves  
And barren chasms, and all to left  
and right  
The bare black cliff clang'd round  
him, as he based  
His feet on juts of slippery crag that  
rang  
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed  
heels—  
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter  
moon.

Then saw they how there hove a  
dusky barge,  
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to  
stern,  
Beneath them; and descending they  
were ware  
That all the decks were dense with  
stately forms,  
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a  
dream—by these  
Three Queens with crowns of gold :  
and from them rose  
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling  
stars,  
And, as it were one voice, an agony  
Of lamentation, like a wind that  
shrills  
All night in a waste land, where no  
one comes,  
Or hath come, since the making of the  
world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me  
in the barge.'  
So to the barge they came. There  
those three Queens  
Put forth their hands, and took the  
King, and wept.  
But she, that rose the tallest of them  
all  
And fairest, laid his head upon her  
lap,

And loosed the shatter'd casque, and  
chafed his hands,  
And call'd him by his name, complain-  
ing loud,  
And dropping bitter tears against a  
brow  
Striped with dark blood: for all his  
face was white  
And colorless, and like the wither'd  
moon  
Smote by the fresh beam of the  
springing east;  
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd  
with drops  
Of onset; and the light and lustrous  
curls—  
That made his forehead like a rising  
sun  
High from the dais-throne—were  
parch'd with dust;  
Or, clotted into points and hanging  
loose,  
Mix'd with the knightly growth that  
fringed his lips.  
So like a shatter'd column lay the  
King;  
Not like that Arthur who, with lance  
in rest,  
From spur to plume a star of tourna-  
ment,  
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and  
charged  
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bed-  
ivere :  
'Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall  
I go?  
Where shall I hide my forehead and  
my eyes?  
For now I see the true old times are  
dead,  
When every morning brought a noble  
chance,  
And every chance brought out a noble  
knight.  
Such times have been not since the  
light that led  
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.  
But now the whole Round Table is  
dissolved  
Which was an image of the mighty  
world,

And I, the last, go forth companion-  
less,  
And the days darken round me, and  
the years,  
Among new men, strange faces, other  
minds.'

And slowly answer'd Arthur from  
the barge:  
✓ 'The old order changeth, yielding  
place to new,  
And God fulfils himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt  
the world.  
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in  
me?  
I have lived my life, and that which I  
have done  
May He within himself make pure!  
but thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face  
again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are  
wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Where-  
fore, let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and  
day.  
For what are men better than sheep  
or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the  
brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands  
of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who  
call them friend?  
For so the whole round earth is every  
way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet  
of God. ¶  
But now farewell. I am going a long  
way  
With these thou seest—if indeed I  
go  
(For all my mind is clouded with a  
doubt)—  
To the island-valley of Avilion;  
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any  
snow,  
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it  
lies  
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with  
orchard lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with  
summer sea,  
Where I will heal me of my grievous  
wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar  
and sail  
Moved from the brink, like some full-  
breasted swan  
That, fluting a wild carol ere her  
death,  
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes  
the flood  
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir  
Bedivere  
Revolving many memories, till the  
hull  
Look'd one black dot against the  
verge of dawn,  
And on the mere the wailing died  
away.

But when that moan had past for  
evermore,  
The stillness of the dead world's win-  
ter dawn  
Amazed him, and he groan'd, 'The  
King is gone.'  
And therewithal came on him the  
weird rhyme,  
'From the great deep to the great  
deep he goes.'

Whereat he slowly turn'd and  
slowly clomb  
The last hard footstep of that iron  
crag;  
Thence mark'd the black hull moving  
yet, and cried,  
'He passes to be King among the  
dead,  
And after healing of his grievous  
wound  
He comes again; but—if he come no  
more—  
O me, be yon dark Queens in yon  
black boat,  
Who shriek'd and wail'd, the three  
whereat we gazed  
On that high day, when, clothed with  
living light,  
They stood before his throne in si-  
lence, friends



Of Arthur, who should help him at his need?'

Then from the dawn it seem'd there came, but faint  
As from beyond the limit of the world,  
Like the last echo born of a great cry,  
Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice  
Around a king returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about,  
and clomb

Ev'n to the highest he could climb,  
and saw,  
Straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand,  
Or thought he saw, the speck that bare the King,  
Down that long water opening on the deep  
Somewhere far off, pass on and on,  
and go  
From less to less and vanish into light.  
And the new sun rose bringing the new year.

TO THE QUEEN.

O LOYAL to the royal in thyself,  
And loyal to thy land, as this to thee—  
Bear witness, that rememberable day,  
When, pale as yet, and fever-worn,  
the Prince  
Who scarce had pluck'd his flickering  
life again  
From halfway down the shadow of  
the grave,  
Past with thee thro' thy people and  
their love,  
And London roll'd one tide of joy  
thro' all  
Her trebled millions, and loud leagues  
of man  
And welcome! witness, too, the si-  
lent cry,  
The prayer of many a race and creed,  
and clime—  
Thunderless lightnings striking under  
sea  
From sunset and sunrise of all thy  
realm,  
And that true North, whereof we  
lately heard  
A strain to shame us 'keep you to  
yourselves;  
So loyal is too costly! friends—your  
love  
Is but a burthen: loose the bond, and  
go.'  
Is this the tone of empire? here the  
faith

That made us rulers? this, indeed, her  
voice  
And meaning, whom the roar of Hou-  
goumont  
Left mightiest of all peoples under  
heaven?  
What shock has fool'd her since, that  
she should speak  
So feebly? wealthier—wealthier—  
hour by hour!  
The voice of Britain, or a sinking  
land,  
Some third-rate isle half-lost among  
her seas?  
*There* rang her voice, when the full  
city peal'd  
Thee and thy Prince! The loyal to  
their crown  
Are loyal to their own far sons, who  
love  
Our ocean-empire with her boundless  
homes  
For ever-broadening England, and her  
throne  
In our vast Orient, and one isle, one  
isle,  
That knows not her own greatness:  
if she knows  
And dreads it we are fall'n.—But  
thou, my Queen,  
Not for itself, but thro' thy living love  
For one to whom I made it o'er his  
grave  
Sacred, except this old imperfect tale,

New-old, and shadowing Sense at war  
 with Soul  
 Rather than that gray king, whose  
 name, a ghost,  
 Streams like a cloud, man-shaped,  
 from mountain peak,  
 And cleaves to cairn and cromlech  
 still; or him  
 Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Mall-  
 cor's, one  
 Touch'd by the adulterous finger of a  
 time  
 That hover'd between war and wan-  
 tonness,  
 And crownings and dethronements :  
 take withal  
 Thy poet's blessing, and his trust that  
 Heaven  
 Will blow the tempest in the distance  
 back  
 From thine and ours : for some are  
 scared, who mark,  
 Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,  
 Waverings of every vane with every  
 wind,  
 And wordy trucklings to the transient  
 hour,  
 And fierce or careless looseners of  
 the faith,

And Softness breeding scorn of sim-  
 ple life,  
 Or Cowardice, the child of lust for  
 gold,  
 Or Labor, with a groan and not a  
 voice,  
 Or Art with poisonous honey stol'n  
 from France,  
 And that which knows, but careful for  
 itself,  
 And that which knows not, ruling that  
 which knows  
 To its own harm : the goal of this  
 great world  
 Lies beyond sight : yet—if our slowly-  
 grown  
 And crown'd Republic's crowning  
 common-sense,  
 That saved her many times, not fail—  
 their fears  
 Are morning shadows huger than the  
 shapes  
 That cast them, not those gloomier  
 which forego  
 The darkness of that battle in the  
 West,  
 Where all of high and holy dies  
 away.

## THE LOVER'S TALE.

THE original Preface to 'The Lover's Tale' states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends however who, boy-like, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light—accompanying with a reprint of the sequel—a work of my mature life—'The Golden Supper'?

May, 1879.

### ARGUMENT.

JULIAN, whose cousin and foster-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavors to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel. He speaks (in Parts II. and III.) of having been haunted by visions and the sound of bells, tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.

#### I.

HERE far away, seen from the top-  
most cliff,  
Filling with purple gloom the vacan-  
cies  
Between the tufted hills, the sloping  
seas  
Hung in mid-heaven, and half-way  
down rare sails,  
White as white clouds, floated from  
sky to sky.  
Oh! pleasant breast of waters, quiet  
bay,  
Like to a quiet mind in the loud  
world,  
Where the chafed breakers of the  
outer sea  
Sank powerless, as anger falls aside  
And withers on the breast of peaceful  
love;  
Thou didst receive the growth of  
pines that fledged  
The hills that watch'd thee, as Love  
watcheth Love,  
In thine own essence, and delight thy-  
self  
To make it wholly thine on sunny  
days.

Keep thou thy name of 'Lover's  
Bay.' See, sirs,  
Even now the Goddess of the Past,  
that takes  
The heart, and sometimes touches but  
one string  
That quivers, and is silent, and some-  
times  
Sweeps suddenly all its half-moulder'd  
chords  
To some old melody, begins to  
play  
That air which pleased her first. I  
feel thy breath;  
I come, great Mistress of the ear and  
eye:  
Thy breath is of the pinewood; and  
tho' years  
Have hollow'd out a deep and stormy  
strait  
Betwixt the native land of Love and  
me,  
Breathe but a little on me, and the  
sail  
Will draw me to the rising of the  
sun,  
The lucid chambers of the morning  
star,  
And East of Life.

Permit me, friend, I prythee,  
 To pass my hand across my brows,  
 and muse  
 On those dear hills, that never more  
 will meet  
 The sight that throbs and aches be-  
 neath my touch,  
 As tho' there beat a heart in either  
 eye;  
 For when the outer lights are darken'd  
 thus,  
 The memory's vision hath a keener  
 edge.  
 It grows upon me now—the semicircle  
 Of dark-blue waters and the narrow  
 fringe  
 Of curving beach—its wreaths of  
 dripping green—  
 Its pale pink shells—the summerhouse  
 aloft  
 That open'd on the pines with doors  
 of glass,  
 A mountain nest—the pleasure-boat  
 that rock'd,  
 Light-green with its own shadow, keel  
 to keel,  
 Upon the dappled dimplings of the  
 wave,  
 That blanch'd upon its side.

O Love, O Hope!  
 They come, they crowd upon me all  
 at once—  
 Moved from the cloud of unforgotten  
 things,  
 That sometimes on the horizon of the  
 mind  
 Lies folded, often sweeps athwart in  
 storm—  
 Flash upon flash they lighten thro'  
 me—days  
 Of dewy dawning and the amber  
 eyes  
 When thou and I, Camilla, thou and  
 I  
 Were borne about the bay or safely  
 moor'd  
 Beneath a low-brow'd cavern, where  
 the tide  
 Plash'd, sapping its worn ribs; and all  
 without  
 The slowly-riding rollers on the  
 cliffs

Clash'd, calling to each other, and  
 thro' the arch  
 Down those loud waters, like a set-  
 ting star,  
 Mixt with the gorgeous west the  
 lighthouse shone,  
 And silver-smiling Venus ere she fell  
 Would often loiter in her balmy blue,  
 To crown it with herself.

Here, too, my love  
 Waver'd at anchor with me, when  
 day hung  
 From his mid-dome in Heaven's airy  
 halls;  
 Gleams of the water-circles as they  
 broke,  
 Flicker'd like doubtful smiles about  
 her lips,  
 Quiver'd a flying glory on her hair,  
 Leapt like a passing thought across  
 her eyes;  
 And mine with one that will not pass,  
 till earth  
 And heaven pass too, dwelt on my  
 heaven, a face  
 Most starry-fair, but kindled from  
 within  
 As 'twere with dawn. She was dark  
 hair'd, dark-eyed:  
 Oh, such dark eyes! a single glance  
 of them  
 Will govern a whole life from birth  
 to death,  
 Careless of all things else, led on with  
 light  
 In trances and in visions: look at  
 them,  
 You lose yourself in utter ignorance;  
 You cannot find their depth; for they  
 go back,  
 And farther back, and still withdraw  
 themselves  
 Quite into the deep soul, that ever-  
 more  
 Fresh springing from her fountains in  
 the brain,  
 Still pouring thro', floods with re-  
 dundant life  
 Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago  
 I should have died, if it were possible

To die in gazing on that perfectness  
Which I do bear within me : I had  
died,  
But from my farthest lapse, my latest  
ebb,  
Thine image, like a charm of light  
and strength  
Upon the waters, push'd me back  
again  
On these deserted sands of barren  
life.  
Tho' from the deep vault where the  
heart of Hope  
Fell into dust, and crumbled in the  
dark—  
Forgetting how to render beautiful  
Her countenance with quick and  
healthful blood—  
Thou didst not sway me upward ;  
could I perish  
While thou, a meteor of the sepul-  
chre,  
Didst swathe thyself all round Hope's  
quiet urn  
For ever? He, that saith it, hath  
o'er-stept  
The slippery footing of his narrow  
wit,  
And fall'n away from judgment.  
Thou art light,  
To which my spirit leaneth all her  
flowers,  
And length of days, and immortal-  
ity  
Of thought, and freshness ever self-  
renew'd.  
For Time and Grief abode too long  
with Life,  
And, like all other friends i' the  
world, at last  
They grew weary of her fellowship :  
So Time and Grief did beckon unto  
Death,  
And Death drew nigh and beat the  
doors of Life ;  
But thou didst sit alone in the inner  
house,  
A wakeful portress, and didst parle  
with Death,  
'This is a charmed dwelling which I  
hold ;'  
So Death gave back, and would no  
further come.

Yet is my life nor in the present  
time,  
Nor in the present place. To me  
alone,  
Push'd from his chair of regal herit-  
age.  
The Present is the vassal of the  
Past :  
So that, in that I *have* lived, do I  
live,  
And cannot die, and am, in having  
been—  
A portion of the pleasant yesterday,  
Thrust forward on to-day and out of  
place ;  
A body journeying onward, sick with  
toil,  
The weight as if of age upon my  
limbs,  
The grasp of hopeless grief about my  
heart,  
And all the senses weaken'd, save in  
that,  
Which long ago they had glean'd  
and garner'd up  
Into the granaries of memory—  
The clear brow, bulwark of the pre-  
cious brain,  
Chink'd as you see, and scam'd—and  
all the while  
The light soul twines and mingles  
with the growths  
Of vigorous early days, attracted,  
won,  
Married, made one with, molten into  
all  
The beautiful in Past of act or  
place,  
And like the all-enduring camel,  
driven  
Far from the diamond fountain by  
the palms,  
Who toils across the middle moonlit  
nights,  
Or when the white heats of the blind-  
ing noons  
Beat from the concave sand ; yet in  
him keeps  
A draught of that sweet fountain  
that he loves,  
To stay his feet from falling, and his  
spirit  
From bitterness of death.

Ye ask me, friends,  
 When I began to love. How should  
 I tell you?  
 Or from the after-fulness of my heart,  
 Flow back again unto my slender  
 spring  
 And first of love, tho' every turn and  
 depth  
 Between is clearer in my life than  
 all  
 Its present flow. Ye know not what  
 ye ask.  
 How should the broad and open  
 flower tell  
 What sort of bud it was, when, prest  
 together  
 In its green sheath, close-lapt in  
 silken folds,  
 It seem'd to keep its sweetness to it-  
 self,  
 Yet was not the less sweet for that it  
 seem'd?  
 For young Life knows not when  
 young Life was born,  
 But takes it all for granted: neither  
 Love,  
 Warm in the heart, his cradle, can re-  
 member  
 Love in the womb, but resteth satis-  
 fied,  
 Looking on her that brought him to  
 the light:  
 Or as men know not when they fall  
 asleep  
 Into delicious dreams, our other life,  
 So know I not when I began to love.  
 This is my sum of knowledge—that  
 my love  
 Grew with myself—say rather, was  
 my growth,  
 My inward sap, the hold I have on  
 earth,  
 My outward circling air wherewith I  
 breathe,  
 Which yet upholds my life, and ever-  
 more  
 Is to me daily life and daily death:  
 For how should I have lived and not  
 have loved?  
 Can ye take off the sweetness from  
 the flower,  
 The color and the sweetness from the  
 rose,

And place them by themselves; or  
 set apart  
 Their motions and their brightness  
 from the stars,  
 And then point out the flower or the  
 star?  
 Or build a wall betwixt my life and  
 love,  
 And tell me where I am? 'Tis even  
 thus:  
 In that I live I love; because I love  
 I live: whate'er is fountain to the one  
 Is fountain to the other; and when-  
 e'er  
 Our God unknits the riddle of the  
 one,  
 There is no shade or fold of mystery  
 Swathing the other.

Many, many years,  
 (For they seem many and my most of  
 life,  
 And well I could have linger'd in  
 that porch,  
 So unproportion'd to the dwelling-  
 place,)  
 In the Maydews of childhood, oppo-  
 site  
 The flush and dawn of youth, we  
 lived together,  
 Apart, alone together on those hills.

Before he saw my day my father  
 died,  
 And he was happy that he saw it not;  
 But I and the first daisy on his grave  
 From the same clay came into light at  
 once.  
 As Love and I do number equal  
 years,  
 So she, my love, is of an age with me.  
 How like each other was the birth of  
 each!  
 On the same morning, almost the  
 same hour,  
 Under the selfsame aspect of the  
 stars,  
 (Oh falsehood of all starcraft!) we  
 were born.  
 How like each other was the birth of  
 each!  
 The sister of my mother—she that  
 bore

Camilla close beneath her beating  
heart,  
Which to the imprison'd spirit of the  
child,  
With its true-touched pulses in the  
flow  
And hourly visitation of the blood,  
Sent notes of preparation manifold,  
And mellow'd echoes of the outer  
world—  
My mother's sister, mother of my  
love,  
Who had a twofold claim upon my  
heart,  
One twofold mightier than the other  
was,  
In giving so much beauty to the  
world,  
And so much wealth as God had  
charged her with—  
Loathing to put it from herself for  
ever,  
Left her own life with it; and dying  
thus,  
Crown'd with her highest act the  
placid face  
And breathless body of her good  
deeds past.

So were we born, so orphan'd.  
She was motherless  
And I without a father. So from  
each  
Of those two pillars which from earth  
uphold  
Our childhood, one had fallen away,  
and all  
The careful burthen of our tender  
years  
Trembled upon the other. He that  
gave  
Her life, to me delightedly fulfill'd  
All lovingkindnesses, all offices  
Of watchful care and trembling ten-  
derness.  
He waked for both: he pray'd for  
both: he slept  
Dreaming of both: nor was his love  
the less  
Because it was divided, and shot  
forth  
Boughs on each side, laden with  
wholesome shade,

Wherein we nested sleeping or  
awake,  
And sang aloud the matin-song of  
life.

She was my foster-sister: on one  
arm  
The flaxen ringlets of our infancies  
Wander'd, the while we rested: one  
soft lap  
Pillow'd us both: a common light of  
eyes  
Was on us as we lay: our baby lips,  
Kissing one bosom, ever drew from  
thence  
The stream of life, one stream, one  
life, one blood,  
One sustenance, which, still as  
thought grew large,  
Still larger moulding all the house of  
thought,  
Made all our tastes and fancies like,  
perhaps—  
All—all but one; and strange to me,  
and sweet,  
Sweet thro' strange years to know  
that whatsoe'er  
Our general mother meant for me  
alone,  
Our mutual mother dealt to both of  
us:  
So what was earliest mine in earliest  
life,  
I shared with her in whom myself  
remains.  
As was our childhood, so our in-  
fancy,  
They tell me, was a very miracle  
Of fellow-feeling and communion.  
They tell me that we would not be  
alone,—  
We cried when we were parted; when  
I wept,  
Her smile lit up the rainbow on my  
tears,  
Stay'd on the cloud of sorrow; that  
we loved  
The sound of one-another's voices  
more  
Than the gray cuckoo loves his name,  
and learn'd  
To lisp in tune together; that we  
slept

In the same cradle always, face to  
face.  
Heart beating time to heart, lip press-  
ing lip,  
Folding each other, breathing on each  
other,  
Dreaming together (dreaming of each  
other  
They should have added), till the  
morning light  
Sloped thro' the pines, upon the dewy  
pane  
Falling, unseal'd our eyelids, and we  
woke  
To gaze upon each other. If this be  
true,  
At thought of which my whole soul  
languishes  
And faints, and hath no pulse, no  
breath—as tho'  
A man in some still garden should  
infuse  
Rich atar in the bosom of the rose,  
Till, drunk with its own wine, and  
overfull  
Of sweetness, and in smelling of  
itself,  
It fall on its own thorns—if this be  
true—  
And that way my wish leads me ever-  
more  
Still to believe it—'tis so sweet a  
thought,  
Why in the utter stillness of the  
soul  
Doth question'd memory answer not,  
nor tell  
Of this our earliest, our closest-drawn,  
Most loveliest, earthly-heavenliest  
harmony?  
O blossom'd portal of the lonely  
house,  
Green prelude, April promise, glad  
new-year  
Of Being, which with earliest violets  
And lavish carol of clear-throated  
larks  
Fill'd all the March of life!—I will  
not speak of thee,  
These have not seen thee, these can  
never know thee,  
They cannot understand me. Pass  
we then

A term of eighteen years. Ye would  
but laugh,  
If I should tell you how I hoard in  
thought  
The faded rhymes and scraps of  
ancient crones,  
Gray relics of the nurseries of the  
world,  
Which are as gems set in my memory,  
Because she learnt them with me; or  
what use  
To know her father left us just before  
The daffodil was blown? or how we  
found  
The dead man cast upon the shore?  
All this  
Seems to the quiet daylight of your  
minds  
But cloud and smoke, and in the dark  
of mine  
Is traced with flame. Move with me  
to the event.  
There came a glorious morning,  
such a one  
As dawns but once a season. Mer-  
cury  
On such a morning would have flung  
himself  
From cloud to cloud, and swum with  
balanced wings  
To some tall mountain: when I said  
to her,  
'A day for Gods to stoop,' she an-  
swered, 'Ay,  
And men to soar:' for as that other  
gazed,  
Shading his eyes till all the fiery  
cloud,  
The prophet and the chariot and the  
steeds,  
Suck'd into oneness like a little star  
Were drunk into the inmost blue, we  
stood,  
When first we came from out the  
pines at noon,  
With hands for eaves, uplooking and  
almost  
Waiting to see some blessed shape in  
heaven,  
So bathed we were in brilliance.  
Never yet  
Before or after have I known the  
spring



Pour with such sudden deluges of  
light  
Into the middle summer; for that  
day  
Love, rising, shook his wings, and  
charged the winds  
With spiced May-sweets from bound  
to bound, and blew  
Fresh fire into the sun, and from  
within  
Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent  
his soul  
Into the songs of birds, and touch'd  
far-off  
His mountain-altars, his high hills,  
with flame  
Milder and purer.

Thro' the rocks we wound:  
The great pine shook with lonely  
sounds of joy  
That came on the sea-wind. As  
mountain streams  
Our bloods ran free: the sunshine  
seem'd to brood  
More warmly on the heart than on  
the brow.  
We often paused, and, looking back,  
we saw  
The clefts and openings in the moun-  
tains fill'd  
With the blue valley and the glisten-  
ing brooks,  
And all the low dark groves, a land  
of love!  
A land of promise, a land of mem-  
ory,  
A land of promise flowing with the  
milk  
And honey of delicious memories!  
And down to sea, and far as eye could  
ken,  
Each way from verge to verge a Holy  
Land,  
Still growing holier as you near'd the  
bay,  
For there the Temple stood.

When we had reach'd  
The grassy platform on some hill, I  
stoop'd,  
I gather'd the wild herbs, and for her  
brows

And mine made garlands of the self-  
same flower,  
Which she took smiling, and with my  
work thus  
Crown'd her clear forehead. Once or  
twice she told me  
(For I remember all things) to let  
grow  
The flowers that run poison in their  
veins.  
She said, 'The evil flourish in the  
world.'  
Then playfully she gave herself the  
lie—  
'Nothing in nature is unbeautiful;  
So, brother, pluck and spare not.'  
So I wove  
Ev'n the dull-blooded poppy-stem,  
'whose flower,  
Hued with the scarlet of a fierce sun-  
rise,  
Like to the wild youth of an evil  
prince,  
Is without sweetness, but who crowns  
himself  
Above the naked poisons of his heart  
In his old age.' A graceful thought  
of hers  
Grav'n on my fancy! And oh, how  
like a nymph,  
A stately mountain nymph she  
look'd! how native  
Unto the hills she trod on! While I  
gazed  
My coronal slowly disentwined itself  
And fell between us both; tho' while  
I gazed  
My spirit leap'd as with those thrills  
of bliss  
That strike across the soul in prayer,  
and show us  
That we are surely heard. Methought  
a light  
Burst from the garland I had wov'n,  
and stood  
A solid glory on her bright black  
hair;  
A light methought broke from her  
dark, dark eyes,  
And shot itself into the singing  
winds;  
A mystic light flash'd ev'n from her  
white robe

As from a glass in the sun, and fell  
about  
My footsteps on the mountains.

Last we came  
To what our people call 'The Hill of  
Woe.'

A bridge is there, that, look'd at from  
beneath  
Seems but a cobweb filament to link  
The yawning of an earthquake-cloven  
chasm.

And thence one night, when all the  
winds were loud,

A woful man (for so the story went)  
Had thrust his wife and child and  
dash'd himself

Into the dizzy depth below. Below,  
Fierce in the strength of far descent,  
a stream

Flies with a shatter'd foam along the  
chasm.

The path was perilous, loosely  
strown with crags:

We mounted slowly; yet to both  
there came

The joy of life in steepness overcome,  
And victories of ascent, and looking  
down

On all that had look'd down on us;  
and joy

In breathing nearer heaven; and joy  
to me,

High over all the azure-circled earth,  
To breathe with her as if in heaven  
itself;

And more than joy that I to her  
became

Her guardian and her angel, raising  
her

Still higher, past all peril, until she  
saw

Beneath her feet the region far away,  
Beyond the nearest mountain's bosky  
brows,

Arise in open prospect—heath and  
hill,

And hollow lined and wooded to the  
lips,

And steep-down walls of battle-  
mented rock

Gilded with broom, or shatter'd into  
spires,

And glory of broad waters interfused,  
Whence rose as it were breath and  
steam of gold,

And over all the great wood rioting  
And climbing, streak'd or starr'd at  
intervals

With falling brook or blossom'd bush  
—and last,

Framing the mighty landscape to the  
west,

A purple range of mountain-cones,  
between

Whose interspaces gush'd in blinding  
bursts

The incorporate blaze of sun and  
sea.

At length  
Descending from the point and stand-  
ing both,

There on the tremulous bridge, that  
from beneath

Had seem'd a gossamer filament up  
in air,

We paused amid the splendor. All  
the west

And ev'n unto the middle south was  
ribb'd

And barr'd with bloom on bloom.  
The sun below,

Held for a space 'twixt cloud and  
wave, shower'd down

Rays of a mighty circle, weaving over  
That various wilderness a tissue of  
light

Unparallel'd. On the other side, the  
moon,

Half-melted into thin blue air, stood  
still,

And pale and fibrous as a wither'd  
leaf,

Nor yet endured in presence of His  
eyes

To indue his lustre; most unlover-  
like,

Since in his absence full of light and  
joy,

And giving light to others. But this  
most,

Next to her presence whom I loved  
so well,

Spoke loudly even into my inmost  
heart

As to my outward hearing: the loud  
stream,  
Forth issuing from his portals in the  
crag  
(A visible link unto the home of my  
heart),  
Ran amber toward the west, and nigh  
the sea  
Parting my own loved mountains was  
received,  
Shorn of its strength, into the sympa-  
thy  
Of that small bay, which out to open  
main  
Glow'd intermingling close beneath  
the sun.  
Spirit of Love! that little hour was  
bound  
Shut in from Time, and dedicate to  
thee:  
Thy fires from heaven had touch'd it,  
and the earth  
They fell on became hallow'd ever-  
more.

We turn'd: our eyes met: hers  
were bright, and mine  
Were dim with floating tears, that  
shot the sunset  
In lightnings round me; and my name  
was borne  
Upon her breath. Henceforth, my  
name has been  
A hallow'd memory like the names of  
old,  
A center'd, glory-circled memory,  
And a peculiar treasure, brooking not  
Exchange or currency: and in that  
hour  
A hope flow'd round me, like a golden  
mist  
Charm'd amid eddies of melodious  
airs,  
A moment, ere the onward whirlwind  
shatter it,  
Waver'd and floated—which was less  
than Hope,  
Because it lack'd the power of perfect  
Hope;  
But which was more and higher than  
all Hope,  
Because all other Hope had lower  
aim;

Even that this name to which her gra-  
cious lips  
Did lend such gentle utterance, this  
one name,  
In some obscure hereafter, might in-  
wreathe  
(How lovelier, nobler then!) her life,  
her love,  
With my life, love, soul, spirit, and  
heart and strength.

'Brother,' she said, 'let this be  
call'd henceforth  
The Hill of Hope;' and I replied, 'O  
sister,  
My will is one with thine; the Hill of  
Hope.'  
Nevertheless, we did not change the  
name.

I did not speak: I could not speak  
my love.  
Love lieth deep: Love dwells not in  
lip-depths.  
Love wraps his wings on either side  
the heart,  
Constraining it with kisses close and  
warm,  
Absorbing all the incense of sweet  
thoughts  
So that they pass not to the shrine of  
sound.  
Else had the life of that delighted  
hour  
Drunk in the largeness of the utter-  
ance  
Of Love; but how should Earthly  
measure mete  
The Heavenly-unmeasured or unlimi-  
ted Love,  
Who scarce can tune his high majestic  
sense  
Unto the thundersong that wheels the  
spheres,  
Scarce living in the Æolian harmony,  
And flowing odor of the spacious air,  
Scarce housed within the circle of  
this Earth,  
Be cabin'd up in words and syllables,  
Which pass with that which breathes  
them? Sooner Earth  
Might go round Heaven, and the  
strait girth of Time

Inswathe the fulness of Eternity,  
Than language grasp the infinite of  
Love.

O day which did enwomb that  
happy hour,  
Thou art blessed in the years, divin-  
est day!

O Genius of that hour which dost up-  
hold

Thy coronal of glory like a God,  
Amid thy melancholy mates far-seen,  
Who walk before thee, ever turning  
round

To gaze upon thee till their eyes are  
dim

With dwelling on the light and depth  
of thine,

Thy name is ever worshipp'd among  
hours!

Had I died then, I had not seem'd to  
die,

For bliss stood round me like the  
light of Heaven,—

Had I died then, I had not known the  
death;

Yea had the Power from whose right  
hand the light

Of Life issueth, and from whose left  
hand floweth

The Shadow of Death, perennial efflu-  
ences,

Whereof to all that draw the whole-  
some air,

Somewhile the one must overflow the  
other;

Then had he stemm'd my day with  
night, and driven

My current to the fountain whence it  
sprang,—

Even his own abiding excellence—  
On me, methinks, that shock of gloom  
had fall'n

Unfelt, and in this glory I had merged  
The other, like the sun I gazed  
upon,

Which seeming for the moment due  
to death,

And dipping his head low beneath the  
verge,

Yet bearing round about him his own  
day,

In confidence of unabated strength,

Steppeth from Heaven to Heaven,  
from light to light,  
And holdeth his undimmed forehead  
far  
Into a clearer zenith, pure of cloud.

We trod the shadow of the down-  
ward hill;

We past from light to dark. On the  
other side

Is scoop'd a cavern and a mountain  
hall,

Which none have fathom'd. If you  
go far in

(The country people rumor) you  
may hear

The moaning of the woman and the  
child,

Shut in the secret chambers of the  
rock.

I too have heard a sound—perchance  
of streams

Running far on within its inmost  
halls,

The home of darkness; but the cav-  
ern-month,

Half overtrailed with a wanton weed,  
Gives birth to a brawling brook, that

passing lightly  
Adown a natural stair of tangled

roots,  
Is presently received in a sweet grave

Of eglantines, a place of burial  
Far lovelier than its cradle; for un-  
seen,

But taken with the sweetness of the  
place,

It makes a constant bubbling melody  
That drowns the nearer echoes.

Lower down  
Spreads out a little lake, that, flood-  
ing, leaves

Low banks of yellow sand; and from  
the woods

That belt it rise three dark, tall cy-  
presses,—

Three cypresses, symbols of mortal  
woe,

That men plant on graves.

Hither we came,  
And sitting down upon the golden  
moss,

"ALL AMONG THE MEADOWS,"—Page 108.





Held converse sweet and low—low  
 converse sweet,  
 In which our voices bore least part.  
 'The wind  
 Told a lovetale beside us, how he  
 woo'd  
 The waters, and the waters answering  
 lisp'd  
 To kisses of the wind, that, sick with  
 love,  
 Fainted at intervals, and grew again  
 To utterance of passion. Ye cannot  
 shape  
 Fancy so fair as is this memory.  
 Methought all excellence that ever  
 was  
 Had drawn herself from many thou-  
 sand years,  
 And all the separate Edens of this  
 earth,  
 To centre in this place and time. I  
 listen'd,  
 And her words stole with most pre-  
 vailing sweetness  
 Into my heart, as thronging fancies  
 come  
 To boys and girls when summer days  
 are new,  
 And soul and heart and body are all  
 at ease :  
 What marvel my Camilla told me all ?  
 It was so happy an hour, so sweet a  
 place,  
 And I was as the brother of her blood,  
 And by that name I moved upon her  
 breath ;  
 Dear name, which had too much of  
 nearness in it  
 And heralded the distance of this  
 time !  
 At first her voice was very sweet and  
 low,  
 As if she were afraid of utterance ;  
 But in the onward current of her  
 speech,  
 (As echoes of the hollow-banked  
 brooks  
 Are fashion'd by the channel which  
 they keep),  
 Her words did of their meaning bor-  
 row sound,  
 Her cheek did catch the color of her  
 words.

I heard and trembled, yet I could but  
 hear ;  
 My heart paused—my raised eyelids  
 would not fall,  
 But still I kept my eyes upon the sky.  
 I seem'd the only part of Time stood  
 still,  
 And saw the motion of all other  
 things ;  
 While her words, syllable by syllable,  
 Like water, drop by drop, upon my  
 ear  
 Fell ; and I wish'd, yet wish'd her not  
 to speak ;  
 But she spake on, for I did name no  
 wish,  
 What marvel my Camilla told me all  
 Her maiden dignities of Hope and  
 Love—  
 'Perchance,' she said, 'return'd.'  
 Even then the stars  
 Did tremble in their stations as I  
 gazed ;  
 But she spake on, for I did name no  
 wish,  
 No wish—no hope. Hope was not  
 wholly dead,  
 But breathing hard at the approach of  
 Death,—  
 Camilla, my Camilla, who was mine  
 No longer in the dearest sense of  
 mine—  
 For all the secret of her inmost heart,  
 And all the maiden empire of her  
 mind,  
 Lay like a map before me, and I saw  
 There, where I hoped myself to reign  
 as king,  
 There, where that day I crown'd my-  
 self as king,  
 There in my realm and even on my  
 throne,  
*Another !* then it seem'd as tho' a link  
 Of some tight chain within my inmost  
 frame  
 Was riven in twain : that life I heeded  
 not  
 Flow'd from me, and the darkness of  
 the grave,  
 The darkness of the grave and utter  
 night,  
 Did swallow up my vision ; at her  
 feet,

Even the feet of her I loved, I fell,  
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto  
Death.

Then had the earth beneath me  
yawning cloven  
With such a sound as when an ice-  
berg splits  
From cope to base—had Heaven from  
all her dooms,  
With all her golden thresholds clash-  
ing, roll'd  
Her heaviest thunder—I had lain as  
dead,  
Mute, blind and motionless as then I  
lay;  
Dead, for henceforth there was no  
life for me!  
Mute, for henceforth what use were  
words to me!  
Blind, for the day was as the night to  
me!  
The night to me was kinder than the  
day;  
The night in pity took away my day,  
Because my grief as yet was newly  
born  
Of eyes too weak to look upon the  
light;  
And thro' the hasty notice of the ear  
Frail Life was startled from the tender  
love  
Of him she brooded over. Would I  
had lain  
Until the plaited ivy-tress had wound  
Round my worn limbs, and the wild  
brier had driven  
Its knotted thorns thro' my unpaining  
brows,  
Leaning its roses on my faded eyes,  
The wind had blown above me, and  
the rain  
Had fall'n upon me, and the gilded  
snake  
Had nestled in this bosom-throne of  
Love,  
But I had been at rest for evermore.

Long time entrancement held me.  
All too soon  
Life (like a wanton too-officious friend,  
Who will not *hear* denial, vain and  
rude

With proffer of unwish'd-for services)  
Entering all the avenues of sense  
Past thro' into his citadel, the brain,  
With hated warmth of apprehensive-  
ness.

And first the chillness of the sprinkled  
brook  
Smote on my brows, and then I seem'd  
to hear  
Its murmur, as the drowning seaman  
hears,  
Who with his head below the surface  
dropt  
Listens the muffled booming indistinct  
Of the confused floods, and dimly  
knows  
His head shall rise no more: and then  
came in  
The white light of the weary moon  
above,  
Diffused and molten into flaky cloud.  
Was my sight drunk that it did shape  
to me  
Him who should own that name?  
Were it not well

If so be that the echo of that name  
Ringing within the fancy had updrawn  
A fashion and a phantasm of the form  
It should attach to? Phantom!—had  
the ghastliest

That ever lusted for a body, sucking  
The foul steam of the grave to thicken  
by it,

There in the shuddering moonlight  
brought its face

And what it has for eyes as close to  
mine

As he did—better that than his, than  
he

The friend, the neighbor, Lionel, the  
beloved,

The loved, the lover, the happy  
Lionel,

The low-voiced, tender-spirited Lionel,  
All joy, to whom my agony was a joy.  
O how her choice did leap forth from  
his eyes!

O how her love did clothe itself in  
smiles

About his lips! and—not one mo-  
ment's grace—

Then when the effect weigh'd seas  
upon my head



To come my way! to twit me with the  
cause!

Was not the land as free thro' all  
her ways  
To him as me? Was not his wont to  
walk  
Between the going light and growing  
night?  
Had I not learnt my loss before he  
came?  
Could that be more because he came  
my way?  
Why should he not come my way if  
he would?  
And yet to-night, to-night—when all  
my wealth  
Flash'd from me in a moment and I  
fell  
Beggard for ever—why *should* he  
come my way  
Robed in those robes of light I must  
not wear,  
With that great crown of beams about  
his brows—  
Come like an angel to a damned soul,  
To tell him of the bliss he had with  
God—  
Come like a careless and a greedy  
heir  
That scarce can wait the reading of  
the will  
Before he takes possession? Was  
mine a mood  
To be invaded rudely, and not rather  
A sacred, secret, unapproach'd woe,  
Unspeakable? I was shut up with  
Grief;  
She took the body of my past de-  
light,  
Narded and swathed and balm'd it for  
herself,  
And laid it in a sepulchre of rock  
Never to rise again. I was led mute  
Into her temple like a sacrifice;  
I was the High Priest in her holiest  
place,  
Not to be loudly broken in upon.

Oh friend, thoughts deep and heavy  
as these well-nigh  
O'erbore the limits of my brain: but  
he

Bent o'er me, and my neck his arm  
upstay'd.  
I thought it was an adder's fold, and  
once  
I strove to disengage myself, but  
fail'd,  
Being so feeble: she bent above me,  
too;  
Wan was her cheek; for whatsoever  
of blight  
Lives in the dewy touch of pity had  
made  
The red rose there a pale one—and  
her eyes—  
I saw the moonlight glitter on their  
tears—  
And some few drops of that distress-  
ful rain  
Fell on my face, and her long ringlets  
moved,  
Drooping and beaten by the breeze,  
and brush'd  
My fallen forehead in their to and  
fro,  
For in the sudden anguish of her  
heart  
Loosed from their simple thrall they  
had flow'd abroad,  
And floated on and parted round her  
neck,  
Mantling her form halfway. She,  
when I woke,  
Something she ask'd, I know not  
what, and ask'd,  
Unanswer'd, since I spake not; for  
the sound  
Of that dear voice so musically low,  
And now first heard with any sense of  
pain,  
As it had taken life away before,  
Choked all the syllables, that strove  
to rise  
From my full heart.

The blissful lover, too,  
From his great hoard of happiness  
distill'd  
Some drops of solace; like a vain  
rich man,  
That, having always prosper'd in the  
world,  
Folding his hands, deals comfortable  
words

To hearts wounded for ever; yet, in truth,  
 Fair speech was his and delicate of phrase,  
 Falling in whispers on the sense, address'd  
 More to the inward than the outward ear,  
 As rain of the midsummer midnight soft,  
 Scarce-heard, recalling fragrance and the green  
 Of the dead spring: but mine was wholly dead,  
 No bud, no leaf, no flower, no fruit for me.  
 Yet who had done, or who had suffer'd wrong?  
 And why was I to darken their pure love,  
 If, as I found, they two did love each other,  
 Because my own was darken'd? Why was I  
 To cross between their happy star and them?  
 To stand a shadow by their shining doors,  
 And vex them with my darkness? Did I love her?  
 Ye know that I did love her; to this present  
 My full-orb'd love has waned not. Did I love her,  
 And could I look upon her tearful eyes?  
 What had *she* done to weep? Why should *she* weep?  
 O innocent of spirit—let my heart break rather—whom the gentlest airs of Heaven  
 Should kiss with an unwonted gentleness.  
 Her love did murder mine? What then? She deem'd  
 I wore a brother's mind: she call'd me brother:  
 She told me all her love: she shall not weep.

The brightness of a burning thought, awhile  
 In battle with the glooms of my dark will,

Moonlike emerged, and to itself lit up  
 There on the depth of an unfathom'd woe  
 Reflex of action. Starting up at once,  
 As from a dismal dream of my own death,  
 I, for I loved her, lost my love in Love;  
 I, for I loved her, graspt the hand she lov'd,  
 And laid it in her own, and sent my cry  
 Thro' the blank night to Him who loving made  
 The happy and the unhappy love, that He  
 Would hold the hand of blessing over them,  
 Lionel, the happy, and her, and her, his bride!  
 Let them so love that men and boys may say,  
 'Lo! how they love each other!' till their love  
 Shall ripen to a proverb, unto all Known, when their faces are forgot in the land—  
 One golden dream of love, from which may death  
 Awake them with heaven's music in a life  
 More living to some happier happiness,  
 Swallowing its precedent in victory.  
 And as for me, Camilla, as for me,—  
 The dew of tears is an unwholesome dew,  
 They will but sicken the sick plant the more.  
 Deem that I love thee but as brothers do,  
 So shalt thou love me still as sisters do;  
 Or if thou dream aught farther, dream but how  
 I could have loved thee, had there been none else  
 To love as lovers, loved again by thee.  
 Or this, or somewhat like to this, I spake,

When I beheld her weep so ruefully ;  
 For sure my love should ne'er indue  
 the front  
 And mask of Hate, who lives on  
 others' moans.  
 Shall Love pledge Hatred in her bitter  
 draughts,  
 And batten on her poisons? Love  
 forbid!  
 Love passeth not the threshold of  
 cold Hate,  
 And Hate is strange beneath the roof  
 of Love.  
 O Love, if thou be'st Love, dry up  
 these tears  
 Shed for the love of Love; for tho'  
 mine image,  
 The subject of thy power, be cold in  
 her,  
 Yet, like cold snow, it melteth in the  
 source  
 Of these sad tears, and feeds their  
 downward flow.  
 So Love, arraign'd to judgment and to  
 death,  
 Received unto himself a part of blame,  
 Being guiltless, as an innocent pris-  
 oner,  
 Who, when the woful sentence hath  
 been past,  
 And all the clearness of his fame hath  
 gone  
 Beneath the shadow of the curse of  
 man,  
 First falls asleep in swoon, wherefrom  
 awaked,  
 And looking round upon his tearful  
 friends,  
 Forthwith and in his agony con-  
 ceives  
 A shameful sense as of a cleaving  
 crime—  
 For whence without some guilt should  
 such grief be?

So died that hour, and fell into the  
 abysm  
 Of forms outworn, but not to me out-  
 worn,  
 Who never hail'd another—was there  
 one?  
 There might be one—one other, worth  
 the life

That made it sensible. So that hour  
 died  
 Like odor rapt into the winged wind  
 Borne into alien lands and far away.

There be some hearts so airily  
 built, that they,  
 They—when their love is wreck'd—if  
 Love can wreck—  
 On that sharp ridge of utmost doom  
 ride highly  
 Above the perilous seas of Change  
 and Chance;  
 Nay, more, hold out the lights of  
 cheerfulness;  
 As the tall ship, that many a dreary  
 year  
 Knit to some dismal sandbank far at  
 sea,  
 All thro' the livelong hours of utter  
 dark,  
 Showers slanting light upon the dolo-  
 rous wave.  
 For me—what light, what gleam on  
 those black ways  
 Where Love could walk with ban-  
 ish'd Hope no more?

It was ill-done to part you, Sisters  
 fair;  
 Love's arms were wreath'd about the  
 neck of Hope,  
 And Hope kiss'd Love, and Love  
 drew in her breath  
 In that close kiss, and drank her  
 whisper'd tales.  
 They said that Love would die when  
 Hope was gone,  
 And Love mourn'd long, and sor-  
 row'd after Hope;  
 At last she sought out Memory, and  
 they trod  
 The same old paths where Love had  
 walk'd with Hope,  
 And Memory fed the soul of Love  
 with tears.

## II.

FROM that time forth I would not see  
 her more;  
 But many weary moons I lived  
 alone—

Alone, and in the heart of the great forest.

Sometimes upon the hills beside the sea

All day I watch'd the floating isles of shade,

And sometimes on the shore, upon the sands

Insensibly I drew her name, until  
The meaning of the letters shot into  
My brain; anon the wanton billow  
wash'd

Them over, till they faded like my love.

The hollow caverns heard me—the black brooks

Of the midforest heard me—the soft winds,

Laden with thistle-down and seeds of flowers,

Paused in their course to hear me, for my voice

Was all of thee: the merry linnet knew me,

The squirrel knew me, and the dragonfly

Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.

The rough brier tore my bleeding palms; the hemlock,

Brow-high, did strike my forehead as I past;

Yet trod I not the wildflower in my path,

Nor bruised the wildbird's egg.

Was this the end?

Why grew we then together in one plot?

Why fed we from one fountain? drew one sun?

Why were our mother's branches of one stem?

Why were we one in all things, save in that

Where to have been one had been the cope and crown

Of all I hoped and fear'd?—if that same nearness

Were father to this distance, and that one

Vaunt-courier to this *double*? if Affec-  
tion

Living slew Love, and Sympathy  
hew'd out

The bosom-sepulchre of Sympathy?

Chiefly I sought the cavern and the hill

Where last we roam'd together, for the sound

Of the loud stream was pleasant, and the wind

Came wooingly with woodbine smells. Sometimes

All day I sat within the cavern-mouth,  
Fixing my eyes on those three cy-  
press-cones

That spired above the wood; and with mad hand

Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-  
screen,

I cast them in the noisy brook be-  
neath,

And watch'd them till they vanish'd  
from my sight

Beneath the bower of wreathed eg-  
lantines:

And all the fragments of the living  
rock

(Huge blocks, which some old trem-  
bling of the world

Had loosen'd from the mountain, till they fell

Half-digging their own graves) these  
in my agony

Did I make bare of all the golden  
moss,

Wherewith the dashing runnel in the  
spring

Had liveried them all over. In my  
brain

The spirit seem'd to flag from thought  
to thought,

As moonlight wandering thro' a mist:  
my blood

Crept like marsh drains thro' all my  
languid limbs;

The motions of my heart seem'd far  
within me,

Unfrequent, low, as tho' it told its  
pulses;

And yet it shook me, that my frame  
would shudder,

As if 'twere drawn asunder by the  
rack.

But over the deep graves of Hope  
and Fear,  
And all the broken palaces of the  
Past,  
Brooded one master-passion ever-  
more,  
Like to a low-hung and a fiery sky  
Above some fair metropolis, earth-  
shock'd,—  
Hung round with ragged rims and  
burning folds,—  
Embathing all with wild and woful  
hues,  
Great hills of ruins, and collapsed  
masses  
Of thundershaken columns indistinct,  
And fused together in the tyrannous  
light—  
Ruins, the ruins of all my life and me!

Sometimes I thought Camilla was  
no more,  
Some one had told me she was dead,  
and ask'd  
If I would see her burial: then I  
seem'd  
To rise, and through the forest-shadow  
borne  
With more than mortal swiftness, I  
ran down  
The steepy sea-bank, till I came upon  
The rear of a procession, curving  
round  
The silver-sheeted bay: in front of  
which  
Six stately virgins, all in white, up-  
bare  
A broad earth-sweeping pall of whit-  
est lawn,  
Wreathed round the bier with gar-  
lands: in the distance,  
From out the yellow woods upon the  
hill  
Look'd forth the summit and the pin-  
nacles  
Of a gray steeple—thence at inter-  
vals  
A low bell tolling. All the pageant-  
ry,  
Save those six virgins which upheld  
the bier,  
Were stole from head to foot in  
flowing black;

One walk'd abreast with me, and veil'd  
his brow,  
And he was loud in weeping and in  
praise  
Of her, we follow'd: a strong sympa-  
thy  
Shook all my soul: I flung myself  
upon him  
In tears and cries: I told him all my  
love,  
How I had loved her from the first;  
whcreat  
He shrank and howl'd, and from his  
brow drew back  
His hand to push me from him; and  
the face,  
The very face and form of Lionel  
Flash'd thro' my eyes into my inner-  
most brain,  
And at his feet I seem'd to faint and  
fall,  
To fall and die away. I could not  
rise  
Albeit I strove to follow. They past  
on,  
The lordly Phantasms! in their float-  
ing folds  
They past and were no more: but I  
had fallen  
Prone by the dashing runnel on the  
grass.

Always the inaudible invisible  
thought,  
Artificer and subject, lord and slave,  
Shaped by the audible and visible,  
Moulded the audible and visible;  
All crisped sounds of wave and leaf  
and wind,  
Flatter'd the fancy of my fading  
brain;  
The cloud-pavilion'd element, the  
wood,  
The mountain, the three cypresses,  
the cave,  
Storm, sunset, glows and glories of  
the moon  
Below black firs, when silent creep-  
ing winds  
Laid the long night in silver streaks  
and bars,  
Were wrought into the tissue of my  
dream:

The moanings in the forest, the loud  
brook,  
Cries of the partridge like a rusty key  
Turn'd in a lock, owi-whoop and dor-  
hawk-whirr  
Awoke me not, but were a part of  
sleep,  
And voices in the distance calling to  
me  
And in my vision bidding me dream  
on,  
Like sounds without the twilight  
realm of dreams,  
Which wander round the bases of the  
hills,  
And murmur at the low-dropt eaves  
of sleep,  
Half-entering the portals. Often-  
times  
The vision had fair prelude, in the  
end  
Opening on darkness, stately vesti-  
bules  
To caves and shows of Death:  
whether the mind,  
With some revenge—even to itself  
unknown,—  
Made strange division of its suffer-  
ing  
With her, whom to have suffering  
view'd had been  
Extremest pain; or that the clear-  
eyed Spirit,  
Being blunted in the Present, grew at  
length  
Prophetical and prescient of whate'er  
The Future had in store: or that  
which most  
Enchains belief, the sorrow of my  
spirit  
Was of so wide a compass it took in  
All I had loved, and my dull agony,  
Ideally to her transferr'd, became  
Anguish intolerable.

The day waned;  
Alone I sat with her: about my brow  
Her warm breath floated in the utter-  
ance  
Of silver-corded tones: her lips were  
sunder'd  
With smiles of tranquil bliss, which  
broke in light

Like morning from her eyes—her  
eloquent eyes,  
(As I have seen them many a hun-  
dred times)  
Fill'd all with pure clear fire, thro'  
mine down rain'd  
Their spirit-searching splendors. As  
a vision  
Unto a haggard prisoner, iron-stay'd  
In damp and dismal dungeons under-  
ground,  
Confined on points of faith, when  
strength is shock'd  
With torment, and expectancy of  
worse  
Upon the morrow, thro' the ragged  
walls,  
All unawares before his half-shut  
eyes,  
Comes in upon him in the dead of  
night,  
And with the excess of sweetness and  
of awe,  
Makes the heart tremble, and the  
sight run over  
Upon his steely gyves; so those fair  
eyes  
Shone on my darkness, forms which  
ever stood  
Within the magic cirque of memory,  
Invisible but deathless, waiting still  
The edict of the will to reassume  
The semblance of those rare realities  
Of which they were the mirrors. Now  
the light  
Which was their life, burst through  
the cloud of thought  
Keen, irrepresible.

It was a room  
Within the summer-house of which I  
spake,  
Hung round with paintings of the sea,  
and one  
A vessel in mid-ocean, her heaved  
prow  
Clambering, the mast bent and the  
ravin wind  
In her sail roaring. From the outer  
day,  
Betwixt the close-set ivies came a  
broad  
And solid beam of isolated light,

Crowded with driving atomies, and  
 fell  
 Slanting upon that picture, from  
 prime youth  
 Well-known well-loved. She drew it  
 long ago  
 Forthgazing on the waste and open  
 sea,  
 One morning when the upblown bil-  
 low ran  
 Shoreward beneath red clouds, and I  
 had pour'd  
 Into the shadowing pencil's naked  
 forms  
 Color and life: it was a bond and  
 seal  
 Of friendship, spoken of with tearful  
 smiles;  
 A monument of childhood and of  
 love;  
 The poesy of childhood; my lost  
 love  
 Symbol'd in storm. We gazed on it  
 together  
 In mute and glad remembrance, and  
 each heart  
 Grew closer to the other, and the eye  
 Was riveted and charm-bound, gaz-  
 ing like  
 The Indian on a still-eyed snake, low-  
 couch'd—  
 A beauty which is death; when all at  
 once  
 That painted vessel, as with inner  
 life,  
 Began to heave upon that painted  
 sea;  
 An earthquake, my loud heart-beats,  
 made the ground  
 Reel under us, and all at once, soul,  
 life  
 And breath and motion, past and  
 flow'd away  
 To those unreal billows: round and  
 round  
 A whirlwind caught and bore us;  
 mighty gyres  
 Rapid and vast, of hissing spray  
 wind-driven  
 Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she  
 shriek'd;  
 My heart was cloven with pain; I  
 wound my arms

About her: we whirl'd giddily; the  
 wind  
 Sung; but I clasp'd her without fear:  
 her weight  
 Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim  
 eyes,  
 And parted lips which drank her  
 breath, down-hung  
 The jaws of Death: I, groaning, from  
 me flung  
 Her empty phantom: all the sway  
 and whirl  
 Of the storm dropt to windless calm,  
 and I  
 Down welter'd thro' the dark ever and  
 ever.

## III.

I CAME one day and sat among the  
 stones  
 Strewn in the entry of the moaning  
 cave;  
 A morning air, sweet after rain, ran  
 over  
 The rippling levels of the lake, and  
 blew  
 Coolness and moisture and all smells  
 of bud  
 And foliage from the dark and drip-  
 ping woods  
 Upon my fever'd brows that shook  
 and throbb'd  
 From temple unto temple. To what  
 height  
 The day had grown I know not.  
 Then came on me  
 The hollow tolling of the bell, and  
 all  
 The vision of the bier. As hereto-  
 fore  
 I walk'd behind with one who veil'd  
 his brow.  
 Methought by slow degrees the sullen  
 bell  
 Toll'd quicker, and the breakers on  
 the shore  
 Sloped into louder surf: those that  
 went with me,  
 And those that held the bier before  
 my face,  
 Moved with one spirit round about the  
 bay,

Trod swifter steps; and while I  
walk'd with these  
In marvel at that gradual change, I  
thought  
Four bells instead of one began to  
ring,  
Four merry bells, four merry mar-  
riage bells,  
In clanging cadence jangling peal on  
peal—  
A long loud clash of rapid marriage-  
bells.  
Then those who led the van, and  
those in rear,  
Rush'd into dance, and like wild Bac-  
chanals  
Fled onward to the steeple in the  
woods:  
I, too, was bornè along and felt the  
blast  
Beat on my heated eyelids: all at  
once  
The front rank made a sudden halt;  
the bells  
Lapsed into frightful stillness; the  
surge fell  
From thunder into whispers; those  
six maids  
With shrieks and ringing laughter on  
the sand  
Threw down the bier; the woods  
upon the hill  
Waved with a sudden gust that sweep-  
ing down  
Took the edges of the pall, and blew  
it far  
Until it hung, a little silver cloud  
Over the sounding seas: I turn'd:  
my heart  
Shrank in me, like a snowflake in the  
hand,  
Waiting to see the settled countenance  
Of her I loved, adorn'd with fading  
flowers.  
But she from out her death-like chrys-  
alis,  
She from her bier, as into fresher life,  
My sister, and my cousin, and my  
love,  
Leapt lightly clad in bridal white—her  
hair  
Studded with one rich Provence rose  
—a light

Of smiling welcome round her lips—  
her eyes  
And cheeks as bright as when she  
climb'd the hill.  
One hand she reach'd to those that  
came behind,  
And while I mused nor yet endured  
to take  
So rich a prize, the man who stood  
with me  
Stept gaily forward, throwing down  
his robes,  
And claspt her hand in his: again the  
bells  
Jangled and clang'd: again the stormy  
surf  
Crash'd in the shingle: and the whirl-  
ing rout  
Led by those two rush'd into dance,  
and fled  
Wind-footed to the steeple in the  
woods,  
Till they were swallow'd in the leafy  
bowers,  
And I stood sole beside the vacant  
bier.  
There, there, my latest vision—then  
the event!

## IV.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.<sup>1</sup>*(Another speaks.)*

HE flies the event: he leaves the  
event to me:  
Poor Julian—how he rush'd away;  
the bells,  
Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear  
and heart—  
But cast a parting glance at me, you  
saw,  
As who should say 'Continue.' Well  
he had  
One golden hour—of triumph shall I  
say?  
Solace at least—before he left his  
home.

<sup>1</sup> This poem is founded upon a story in Boccaccio. See Introduction, p. 355.



Would you had seen him in that  
hour of his!  
He moved thro' all of it majesti-  
cally—  
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—  
but now—

Whether they *were* his lady's mar-  
riage-bells,  
Or prophets of them in his fantasy,  
I never ask'd: but Lionel and the girl  
Were wedded, and our Julian came  
again  
Back to his mother's house among the  
pines.  
But these, their gloom, the mountains  
and the Bay,  
The whole land weigh'd him down as  
*Ætua* does  
The Giant of Mythology: he would  
go,  
Would leave the land for ever, and  
had gone  
Surely, but for a whisper, 'Go not  
yet,'  
Some warning—sent divinely—as it  
seem'd  
By that which follow'd—but of this I  
deem  
As of the visions that he told—the  
event  
Glanced back upon them in his  
after life,  
And partly made them—tho' he knew  
it not.

And thus he stay'd and would not  
look at her—  
No not for months: but, when the  
eleventh moon  
After their marriage lit the lover's  
Bay,  
Heard yet once more the tolling bell,  
and said,  
Would you could toll me out of life,  
but found—  
All softly as his mother broke it to  
him—  
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,  
For that low knell tolling his lady  
dead—  
Dead—and had lain three days with-  
out a pulse:

All that look'd on her had pronounced  
her dead.  
And so they bore her (for in Julian's  
land  
They never nail a dumb head up in  
elm),  
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of  
heaven,  
And laid her in the vault of her own  
kin.

What did he then? not die: he is  
here and hale—  
Not plunge headforemost from the  
mountain there,  
And leave the name of Lover's Leap:  
not he:  
He knew the meaning of the whisper  
now,  
Thought that he knew it. 'This, I  
stay'd for this;  
O love, I have not seen you for so  
long.  
Now, now, will I go down into the  
grave,  
I will be all alone with all I love,  
And kiss her on the lips. She is his  
no more:  
The dead returns to me, and I go  
down  
To kiss the dead.'

The fancy stirr'd him so  
He rose and went, and entering the  
dim vault,  
And, making there a sudden light, be-  
held  
All round about him that which all  
will be.  
The light was but a flash, and went  
again.  
Then at the far end of the vault he  
saw  
His lady with the moonlight on her  
face:  
Her breast as in a shadow-prison,  
bars  
Of black and bands of silver, which  
the moon  
Struck from an open grating over-  
head  
High in the wall, and all the rest of  
her

Drown'd in the gloom and horror of  
the vault.

'It was my wish,' he said, 'to pass,  
to sleep,  
To rest, to be with her—till the great  
day  
Peal'd on us with that music which  
rights all,  
And raised us hand in hand.' And,  
kneeling there  
Down in the dreadful dust that once  
was man,  
Dust, as he said, that once was loving  
hearts,  
Hearts that had beat with such a love  
as mine—  
Not such as mine, no, nor for such as  
her—  
He softly put his arm about her  
neck  
And kiss'd her more than once, till  
helpless death  
And silence made him bold—nay, but  
I wrong him,  
He revered his dear lady even in  
death;  
But, placing his true hand upon her  
heart,  
'O, you warm heart,' he moan'd, 'not  
even death  
Can chill you all at once:' then start-  
ing, thought  
His dreams had come again. 'Do I  
wake or sleep?  
Or am I made immortal, or my love  
Mortal once more?' It beat—the  
heart—it beat:  
Faint—but it beat: at which his own  
began  
To pulse with such a vehemence that it  
drown'd  
The feebl' motion underneath his  
hand.  
But when at last his doubts were  
satisfied,  
He raised her softly from the sepul-  
chre,  
And, wrapping her all over with the  
cloak  
He came in, and now striding fast,  
and now  
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore

Holding his golden burthen in his  
arms,  
So bore her thro' the solitary land  
Back to the mother's house where  
she was born.

There the good mother's kindly  
ministering,  
With half a night's appliances, re-  
call'd  
Her fluttering life: she rais'd an eye  
that ask'd  
'Where?' till the things familiar to  
her youth  
Had made a silent answer: then she  
spoke  
'Here! and how came I here?' and  
learning it  
(They told her somewhat rashly as I  
think)  
At once began to wander and to  
wail,  
'Ay, but you know that you must give  
me back:  
Send! bid him come;' but Lionel was  
away—  
Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none  
knew where.  
'He casts me out,' she wept, and,  
goes—a wail  
That seeming something, yet saw  
nothing, born  
Not from believing mind, but shat-  
ter'd nerve,  
Yet haunting Julian, as her own re-  
proof  
At some precipitance in her burial.  
Then, when her own true spirit had  
return'd,  
'Oh yes, and you,' she said, 'and none  
but you?  
For you have given me life and love  
again,  
And none but you yourself shall tell  
him of it,  
And you shall give me back when he  
returns.'  
'Stay then a little,' answer'd Julian,  
'here.  
And keep yourself, none knowing, to  
yourself;  
And I will do your will. I may not  
stay,

No, not an hour; but send me notice  
of him  
When he returns, and then will I re-  
turn,  
And I will make a solemn offering of  
you  
To him you love.' And faintly she  
replied,  
'And I will do *your* will, and none  
shall know.'

Not know? with such a secret to be  
known.  
But all their house was old and loved  
them both,  
And all the house had known the  
loves of both;  
Had died almost to serve them any  
way,  
And all the land was waste and soli-  
tary:  
And then he rode away; but after  
this,  
An hour or two, Camilla's travail  
came  
Upon her, and that day a boy was  
born,  
Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode  
away,  
And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,  
There fever seized upon him: myself  
was then  
Travelling that land, and meant to  
rest an hour;  
And sitting down to such a base re-  
past,  
It makes me angry yet to speak of  
it—  
I heard a groaning overhead, and  
climb'd  
The moulder'd stairs (for everything  
was vile)  
And in a loft, with none to wait on  
him,  
Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,  
Raving of dead men's dust and beat-  
ing hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,  
A flat malarian world of reed and  
rush!

But there from fever and my care of  
him  
Sprang up a friendship that may help  
us yet.  
For while we roam'd along the dreary  
coast,  
And waited for her message, piece by  
piece  
I learnt the drearier story of his  
life;  
And, tho' he loved and honor'd Li-  
onel,  
Found that the sudden wail his lady  
made  
Dwelt in his fancy: did he know her  
worth,  
Her beauty even? should he not be  
taught,  
Ev'n by the price that others set upon  
it,  
The value of that jewel he had to  
guard?

Suddenly came her notice and we  
past,  
I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind,  
the soul:  
*That* makes the sequel pure; tho'  
some of us  
Beginning at the sequel know no  
more.  
Not such am I: and yet I say the  
bird  
That will not hear my call, however  
sweet,  
But if my neighbor whistle answers  
him—  
What matter? there are others in the  
wood.  
Yet when I saw her (and I thought  
him crazed,  
Tho' not with such a craziness as  
needs  
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes  
of hers—  
Oh! such dark eyes! and not her  
eyes alone,  
But all from these to where she  
touch'd on earth,  
For such a craziness as Julian's look'd  
No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she  
came  
To greet us, her young hero in her  
arms!  
'Kiss him,' she said. 'You gave me  
life again.  
He, but for you, had never seen it  
once.  
His other father you! Kiss him, and  
then  
Forgive him, if his name be Julian  
too.'

Talk of lost hopes and broken  
heart! his own  
Sent such a flame into his face, I  
knew  
Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him  
there.

But he was all the more resolved to  
go,  
And sent at once to Lionel, praying  
him  
By that great love they both had  
borne the dead,  
To come and revel for one hour with  
him  
Before he left the land for evermore;  
And then to friends—they were not  
many—who lived  
Scatteringly about that lonely land of  
his,  
And bad them to a banquet of fare-  
wells.

And Julian made a solemn feast: I  
never  
Sat at a costlier; for all round his  
hall  
From column on to column, as in a  
wood,  
Not such as here—an equatorial one,  
Great garlands swung and blossom'd;  
and beneath,  
Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of  
Art,  
Chalice and salver, wines that,  
Heaven knows when,  
Had suck'd the fire of some forgot-  
ten sun,  
And kept it thro' a hundred years of  
gloom,

Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups  
Where nymph and God ran ever  
round in gold—  
Others of glass as costly—some with  
gems  
Moveable and resettable at will,  
And trebling all the rest in value—Ah  
heavens!  
Why need I tell you all?—suffice to  
say  
That whatsoever such a house as his,  
And his was old, has in it rare or fair  
Was brought before the guest: and  
they, the guests,  
Wonder'd at some strange light in  
Julian's eyes  
(I told you that he had his golden  
hour),  
And such a feast, ill-suited as it  
seem'd  
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and  
his  
And that resolved self-exile from a  
land  
He never would revisit, such a feast  
So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n  
than rich,  
But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the  
hall  
Two great funereal curtains, looping  
down,  
Parted a little ere they met the floor,  
About a picture of his lady, taken  
Some years before, and falling hid the  
frame.  
And just above the parting was a  
lamp:  
So the sweet figure folded round with  
night  
Seem'd stepping out of darkness with  
a smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we  
ate and drank,  
And might—the wines being of such  
nobleness—  
Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes,  
And something weird and wild about  
it all:  
What was it? for our lover seldom  
spoke,

Scarce touch'd the meats ; but ever  
 and anon  
 A priceless goblet with a priceless  
 wine  
 Arising, show'd he drank beyond his  
 use ;  
 And when the feast was near an end,  
 he said :

'There is a custom in the Orient,  
 friends—  
 I read of it in Persia—when a man  
 Will honor those who feast with him,  
 he brings  
 And shows them whatsoever he ac-  
 counts  
 Of all his treasures the most beautiful,  
 Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.  
 This custom—'

Pausing here a moment, all  
 The guests broke in upon him with  
 meeting hands  
 And cries about the banquet—' Beautiful!  
 Who could desire more beauty at a  
 feast?'

The lover answer'd, ' There is more  
 than one  
 Here sitting who desires it. Laud  
 me not  
 Before my time, but hear me to the  
 close.  
 This custom steps yet further when  
 the guest  
 Is loved and honor'd to the utter-  
 most.  
 For after he hath shown him gems or  
 gold,  
 He brings and sets before him in rich  
 guise  
 That which is thrice as beautiful as  
 these,  
 The beauty that is dearest to his  
 heart—  
 " O my heart's lord, would I could  
 show you," he says,  
 " Ev'n my heart too." And I pro-  
 pose to-night  
 To show you what is dearest to my  
 heart,  
 And my heart too.

' But solve me first a doubt.  
 I knew a man, nor many years ago ;  
 He had a faithful servant, one who  
 loved  
 His master more than all on earth  
 beside.  
 He falling sick, and seeming close on  
 death,  
 His master would not wait until he  
 died,  
 But bad his menials bear him from  
 the door,  
 And leave him in the public way to  
 die.  
 I knew another, not so long ago,  
 Who found the dying servant, took  
 him home,  
 And fed, and cherish'd him, and  
 saved his life.  
 I ask you now, should this first master  
 claim  
 His service, whom does it belong to ?  
 him  
 Who thrust him out, or him who  
 saved his life?'

This question, so flung down before  
 the guests,  
 And balanced either way by each, at  
 length  
 When some were doubtful how the  
 law would hold,  
 Was handed over by consent of all  
 To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of  
 phrase.  
 And he beginning languidly—his loss  
 Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as  
 he went,  
 Glanced at the point of law, to pass  
 it by,  
 Affirming that as long as either lived,  
 By all the laws of love and grateful-  
 ness,  
 The service of the one so saved was  
 due  
 All to the saver—adding, with a  
 smile,  
 The first for many weeks—a semi-  
 smile  
 As at a strong conclusion—' body and  
 soul

And life and limbs, all his to work his will.'

Then Julian made a secret sign to me  
To bring Camilla down before them all.  
And crossing her own picture as she came,  
And looking as much lovelier as herself  
Is lovelier than all others—on her head  
A diamond circlet, and from under this  
A veil, that seemed no more than gilded air,  
Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gauze  
With seeds of gold—so, with that grace of hers,  
Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,  
That flings a mist behind it in the sun—  
And bearing high in arras the mighty babe,  
The younger Julian, who himself was crown'd  
With roses, none so rosy as himself—  
And over all her babe and her the jewels  
Of many generations of his house  
Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked them out  
As for a solemn sacrifice of love—  
So she came in:—I am long in telling it,  
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,  
Sad, sweet, and strange together—  
floated in—  
While all the guests in mute amazement rose—  
And slowly pacing to the middle hall,  
Before the board, there paused and stood, her breast  
Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her feet,  
Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.  
But him she carried, him nor lights nor feasts  
Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men; who cared

Only to use his own, and staring wide  
And hungering for the gilt and jewell'd world  
About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,  
When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.

'My guests,' said Julian. 'you are honor'd now  
Ev'n to the uttermost: in her behold  
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,  
Of all things upon earth the dearest to me.'  
Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,  
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.  
And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face  
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again  
Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,  
And heard him muttering, 'So like, so like;  
She never had a sister. I knew none.  
Some cousin of his and hers—O God, so like!'  
And then he suddenly ask'd her if she were.  
She shook, and cast her eyes down, and was dumb.  
And then some other question'd if she came  
From foreign lands, and still she did not speak.  
Another, if the boy were hers: but she  
To all their queries answer'd not a word,  
Which made the amazement more, till one of them  
Said, shuddering, 'Her spectre!'  
But his friend  
Replied, in half a whisper, 'Not at least  
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.  
Terrible pity, if one so beautiful  
Prove, as I almost dread to find her, dumb!'

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd  
all:

'She is but dumb, because in her you  
see

That faithful servant whom we spoke  
about,

Obedient to her second master now ;  
Which will not last. I have here  
to-night a guest

So bound to me by common love and  
loss—

What! shall I bind him more? in his  
behalf,

Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him  
That which of all things is the dear-  
est to me,

Not only showing? and he himself  
pronounced

That my rich gift is wholly mine to  
give.

'Now all be dumb, and promise all  
of you

Not to break in on what I say by word  
Or whisper, while I show you all  
my heart.'

And then began the story of his love  
As here to-day, but not so wordily—  
The passionate moment would not  
suffer that—

Past thro' his visions to the burial ;  
thence

Down to this last strange hour in his  
own hall ;

And then rose up, and with him all  
his guests

Once more as by enchantment ; all but  
he,

Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell  
again,

And sat as if in chains—to whom he  
said :

'Take my free gift, my cousin, for  
your wife ;

And were it only for the giver's sake,  
And tho' she seem so like the one you  
lost,

Yet cast her not away so suddenly,  
Lest there be none left here to bring  
her back :

I leave this land forever.' Here he  
ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one  
hand,

And bearing on one arm the noble  
babe,

He slowly brought them both to Lion-  
nel.

And there the widower husband and  
dead wife

Rush'd each at each with a cry, that  
rather seem'd

For some new death than for a life re-  
new'd ;

Whereat the very babe began to wail ;  
At once they turn'd, and caught and

brought him in  
To their charm'd circle, and, half kill-  
ing him

With kisses, round him closed and  
claspt again.

But Lionel, when at last he freed him-  
self

From wife and child, and lifted up a  
face

All over glowing with the sun of life,  
And love, and boundless thanks—the

sight of this  
So frightened our good friend, that

turning to me  
And saying, 'It is over : let us go'—

There were our horses ready at the  
doors—

We had them no farewell, but mount-  
ing these

He past for ever from his native land ;  
And I with him, my Julian, back to

mine.

TO ALFRED TENNYSON

MY GRANDSON.

GOLDEN-HAIR'D Ally whose name is one  
with mine,

Crazy with laughter and babble and  
earth's new wine,

Now that the flower of a year and a half is  
thine,

O little blossom, O mine, and mine of mine,  
Glorious poet who never hast written a  
line,

Laugh, for the name at the head of my  
verse is thine.

May'st thou never be wrong'd by the name  
that is mine !

## PREFATORY SONNET

TO THE 'NINETEENTH CENTURY.'

THOSE that of late had fled to far and fast  
 To touch all shores, now leaving to the skill  
 Of others their old craft seaworthy still,  
 Have charter'd this; where, mindful of the past,  
 Our true co-mates regather round the mast;  
 Of diverse tongue, but with a common will  
 Here, in this roaring moon of daffodil  
 And crocus, to put forth and brave the blast;  
 For some, descending from the sacred peak  
 Of hoar high-templed Faith, have leagued again  
 Their lot with ours to rove the world about;  
 And some are wilder comrades, sworn to seek  
 If any golden harbor be for men  
 In seas of Death and sunless gulfs of Doubt.

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOKFIELD.

BROOKS, for they call'd you so that knew you best,  
 Old Brooks, who loved so well to mouth my rhymes,  
 How oft we two have heard St. Mary's chimes!  
 How oft the Cantab supper, host and guest,  
 Would echo helpless laughter to your jest!  
 How oft with him we paced that walk of limes,  
 Him, the lost light of those dawn-golden times,  
 Who loved you well! Now both are gone to rest.

You man of humorous-melancholy mark,  
 Dead of some inward agony—is it so?  
 Our kindlier, trustier Jaques, past away!  
 I cannot laud this life, it looks so dark:  
 Σκιάς ὄψαρ—dream of a shadow, go—  
 God bless you. I shall join you in a day.

## MONTENEGRO.

THEY rose to where their sovran eagle sails,  
 They kept their faith, their freedom, on the height,  
 Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day and night  
 Against the Turk; whose inroad nowhere scales  
 Their headlong passes, but his foot-step fails,  
 And red with blood the Crescent reels from fight  
 Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone fight  
 By thousands down the crags and thro' the vales.  
 O smallest among peoples! rough rock-throne  
 Of Freedom! warriors beating back the swarm  
 Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,  
 Great Tsernogora! never since thine own  
 Black ridges drew the cloud and brake the storm  
 Has breathed a race of mightier mountaineers.

## TO VICTOR HUGO.

VICTOR in Drama, Victor in Romance,  
 Cloud-weaver of phantasmal hopes and fears,  
 French of the French, and Lord of human tears;  
 Child-lover; Bard whose fame-lit laurels glance



Darkening the wreaths of all that  
would advance,  
Beyond our strait, their claim to be  
thy peers;  
Weird Titan by thy winter weight of  
years  
As yet unbroken, Stormy voice of  
France!  
Who dost not love our England—so  
they say;

I know not—England, France, all  
man to be  
Will make one people ere man's race  
be run:  
And I, desiring that diviner day,  
Yield thee full thanks for thy full  
courtesy  
To younger England in the boy my  
son.

## TRANSLATIONS, ETC.

## BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

CONSTANTINUS, King of the Scots, after having sworn allegiance to Athelstan, allied himself with the Danes of Ireland under Anlaf, and invading England, was defeated by Athelstan and his brother Edmund with great slaughter at Brunanburh in the year 937.

## I.

<sup>1</sup> ATHELSTAN King,  
Lord among Earls,  
Bracelet-bestower and  
Baron of Barons,  
He with his brother,  
Edmund Atheling,  
Gaining a lifelong  
Glory in battle,  
Slew with the sword-edge  
There by Brunanburh,  
Brake the shield-wall,  
Hew'd the lindenwood,<sup>2</sup>  
Hack'd the battleshield,

Sons of Edward with hammer'd  
brands.

## II.

Theirs was a greatness  
Got from their Grandsires—  
Theirs that so often in

<sup>1</sup> I have more or less availed myself of my son's prose translation of this poem in the *Contemporary Review* (November 1876).

<sup>2</sup> Shields of lindenwood.

Strife with their enemies  
Struck for their hoards and their  
hearthes and their homes.

## III.

Bow'd the spoiler,  
Bent the Scotsman,  
Fell the shipcrews  
Doom'd to the death.

All the field with blood of the fighters  
Flow'd, from when first the  
great  
Sun-star of morningtide,  
Lamp of the Lord God  
Lord everlasting,  
Glode over earth till the glorious  
creature  
Sank to his setting.

## IV.

There lay many a man  
Marr'd by the javelin,  
Men of the Northland  
Shot over shield.  
There was the Scotsman  
Weary of war.

## V.

We the West-Saxons,  
Long as the daylight  
Lasted, in companies  
Troubled the track of the host that  
we hated,  
Grimly with swords that were sharp  
from the grindstone,  
Fiercely we hack'd at the flyers before  
us.

## VI.

Mighty the Mercian,  
Hard was his hand-play,  
Sparing not any of  
Those that with Anlaf,  
Warriors over the  
Weltering waters  
Borne in the bark's-bosom,  
Drew to this island:  
Doom'd to the death.

## VII.

Five young kings put asleep by the  
sword-stroke,  
Seven strong Earls of the army of  
Anlaf  
Fell on the war-field, numberless  
numbers,  
Shipmen and Scotsmen.

## VIII.

Then the Norse leader,  
Dire was his need of it,  
Few were his following,  
Fled to his warship:  
Fleeted his vessel to sea with the  
king in it,  
Saving his life on the fallow flood.

## IX.

Also the crafty one,  
Constantinus,  
Crept to his North again,  
Hoar-headed hero!

## X.

Slender warrant had  
*He* to be proud of  
The welcome of war-knives—  
He that was reft of his  
Folk and his friends that had  
Fallen in conflict,  
Leaving his son too  
Lost in the carnage,  
Mangled to morsels,  
A youngster in war!

## XI.

Slender reason had  
*He* to be glad of

The clash of the war-glaive—  
Traitor and trickster  
And spurner of treaties—  
He nor had Anlaf  
With armies so broken  
A reason for bragging  
That they had the better  
In perils of battle  
On places of slaughter—  
The struggle of standards,  
The rush of the javelins,  
The crash of the charges,<sup>1</sup>  
The wielding of weapons—  
The play that they play'd with  
The children of Edward.

## XII.

Then with their nail'd prows  
Parted the Norsemen, a  
Blood-redden'd relic of  
Javelins over  
The jarring breaker, the  
deep-sea billow,  
Shaping their way toward  
Dyffen<sup>2</sup> again,  
Shamed in their souls.

## XIII.

Also the brethren,  
King and Atheling,  
Each in his glory,  
Went to his own in his own West-  
Saxon-land,  
Glad of the war.

## XIV.

Many a carcase they left to be carrion,  
Many a livid one, many a sallow-skin—  
Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear  
it, and  
Left for the horny-nibb'd raven to  
rend it, and  
Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to  
gorge it, and  
That gray beast, the wolf of the weald.

## XV.

Never had huger  
Slaughter of heroes

<sup>1</sup> Lit. 'the gathering of men.' <sup>2</sup> Dublin.

Slain by the sword-edge—  
Such as old writers  
Have writ of in histories—  
Hapt in this isle, since  
Up from the East hither  
Saxon and Angle from  
Over the broad billow  
Broke into Britain with  
Haughty war-workers who  
Harried the Welshman, when  
Earls that were lured by the  
Hunger of glory gat  
Hold of the land.

ACHILLES OVER THE  
TRENCH.

ILIAD, XVIII. 202.

So saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away.  
Then rose Achilles dear to Zeus; and  
round  
The warrior's puissant shoulders  
Pallas flung  
Her fringed ægis, and around his  
head  
The glorious goddess wreath'd a  
golden cloud,  
And from it lighted an all-shining  
flame.  
As when a smoke from a city goes to  
heaven  
Far off from out an island girt by  
foes,  
All day the men contend in grievous  
war  
From their own city, but with set of  
sun  
Their fires flame thickly, and aloft the  
glare  
Flies streaming, if perchance the  
neighbors round  
May see, and sail to help them in the  
war;  
So from his head the splendor went  
to heaven.  
From wall to dyke he stept, he stood,  
nor join'd  
The Achæans—honoring his wise  
mother's word—  
There standing, shouted, and Pallas  
far away

Call'd; and a boundless panic shook  
the foe.  
For like the clear voice when a trum-  
pet shrills,  
Blown by the fierce beleaguers of a  
town,  
So rang the clear voice of Æakidês;  
And when the brazen cry of Æakidês  
Was heard among the Trojans, all  
their hearts  
Were troubled, and the full-maned  
horses whirl'd  
The chariots backward, knowing  
griefs at hand;  
And sheer-astounded were the chariot-  
eers  
To see the dread, unwearable fire  
That always o'er the great Peleion's  
head  
Burn'd, for the bright-eyed goddess  
made it burn.  
Thrice from the dyke he sent his  
mighty shout,  
Thrice backward reel'd the Trojans  
and allies;  
And there and then twelve of their  
noblest died  
Among their spears and chariots.

TO PRINCESS FREDERICA ON  
HER MARRIAGE.

O YOU that were eyes and light to  
the King till he past away  
From the darkness of life—  
He saw not his daughter—he blest her:  
the blind King sees you to-day,  
He blesses the wife.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

ON THE CENOTAPH IN WESTMINSTER  
ABBEY.

NOT here! the white North has thy  
bones; and thou,  
Heroic sailor-soul,  
Art passing on thine happier voyage  
now  
Toward no earthly pole.

## TO DANTE.

(WRITTEN AT REQUEST OF THE FLORENTINES.)

KING, that hast reign'd six hundred  
years, and grown  
In power, and ever growest, since  
thine own

Fair Florence honoring thy nativity,  
Thy Florence now the crown of  
Italy,  
Hath sought the tribute of a verse  
from me,  
I, wearing but the garland of a day,  
Cast at thy feet one flower that fades  
away.

## TIRESIAS

## AND OTHER POEMS.

## TO E. FITZGERALD.

OLD FITZ, who from your suburb  
grange,  
Where once I tarried for a while,  
Glance at the wheeling Orb of change,  
And greet it with a kindly smile ;  
Whom yet I see as there you sit  
Beneath your sheltering garden-  
tree,  
And watch your doves about you flit,  
And plant on shoulder, hand and  
knee,  
Or on your head their rosy feet,  
As if they knew your diet spares  
Whatever moved in that full sheet  
Let down to Peter at his prayers ;  
Who live on milk and meal and  
grass ;  
And once for ten long weeks I tried  
Your table of Pythagoras,  
And seem'd at first 'a thing en-  
skied'  
(As Shakespeare has it) airy-light  
To float above the ways of men,  
Then fell from that half-spiritual  
height  
Chill'd, till I tasted flesh again  
One night when earth was winter-  
black,  
And all the heavens flash'd in  
frost ;  
And on me, half-asleep, came back  
That wholesome heat the blood  
had lost,

And set me climbing icy capes  
And glaciers, over which there  
roll'd  
To meet me long-arm'd vines with  
grapes  
Of Eshcol hugeness ; for the cold  
Without, and warmth within me,  
wrought  
To mould the dream ; but none can  
say  
That Lenten fare makes Lenten  
thought,  
Who reads your golden Eastern  
lay,  
Than which I know no version done  
In English more divinely well ;  
A planet equal to the sun  
Which cast it, that large infidel  
Your Omar ; and your Omar drew  
Full-handed plaudits from our best  
In modern letters, and from two,  
Old friends outvaluing all the rest,  
Two voices heard on earth no more ;  
But we old friends are still alive,  
And I am nearing seventy-four,  
While you have touch'd at seventy-  
five,  
And so I send a birthday line  
Of greeting ; and my son, who dipt  
In some forgotten book of mine  
With sallow scraps of manuscript,  
And dating many a year ago,  
Has hit on this, which you will take  
My Fitz, and welcome, as I know  
Less for its own than for the sake

Of one recalling gracious times,  
 When, in our younger London  
 days,  
 You found some merit in my rhymes,  
 And I more pleasure in your  
 praise.

## TIRESIAS.

I WISH I were as in the years of old,  
 While yet the blessed daylight made  
 itself  
 Ruddy thro' both the roofs of sight,  
 and woke  
 These eyes, now dull, but then so  
 keen to seek  
 The meanings ambush'd under all  
 they saw,  
 The flight of birds, the flame of sacri-  
 fice,  
 What omens may foreshadow fate to  
 man  
 And woman, and the secret of the  
 Gods.  
 My son, the Gods, despite of  
 human prayer,  
 Are slower to forgive than human  
 kings.  
 The great God, Arês, burns in anger  
 still  
 Against the guiltless heirs of him  
 from Tyre,  
 Our Cadmus, out of whom thou art,  
 who found  
 Beside the springs of Dircê, smote,  
 and still'd  
 Thro' all its folds the multitudinous  
 beast,  
 The dragon, which our trembling  
 fathers call'd  
 The God's own son.

A tale, that told to me,  
 When but thine age, by age as winter-  
 white  
 As mine is now, amazed, but made  
 me yearn  
 For larger glimpses of that more than  
 man  
 Which rolls the heavens, and lifts,  
 and lays the deep,  
 Yet loves and hates with mortal hates  
 and loves,

And moves unseen among the ways  
 of men.

Then, in my wanderings all the  
 lands that lie  
 Subjected to the Heliconian ridge  
 Have heard this footstep fall, altho'  
 my wont

Was more to scale the highest of the  
 heights  
 With some strange hope to see the  
 nearer God.

One naked peak—the sister of the  
 sun

Would climb from out the dark, and  
 linger there  
 To silver all the valleys with her  
 shafts—

There once, but long ago, five-fold  
 thy term

Of years, I lay; the winds were dead  
 for heat;

The noonday crag made the hand  
 burn; and sick

For shadow—not one bush was near  
 —I rose

Following a torrent till its myriad  
 falls

Found silence in the hollows under-  
 neath.

There in a secret olive-glade I saw  
 Pallas Athene climbing from the bath  
 In anger; yet one glittering foot dis-  
 turb'd

The lucid well; one snowy knee was  
 prest

Against the margin flowers; a dread-  
 ful light

Came from her golden hair, her golden  
 helm

And all her golden armor on the  
 grass,

And from her virgin breast, and virgin  
 eyes

Remaining fixt on mine, till mine grew  
 dark

For ever, and I heard a voice that  
 said

'Henceforth be blind, for thou hast  
 seen too much,

And speak the truth that no man may  
 believe.'

Son, in the hidden world of sight,  
 that lives

Behind this darkness, I behold her  
still,  
Beyond all work of those who carve  
the stone,  
Beyond all dreams of Godlike woman-  
hood,  
Ineffable beauty, out of whom, at a  
glance,  
And as it were, perforce, upon me  
flash'd  
The power of prophesying—but to me  
No power—so chain'd and coupled  
with the curse  
Of blindness and their unbelief, who  
heard  
And heard not, when I spake of  
famine, plague,  
Shrine-shattering earthquake, fire,  
flood, thunderbolt,  
And angers of the Gods for evil done  
And expiation lack'd—no power on  
Fate,  
Theirs, or mine own! for when the  
crowd would roar  
For blood, for war, whose issue was  
their doom,  
To cast wise words among the multi-  
tude  
Was flinging fruit to lions; nor, in  
hours  
Of civil outbreak, when I knew the  
twain  
Would each waste each, and bring on  
both the yoke  
Of stronger states, was mine the voice  
to curb  
The madness of our cities, and their  
kings.  
Who ever turn'd upon his heel to  
hear  
My warning that the tyranny of one  
Was prelude to the tyranny of all?  
My counsel that the tyranny of all  
Led backward to the tyranny of one?  
This power hath work'd no good to  
aught that lives,  
And these blind hands were useless  
in their wars.  
O therefore that the unfulfill'd desire,  
The grief for ever born from griefs to  
be,  
The boundless yearning of the  
Prophet's heart—

Could *that* stand forth, and like a  
statue, rear'd  
To some great citizen, win all praise  
from all  
Who past it, saying, 'That was he!'  
In vain!  
Virtue must shape itself in deed, and  
those  
Whom weakness or necessity have  
cramp'd  
Within themselves, immersing, each,  
his urn  
In his own well, draw solace as he  
may.  
Mencæus, thou hast eyes, and I  
can hear  
Too plainly what full tides of onset  
sap  
Our seven high gates, and what a  
weight of war  
Rides on those ringing axles! jingle  
of bits,  
Shouts, arrows, tramp of the horn-  
footed horse  
That grind the glebe to powder!  
Stony showers  
Of that ear-stunning hail of Arès  
crash  
Along the sounding walls. Above,  
below,  
Shock after shock, the song-built  
towers and gates  
Reel, bruised and butted with the  
shuddering  
War-thunder of iron rams; and from  
within  
The city comes a murmur void of  
joy,  
Lest she be taken captive—maidens,  
wives,  
And mothers with their babblers of  
the dawn,  
And oldest age in shadow from the  
night,  
Falling about their shrines before  
their Gods,  
And wailing 'Save us.'  
And they wail to thee!  
These eyeless eyes, that cannot see  
thine own,  
See this, that only in thy virtue lies  
The saving of our Thebes; for, yes-  
ter-night,

To me, the great God Arês, whose  
 one bliss  
 Is war, and human sacrifice—himself  
 Blood-red from battle, spear and  
 helmet tipt  
 With stormy light as on a mast at  
 sea,  
 Stood out before a darkness, crying  
 'Thebes,  
 Thy Thebes shall fall and perish, for  
 I loathe  
 The seed of Cadmus—yet if one of  
 these  
 By his own hand—if one of these—'  
 My son,  
 No sound is breathed so potent to  
 coerce,  
 And to conciliate, as their names who  
 dare  
 For that sweet mother land which  
 gave them birth  
 Nobly to do, nobly to die. Their  
 names,  
 Graven on memorial columns, are a  
 song  
 Heard in the future; few, but more  
 than wall  
 And rampart, their examples reach a  
 hand  
 Far thro' all years, and everywhere  
 they meet  
 And kindle generous purpose, and the  
 strength  
 To mould it into action pure as  
 theirs.  
 Fairer thy fate than mine, if life's  
 best end  
 Be to end well! and thou refusing  
 this,  
 Unvenerable will thy memory be  
 While men shall move the lips: but  
 if thou dare—  
 Thou, one of these, the race of Cad-  
 mus—then  
 No stone is fitted in yon marble  
 girth  
 Whose echo shall not tongue thy  
 glorious doom,  
 Nor in this pavement but shall ring  
 thy name  
 To every hoof that clangs it, and the  
 springs  
 Of Dirçé laving yonder battle-plain,

Heard from the roofs by night, will  
 murmur thee  
 To thine own Thebes, while Thebes  
 thro' thee shall stand  
 Firm-based with all her Gods.

The Dragon's cave  
 Half hid, they tell me, now in flowing  
 vines—

Where once he dwelt and whence he  
 roll'd himself  
 At dead of night—thou knowest, and  
 that smooth rock

Before it, altar-fashion'd, where of  
 late

The woman-breasted Sphinx, with  
 wings drawn back,  
 Folded her lion paws, and look'd to  
 Thebes.

There blanch the bones of whom she  
 slew, and these  
 Mixt with her own, because the fierce  
 beast found

A wiser than herself, and dash'd her-  
 self

Dead in her rage: but thou art wise  
 enough,

Tho' young, to love thy wiser, blunt  
 the curse

Of Pallas, hear, and tho' I speak the  
 truth

Believe I speak it, let thine own hand  
 strike

Thy youthful pulses into rest and  
 quench

The red God's anger, fearing not to  
 plunge

Thy torch of life in darkness, rather—  
 thou

Rejoicing that the sun, the moon, the  
 stars

Send no such light upon the ways of  
 men

As one great deed.

Thither, my son, and there  
 Thou, that hast never known the  
 embrace of love,  
 Offer thy maiden life.

This useless hand!  
 I felt one warm tear fall upon it.  
 Gone!

He will achieve his greatness.

But for me,  
 I would that I were gather'd to my rest,

And mingled with the famous kings  
 of old,  
 On whom about their ocean-islets  
 flash  
 The faces of the Gods—the wise  
 man's word,  
 Here trampled by the populace under-  
 foot,  
 There crown'd with worship—and  
 these eyes will find  
 The men I knew, and watch the char-  
 iot whirl  
 About the goal again, and hunters  
 race  
 The shadowy lion, and the warrior-  
 kings,  
 In height and prowess more than hu-  
 man, strive  
 Again for glory, while the golden lyre  
 Is ever sounding in heroic ears  
 Heroic hymns, and every way the  
 vales  
 Wind, clouded with the grateful in-  
 cense-fume  
 Of those who mix all odor to the  
 Gods  
 On one far height in one far-shining  
 fire.

‘One height and one far-shining fire’  
 And while I fancied that my friend  
 For this brief idyll would require  
 A less diffuse and opulent end,  
 And would defend his judgment well,  
 If I should deem it over nice—  
 The tolling of his funeral bell  
 Broke on my Pagan Paradise,  
 And mixt the dream of classic times  
 And all the phantoms of the  
 dream,  
 With present grief, and made the  
 rhymes,  
 That miss'd his living welcome,  
 seem  
 Like would-be guests an hour too late,  
 Who down the highway moving on  
 With easy laughter, find the gate  
 Is bolted, and the master gone.  
 Gone into darkness, that full light  
 Of friendship I past, in sleep, away  
 By night, into the deeper night!

The deeper night? A clearer day  
 Than our poor twilight dawn on  
 earth—  
 If night, what barren toil to be!  
 What life, so main'd by night, were  
 worth  
 Our living out? Not mine to me  
 Remembering all the golden hours  
 Now silent, and so many dead,  
 And him the last; and laying flowers,  
 This wreath, above his honor'd head  
 And praying that, when I from hence,  
 Shall fade with him into the un-  
 known,  
 My close of earth's experience  
 May prove as peaceful as his own.

### THE WRECK.

#### I.

HIDE me, Mother! my Fathers be-  
 long'd to the church of old,  
 I am driven by storm and sin and  
 death to the ancient fold,  
 I cling to the Catholic Cross once  
 more, to the Faith that saves,  
 My brain is full of the crash of  
 wrecks, and the roar of waves,  
 My life itself is a wreck, I have sul-  
 lied a noble name,  
 I am flung from the rushing tide of  
 the world as a waif of shame,  
 I am roused by the wail of a child,  
 and awake to a livid light,  
 And a ghastlier face than ever has  
 haunted a grave by night,  
 I would hide from the storm without,  
 I would flee from the storm  
 within,  
 I would make my life one prayer for  
 a soul that died in his sin,  
 I was the tempter, Mother, and mine  
 was the deeper fall;  
 I will sit at your feet, I will hide my  
 face, I will tell you all.

#### II.

He that they gave me to, Mother, a  
 heedless and innocent bride—  
 I never have wrong'd his heart, I  
 have only wounded his pride—



Spain in his blood and the Jew—  
dark-visaged, stately and tall—  
A princelier-looking man 'ne'er stept  
thro' a Prince's hall.

And who, when his anger was kindled,  
would venture to give him the nay?

And a man men fear is a man to be  
loved by the women they say.

And I could have loved him too, if  
the blossom can doat on the blight,

Or the young green leaf rejoice in the  
frost that sears it at night;

He would open the books that I  
prized, and toss them away  
with a yawn,

Repell'd by the magnet of Art to the  
which my nature was drawn,

The word of the Poet by whom the  
deeps of the world are stirr'd,

The music that robes it in language  
beneath and beyond the word!

My Shelley would fall from my hands  
when he cast a contemptuous  
glance

From where he was poring over his  
Tables of Trade and Finance;

My hands, when I heard him coming,  
would drop from the chords or  
the keys,

But ever I fail'd to please him, how-  
ever I strove to please—

All day long far-off in the cloud of the  
city, and there

Lost, head and heart, in the chances  
of dividend, consol, and share—

And at home if I sought for a kindly  
caress, being woman and weak,

His formal kiss fell chill as a flake of  
snow on the cheek:

And so, when I bore him a girl, when  
I held it aloft in my joy,

He look'd at it coldly, and said to me  
'Pity it isn't a boy.'

The one thing given me, to love and  
to live for, glanced at in scorn!

The child that I felt I could die for—  
as if she were basely born!

I had lived a wild-flower life, I was  
planted now in a tomb,

The daisy will shut to the shadow, I  
closed my heart to the gloom;

I threw myself all abroad—I would  
play my part with the young  
By the low foot-lights of the world—  
and I caught the wreath that  
was flung.

## III.

Mother, I have not—however their  
tongues may have babbled of  
me—

Sinn'd thro' an animal vileness, for all  
but a dwarf was he,

And all but a hunchback too; and I  
look'd at him, first, askance,

With pity—not he the knight for an  
amorous girl's romance!

Tho' wealthy enough to have bask'd  
in the light of a dowerless  
smile,

Having lands at home and abroad in  
a rich West-Indian isle;

But I came on him once at a ball, the  
heart of a listening crowd—

Why, what a brow was there! he was  
seated—speaking aloud

To women, the flower of the time,  
and men at the helm of state—

Flowing with easy greatness and  
touching on all things great,

Science, philosophy, song—till I felt  
myself ready to weep

For I knew not what, when I heard  
that voice,—as mellow and  
deep

As a psalm by a mighty master and  
peal'd from an organ,—roll

Rising and falling—for, Mother, the  
voice was the voice of the  
soul;

And the sun of the soul made day in  
the dark of his wonderful eyes.

Here was the hand that would help  
me, would heal me—the heart  
that was wise!

And he, poor man, when he learnt  
that I hated the ring I wore,

He helpt me with death, and he heal'd  
me with sorrow for evermore.

## IV.

For I broke the bond. That day my  
nurse had brought me the child.

The small sweet face was flush'd, but  
it coo'd to the Mother and  
smiled.

'Anything ailing,' I ask'd her, 'with  
baby?' She shook her head,  
And the Motherless Mother kiss'd it,  
and turn'd in her haste and  
fled.

## v.

Low warm winds had gently breathed  
us away from the land—

Ten long sweet summer days upon  
deck, sitting hand in hand—

When he clothed a naked mind with  
the wisdom and wealth of his  
own,

And I bow'd myself down as a slave  
to his intellectual throne.

When he coin'd into English gold  
some treasure of classical song,

When he flouted a statesman's error,  
or flamed at a public wrong,

When he rose as it were on the wings  
of an eagle beyond me, and  
past

Over the range and the change of the  
world from the first to the  
last,

When he spoke of his tropical home  
in the canes by the purple  
tide,

And the high star-crowns of his  
palms on the deep-wooded  
mountain side,

And cliffs all robed in lianas that  
dropt to the brink of his bay,

And trees like the towers of a min-  
ster, the sons of a winterless  
day.

'Paradise there!' so he said, but I  
seem'd in Paradise then

With the first great love I had felt for  
the first and greatest of men;

Ten long days of summer and sin—if  
it must be so—

But days of a larger light than I ever  
again shall know—

Days that will glimmer, I fear, thro'  
life to my latest breath;

'No frost there,' so he said, 'as in  
truest Love no Death.'

## vi.

Mother, one morning a bird with a  
warble plaintively sweet

Perch'd on the shrouds, and then fell  
fluttering down at my feet;

I took it, he made it a cage, we fon-  
dled it, Stephen and I,

But it died, and I thought of the  
child for a moment, I scarce  
know why.

## vii.

But if sin be sin, not inherited fate, as  
many will say,

My sin to my desolate little one found  
me at sea on a day,

When her orphan wail came borne in  
the shriek of a growing wind,

And a voice rang out in the thunders  
of Ocean and Heaven 'Thou  
hast sinn'd.'

And down in the cabin were we, for  
the towering crest of the tides

Plunged on the vessel and swept in a  
cataract off from her sides,

And ever the great storm grew with a  
howl and a hoot of the blast

In the rigging, voices of hell—then  
came the crash of the mast.

'The wages of sin is death,' and there  
I began to weep,

'I am the Jonah, the crew should  
cast me into the deep.

For ah God, what a heart was mine to  
forsake her even for you.'

'Never the heart among women,' he  
said, 'more tender and true.'

'The heart! not a mother's heart,  
when I left my darling alone.'

'Comfort yourself, for the heart of the  
father will care for his own.'

'The heart of the father will spurn  
her,' I cried, 'for the sin of the  
wife,

The cloud of the mother's shame will  
enfold her and darken her life.'

Then his pale face twitch'd; 'O Ste-  
phen, I love you, I love you,  
and yet'—

As I lean'd away from his arms—  
'would God, we had never  
met!'

And he spoke not—only the storm ;  
till after a little, I yearn'd  
For his voice again, and he call'd to  
me ' Kiss me ! ' and there—as  
I turn'd—  
' The heart, the heart ! ' I kiss'd him,  
I clung to the sinking form,  
And the storm went roaring above us,  
and he—was out of the storm.

## VIII.

And then, then, Mother, the ship  
stagger'd under a thunderous  
shock,  
That shook us asunder, as if she had  
struck and crash'd on a rock ;  
For a huge sea smote every soul from  
the decks of The Falcon but  
one ;  
All of them, all but the man that was  
lash'd to the helm had gone ;  
And I fell—and the storm and the  
days went by, but I knew no  
more—  
Lost myself—lay like the dead by the  
dead on the cabin floor,  
Dead to the death beside me, and lost  
to the loss that was mine,  
With a dim dream, now and then, of  
a hand giving bread and wine,  
Till I woke from the trance, and the  
ship stood still, and the skies  
were blue,  
But the face I had known, O Mother,  
was not the face that I knew.

## IX.

The strange misfeaturing mask that I  
saw so amazed me, that I  
Stumbled on deck, half mad. I  
would fling myself over and  
die !  
But one—he was waving a flag—the  
one man left on the wreck—  
' Woman '—he graspt at my arm—  
' stay there '—I crouch'd upon  
deck—  
' We are sinking, and yet there's  
hope: look yonder,' he cried,  
' a sail '  
In a tone so rough that I broke into  
passionate tears, and the wail

Of a beaten babe, till I saw that a  
boat was nearing us—then  
All on a sudden I thought, I shall  
look on the child again.

## X.

They lower'd me down the side, and  
there in the boat I lay  
With sad eyes fixt on the lost sea-  
home, as we glided away,  
And I sigh'd, as the low dark hull  
dipt under the smiling main,  
' Had I stay'd with *him*, I had now—  
with *him*—been out of my pain.'

## XI.

They took us aboard: the crew were  
gentle, the captain kind ;  
But *I* was the lonely slave of an of-  
ten-wandering mind ;  
For whenever a rougher gust might  
tumble a stormier wave,  
' O Stephen,' I moan'd, ' I am coming  
to thee in thine Ocean-grave.'  
And again, when a balmier breeze  
curl'd over a peacefuller sea,  
I found myself moaning again ' O  
child, I am coming to thee.'

## XII.

The broad white brow of the Isle—  
that bay with the color'd sand—  
Rich was the rose of sunset there, as  
we drew to the land ;  
All so quiet the ripple would hardly  
blanch into spray  
At the feet of the cliff; and I pray'd  
—' my child '—for I still could  
pray—  
' May her life be as blissfully calm, be  
never gloom'd by the curse  
Of a sin, not hers !'  
Was it well with the child ?  
I wrote to the nurse  
Who had borne my flower on her  
hireling heart; and an answer  
came  
Not from the nurse—nor yet to the  
wife—to her maiden name !  
I shook as I open'd the letter—I knew  
that hand too well—

And from it a scrap, clipt out of the  
 'deaths' in a paper, fell.  
 'Ten long sweet summer days' of  
 fever, and want of care!  
 And gone—that day of the storm—  
 O Mother, she came to me  
 there.

### DESPAIR.

A MAN and his wife having lost faith in a  
 God, and hope of a life to come, and being  
 utterly miserable in this, resolve to end  
 themselves by drowning. The woman is  
 drowned, but the man rescued by a minis-  
 ter of the sect he had abandoned.

#### I.

Is it you, that preach'd in the chapel  
 there looking over the sand?  
 Follow'd us too that night, and  
 dogg'd us, and drew me to  
 land?

#### II.

What did I feel that night? You are  
 curious. How should I tell?  
 Does it matter so much what I felt?  
 You rescued me—yet—was it  
 well  
 That you came unwish'd for, uncall'd,  
 between me and the deep and  
 my doom,  
 Three days since, three more dark  
 days of the Godless gloom  
 Of a life without sun, without health,  
 without hope, without any  
 delight  
 In anything here upon earth? but 'ah  
 God, that night, that night  
 When the rolling eyes of the light-  
 house there on the fatal neck  
 Of land running out into rock—they  
 had saved many hundreds from  
 wreck—  
 Glared on our way toward death, I  
 remember I thought, as we  
 past,  
 Does it matter how many they saved?  
 we are all of us wreck'd at  
 last—

'Do you fear?' and there came thro'  
 the roar of the breaker a  
 whisper, a breath,  
 'Fear? am I not with you? I am  
 frighted at life not death.'

#### III.

And the suns of the limitless Universe  
 sparkled and shone in the  
 sky,  
 Flashing with fires as of God, but we  
 knew that their light was a  
 lie—  
 Bright as with deathless hope—but,  
 however they sparkled and  
 shone,  
 The dark little worlds running round  
 them were worlds of woe like  
 our own—  
 No soul in the heaven above, no soul  
 on the earth below,  
 A fiery scroll written over with lamen-  
 tation and woe.

#### IV.

See, we were nursed in the drear  
 nightfold of your fatalist creed,  
 And we turn'd to the growing dawn,  
 we had hoped for a dawn  
 indeed,  
 When the light of a Sun that was  
 coming would scatter the  
 ghosts of the Past,  
 And the cramping creeds that had  
 madden'd the peoples would  
 vanish at last,  
 And we broke away from the Christ,  
 our human brother and friend,  
 For He spoke, or it seem'd that He  
 spoke, of a Hell without help,  
 without end.

#### V.

Hoped for a dawn and it came, but  
 the promise had faded away;  
 We had past from a cheerless night  
 to the glare of a drearier day;  
 He is only a cloud and a smoke who  
 was once a pillar of fire,  
 The guess of a worm in the dust and  
 the shadow of its desire—

Of a worm as it writhes in a world of  
the weak trodden down by the  
strong,  
Of a dying worm in a world, all  
massacre, murder, and wrong.

## VI.

O we poor orphans of nothing—alone  
on that lonely shore—  
Born of the brainless Nature who  
knew not that which she bore !  
Trusting no longer that earthly flower  
would be heavenly fruit—  
Come from the brute, poor souls—no  
souls—and to die with the  
brute—

## VII.

Nay, but I am not claiming your  
pity: I know you of old—  
Small pity for those that have ranged  
from the narrow warmth of  
your fold,  
Where you bawl'd the dark side of  
your faith and a God of eternal  
rage,  
Till you flung us back on ourselves, and  
the human heart, and the Age.

## VIII.

But pity—the Pagan held it a vice—  
was in her and in me,  
Helpless, taking the place of the pity-  
ing God that should be !  
Pity for all that aches in the grasp of  
an idiot power,  
And pity for our own selves on an  
earth that bore not a flower ;  
Pity for all that suffers on land or in  
air or the deep,  
And pity for our own selves till we  
long'd for eternal sleep.

## IX.

'Lightly step over the sands! the  
waters—you hear them call!  
Life with its anguish, and horrors,  
and errors—away with it all !'  
And she laid her hand in my own—  
she was always loyal and  
sweet—

Till the points of the foam in the dusk  
came playing about our feet.

*There* was a strong sea-current would  
sweep us out to the main.

'Ah God 'tho' I felt as I spoke I was  
taking the name in vain—

'Ah God' and we turn'd to each  
other, we kiss'd, we embraced,  
she and I,

Knowing the Love we were used to  
believe everlasting would die :

We had read their know-nothing  
books and we lean'd to the  
darker side—

Ah God, should we find Him, per-  
haps, perhaps, if we died, if we  
died ;

We never had found Him on earth,  
this earth is a fatherless Hell—

'Dear Love, for ever and ever, for  
ever and ever farewell,'

Never a cry so desolate, not since the  
world began,

Never a kiss so sad, no, not since the  
coming of man !

## X.

But the blind wave cast me ashore, and  
you saved me, a valueless life.

Not a grain of gratitude mine ! You  
have parted the man from the  
wife.

I am left alone on the land, she is all  
alone in the sea ;

If a curse meant ought, I would curse  
you for not having let me be.

## XI.

Visions of youth—for my brain was  
drunk with the water, it seems ;

I had past into perfect quiet at length  
out of pleasant dreams,

And the transient trouble of drowning  
—what was it when match'd  
with the pains

Of the hellish heat of a wretched life  
rushing back thro' the veins ?

## XII.

Why should I live? one son had  
forged on his father and fled,

And if I believed in a God, I would  
thank him, the other is dead,  
And there was a baby-girl, that had  
never look'd on the light:  
Happiest she of us all, for she past  
from the night to the night.

## XIII.

But the crime, if a crime, of her eldest-  
born, her glory, her boast,  
Struck hard at the tender heart of the  
mother, and broke it almost;  
Tho', glory and shame dying out for  
ever in endless time,  
Does it matter so much whether  
crown'd for a virtue, or hang'd  
for a crime?

## XIV.

And ruin'd by *him*, by *him*, I stood  
there, naked, amazed  
In a world of arrogant opulence,  
fear'd myself turning crazed,  
And I would not be mock'd in a mad-  
house! and she, the delicate  
wife,  
With a grief that could only be cured,  
if cured, by the surgeon's  
knife,—

## XV.

Why should we bear with an hour of  
torture, a moment of pain,  
If every man die for ever, if all his  
griefs are in vain,  
And the homeless planet at length  
will be wheel'd thro' the silence  
of space,  
Motherless evermore of an ever-  
vanishing race,  
When the worm shall have writhed  
its last, and its last brother-  
worm will have fled  
From the dead fossil skull that is left  
in the rocks of an earth that  
is dead?

## XVI.

Have I crazed myself over their horri-  
ble infidel writings? O yes,  
For these are the new dark ages, you  
see, of the popular press,

When the bat comes out of his cave,  
and the owls are whooping at  
noon,

And Doubt is the lord of this dung-  
hill and crows to the sun and  
the moon,

Till the Sun and the Moon of our  
science are both of them turn'd  
into blood,

And Hope will have broken her  
heart, running after a shadow  
of good;

For their knowing and know-nothing  
books are scatter'd from hand  
to hand—

*We* have knelt in your know-all  
chapel too looking over the  
sand.

## XVII.

What! I should call on that Infinite  
Love that has served us so  
well?

Infinite cruelty rather that made ever-  
lasting Hell,

Made us, foreknew us, foredoom'd us,  
and does what he will with his  
own;

Better our dead brute mother who  
never has heard us groan!

## XVIII.

Hell? if the souls of men were im-  
mortal, as men have been told,

The lecher would cleave to his lusts,  
and the miser would yearn for  
his gold,

And so there were Hell for ever! but  
were there a God as you say,

His Love would have power over Hell  
till it utterly vanish'd away.

## XIX.

Ah yet—I have had some glimmer, at  
times, in my gloomiest woe,

Of a God behind all—after all—the  
great God for aught that I  
know;

But the God of Love and of Hell  
together—they cannot be  
thought,

If there be such a God, may the  
Great God curse him and bring  
him to nought!

XX.

Blasphemy! whose is the fault? is it  
mine? for why would you save  
A madman to vex you with wretched  
words, who is best in his grave?  
Blasphemy! ay, why not, being damn'd  
beyond hope of grace?  
O would I were yonder with her, and  
away from your faith and your  
face!  
Blasphemy! true! I have scared you  
pale with my scandalous talk,  
But the blasphemy to *my* mind lies all  
in the way that you walk.

XXI.

Hence! she is gone! can I stay? can  
I breathe divorced from the  
Past?  
You needs must have good lynx-eyes  
if I do not escape you at last.  
Our orthodox coroner doubtless will  
find it a felo-de-se,  
And the stake and the cross-road,  
fool, if you will, does it matter  
to me?

THE ANCIENT SAGE.

A THOUSAND summers ere the time  
of Christ  
From out his ancient city came a Seer  
Whom one that loved, and honor'd  
him, and yet  
Was no disciple, richly garb'd, but  
worn  
From wasteful living, follow'd—in  
his hand  
A scroll of verse—till that old man  
before  
A cavern whence an affluent fountain  
pour'd  
From darkness into daylight, turn'd  
and spoke.

This wealth of waters might but seem  
to draw

From yon dark cave, but, son, the  
source is higher,  
Yon summit half-a-league in air—and  
higher,  
The cloud that hides it—higher still,  
the heavens  
Whereby the cloud was moulded, and  
whereout  
The cloud descended. Force is from  
the heights.  
I am wearied of our city, son, and go  
To spend my one last year among the  
hills.  
What hast thou there? Some death-  
song for the Ghouls  
To make their banquet relish? let me  
read.

“How far thro' all the bloom and  
brake  
That nightingale is heard!  
What power but the bird's could make  
This music in the bird?  
How summer-bright are yonder skies,  
And earth as fair in hue!  
And yet what sign of aught that lies  
Behind the green and blue?  
But man to-day is fancy's fool  
As man hath ever been.  
The nameless Power, or Powers, that  
rule  
Were never heard or seen.”

If thou would'st hear the Nameless,  
and wilt dive  
Into the Temple-cave of thine own  
self,  
There, brooding by the central altar,  
thou  
May'st haply learn the Nameless hath  
a voice,  
By which thou wilt abide, if thou be  
wise,  
As if thou knewest, tho' thou canst  
not know;  
For Knowledge is the swallow on the  
lake  
That sees and stirs the surface-  
shadow there  
But never yet hath dipt into the  
abysm,  
The Abysm of all Abysms, beneath,  
within

The blue of sky and sea, the green of earth,  
 And in the million-millionth of a grain  
 Which cleft and cleft again for evermore,  
 And ever vanishing, never vanishes,  
 To me, my son, more mystic than myself,  
 Or even than the Nameless is to me.  
 And when thou sendest thy free soul thro' heaven,  
 Nor understandest bound nor boundlessness,  
 Thou seest the Nameless of the hundred names.  
 And if the Nameless should withdraw from all  
 Thy frailty counts most real, all thy  
 Might vanish like thy shadow in the dark.

"And since—from when this earth began—  
 The Nameless never came  
 Among us, never spake with man,  
 And never named the Name"—

Thou canst not prove the Nameless,  
 O my son,  
 Nor canst thou prove the world thou movest in,  
 Thou canst not prove that thou art body alone,  
 Nor canst thou prove that thou art spirit alone,  
 Nor canst thou prove that thou art both in one:  
 Thou canst not prove thou art immortal, no  
 Nor yet that thou art mortal—nay my son,  
 Thou canst not prove that I, who speak with thee,  
 Am not thyself in converse with thyself,  
 For nothing worthy proving can be proven,  
 Nor yet disproven: wherefore thou  
 Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,

And cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith!  
 She reels not in the storm of warring words,  
 She brightens at the clash of 'Yes' and 'No,'  
 She sees the Best that glimmers thro' the Worst,  
 She feels the Sun is hid but for a night,  
 She spies the summer thro' the winter bud,  
 She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,  
 (She hears the lark within the songless egg,  
 She finds the fountain where they wail'd 'Mirage'!

"What Power? aught akin to mind,  
 The mind in me and you?  
 Or power as of the Gods gone blind  
 Who see not what they do?"

But some in yonder city hold, my son,  
 That none but Gods could build this house of ours,  
 So beautiful, vast, various, so beyond  
 All work of man, yet, like all work of man,  
 A beauty with defect—till That which knows,  
 And is not known, but felt thro' what we feel  
 Within ourselves is highest, shall descend  
 On this half-deed, and shape it at the last  
 According to the Highest in the Highest.

"What Power but the Years that make  
 And break the vase of clay,  
 And stir the sleeping earth, and wake  
 The bloom that fades away?  
 What rulers but the Days and Hours  
 That cancel weal with woe,  
 And wind the front of youth with flowers,  
 And cap our age with snow?"



The days and hours are ever glancing by,  
And seem to flicker past thro' sun and shade,  
Or short, or long, as Pleasure leads, or Pain;  
But with the Nameless is nor Day nor Hour;  
Tho' we, thin minds, who creep from thought to thought,  
Break into 'Thens' and 'Whens' the Eternal Now:  
This double seeming of the single world!—  
My words are like the babblings in a dream  
Of nightmare, when the babblings break the dream.  
But thou be wise in this dream-world of ours,  
Nor take thy dial for thy deity,  
But make the passing shadow serve thy will.

“The years that made the stripling wise

And leave him, blind of heart and eyes,  
The last and least of men;  
Who clings to earth, and once would dare

Hell-heat or Arctic cold,  
And now one breath of cooler air  
Would loose him from his hold;  
His winter chills him to the root,  
He withers marrow and mind;  
The kernel of the shrivell'd fruit  
Is jutting thro' the rind;  
The tiger spasms tear his chest,  
The palsy wags his head;  
The wife, the sons, who love him best  
Would fain that he were dead;  
The griefs by which he once was wrung  
Were never worth the while”—

Who knows? or whether this earth-narrow life  
Be yet but yolk, and forming in the shell?

“The shaft of scorn that once had stung  
But wakes a dotard smile.”

The placid gleam of sunset after storm!

“The statesman's brain that sway'd the past  
Is feebler than his knees;  
The passive sailor wrecks at last  
In ever-silent seas;  
The warrior hath forgot his arms,  
The Learned all his lore;  
The changing market frets or charms  
The merchant's hope no more;  
The prophet's beacon burn'd in vain,  
And now is lost in cloud;  
The plowman passes, bent with pain,  
To mix with what he plow'd;  
The poet whom his Age would quote  
As heir of endless fame—  
He knows not ev'n the book he wrote,  
Not even his own name.  
For man has overlived his day,  
And, darkening in the light,  
Scarce feels the senses break away  
To mix with ancient Night.”

The shell must break before the bird can fly.

“The years that when my Youth began  
Had set the lily and rose  
By all my ways where'er they ran,  
Have ended mortal foes;  
My rose of love for ever gone,  
My lily of truth and trust—  
They made her lily and rose in one,  
And changed her into dust.  
O rosetree planted in my grief,  
And growing, on her tomb,  
Her dust is greening in your leaf,  
Her blood is in your bloom.  
O slender lily waving there,  
And laughing back the light,  
In vain you tell me 'Earth is fair'  
When all is dark as night.”

My son, the world is dark with griefs and graves,  
So dark that men cry out against the Heavens.  
Who knows but that the darkness is in man?  
The doors of Night may be the gates of Light;

For wert thou born or blind or deaf,  
 and then  
 Suddenly heal'd, how would'st thou  
 glory in all  
 The splendors and the voices of the  
 world!  
 And we, the poor earth's dying race,  
 and yet  
 No phantoms, watching from a phan-  
 tom shore  
 Await the last and largest sense to  
 make  
 The phantom walls of this illusion  
 fade,  
 And show us that the world is wholly  
 fair.

"But vain the tears for darken'd  
 years  
 As laughter over wine,  
 And vain the laughter as the tears,  
 O brother, mine or thine,

For all that laugh, and all that  
 weep  
 And all that breathe are one  
 Slight ripple on the boundless deep  
 That moves, and all is gone."

But that one ripple on the boundless  
 deep  
 Feels that the deep is boundless, and  
 itself  
 For ever changing form, but evermore  
 One with the boundless motion of the  
 deep.

"Yet wine and laughter friends!  
 and set  
 The lamps alight, and call  
 For golden music, and forget  
 The darkness of the pall."

If utter darkness closed the day,  
 my son—  
 But earth's dark forehead flings  
 athwart the heavens  
 Her shadow crown'd with stars—and  
 yonder—out  
 To northward—some that never set,  
 but pass  
 From sight and night to lose them-  
 selves in day.

I hate the black negation of the biel,  
 And wish the dead, as happier than  
 ourselves  
 And higher, having climb'd one step  
 beyond  
 Our village miseries, might be borne  
 in white  
 To burial or to burning, hymn'd from  
 hence  
 With songs in praise of death, and  
 crown'd with flowers!

"O worms and maggots of to-day  
 Without their hope of wings!"

But louder than thy rhyme the silent  
 Word  
 Of that world-prophet in the heart of  
 man.

"Tho' some have gleams or so they  
 say  
 Of more than mortal things."

To-day? but what of yesterday? for oft  
 On me, when boy, there came what  
 then I call'd,  
 Who knew no books and no philoso-  
 phies,  
 In my boy-phrase 'The Passion of the  
 Past.'  
 The first gray streak of earliest sum-  
 mer-dawn,  
 The last long stripe of waning crimson  
 gloom,  
 As if the late and early were but one—  
 A height, a broken grange, a grove, a  
 flower  
 Had murmurs 'Lost and gone and  
 lost and gone!  
 A breath, a whisper—some divine  
 farewell—  
 Desolate sweetness—far and far  
 away—  
 What had he loved, what had he lost,  
 the boy?  
 I know not and I speak of what has  
 been.  
 And more, my son! for more than  
 once when I  
 Sat all alone, revolving in myself,  
 The word that is the symbol of my-  
 self,

The mortal limit of the Self was  
loosed,  
And past into the Nameless, as a  
cloud  
Melts into Heaven. I touch'd my  
limbs, the limbs  
Were strange not mine—and yet no  
shade of doubt,  
But utter clearness, and thro' loss of  
Self  
The gain of such large life as match'd  
with ours  
Were Sun to spark—unshadowable  
in words,  
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-  
world

“And idle gleams will come and go,  
But still the clouds remain;”

The clouds themselves are children of  
the Sun.

“And Night and Shadow rule  
below  
When only Day should reign.”

And Day and Night are children of  
the Sun,  
And idle gleams to thee are light to  
me.

Some say, the Light was father of the  
Night,  
And some, the Night was father of the  
Light,

No night no day!—I touch thy world  
again—

No ill no good! such counter-terms,  
my son,  
Are border-races, holding, each its  
own

By endless war: but night enough is  
there

In yon dark city: get thee back: and  
since

The key to that weird casket, which  
for thee

But holds a skull, is neither thine nor  
mine,

But in the hand of what is more than  
man,

Or in man's hand when man is more  
than man,

Let be thy wail and help thy fellow  
men,  
And make thy gold thy vassal not thy  
king,

And fling tree alms into the beggar's  
bowl,

And send the day into the darken'd  
heart;

Nor list for guerdon in the voice of  
men,

A dying echo from a fallen wall;  
Nor care—for Hunger hath the Evil  
eye—

To vex the noon with fiery gems, or  
fold  
Thy presence in the silk of sumptuous  
looms;

Nor roll thy viands on a luscious  
tongue,

Nor drown thyself with flies in honied  
wine;

Nor thou be rageful, like a handled  
bee,

And lose thy life by usage of thy  
sting;

Nor harm an adder thro' the lust for  
harm,

Nor make a snail's horn shrink for  
wantonness;

And more—think well! Do-well will  
follow thought,

And in the fatal sequence of this world  
An evil thought may soil thy child-  
ren's blood;

But curb the beast would cast thee in  
the mire,

And leave the hot swamp of voluptu-  
ousness

A cloud between the Nameless and  
thyself,

And lay thine uphill shoulder to the  
wheel,

And climb the Mount of Blessing,  
whence, if thou

Look higher, then—perchance—thou  
mayest—beyond

A hundred ever-rising mountain lines,  
And past the range of Night and  
Shadow—see

The high-heaven dawn of more than  
mortal day

Strike on the Mount of Vision!

So, farewell.

## THE FLIGHT.

## I.

ARE you sleeping? have you forgotten?  
do not sleep, my sister dear!  
How *can* you sleep? the morning  
brings the day I hate and fear;  
The cock has crow'd already once,  
he crows before his time;  
Awake! the creeping glimmer steals,  
the hills are white with rime.

## II.

Ah, clasp me in your arms, sister, ah,  
fold me to your breast!  
Ah, let me weep my fill once more,  
and cry myself to rest!  
To rest? to rest and wake no more  
were better rest for me,  
Than to waken every morning to that  
face I loathe to see:

## III.

I envied your sweet slumber, all  
night so calm you lay,  
The night was calm, the morn is  
calm, and like another day;  
But I could wish yon moaning sea  
would rise and burst the shore,  
And such a whirlwind blow these  
woods, as never blew before.

## IV.

For, one by one, the stars went down  
across the gleaming pane.  
And project after project rose, and all  
of them were vain;  
The blackthorn-blossom fades and  
falls and leaves the bitter sloe,  
The hope I catch at vanishes and  
youth is turn'd to woe.

## V.

Come, speak a little comfort! all  
night I pray'd with tears,  
And yet no comfort came to me, and  
now the morn appears,  
When he will tear me from your side,  
who bought me for his slave:  
This father pays his debt with me, and  
weds me to my grave.

## VI.

What father, this or mine, was he,  
who, on that summer day  
When I had fall'n from off the crag  
we clamber'd up in play,  
Found, fear'd me dead, and groan'd,  
and took and kiss'd me, and  
again  
He kiss'd me; and I loved him then;  
he *was* my father then.

## VII.

No father now, the tyrant vassal of a  
tyrant vice!  
The Godless Jephtha vows his child  
... to one cast of the dice.  
These ancient woods, this Hall at last  
will go—perhaps have gone,  
Except his own meek daughter yield  
her life, heart, soul to one—

## VIII.

To one who knows I scorn him. O  
the formal mocking bow,  
The cruel smile, the courtly phrase  
that masks his malice now—  
But often in the sidelong eyes a gleam  
of all things ill—  
It is not Love but Hate that weds a  
bride against her will;

## IX.

Hate, that would pluck from this true  
breast the locket that I wear,  
The precious crystal into which I  
braided Edwin's hair!  
The love that keeps this heart alive  
beats on it night and day—  
One golden curl, his golden gift, before  
he past away.

## X.

He left us weeping in the woods; his  
boat was on the sand;  
How slowly down the rocks he went,  
how loth to quit the land!  
And all my life was darken'd, as I saw  
the white sail run,  
And darken, up that lane of light into  
the setting sun.

## XI.

How often have we watch'd the sun  
fade from us thro' the West,  
And follow Edwin to those isles, those  
islands of the Blest!  
Is *he* not there? would I were there,  
the friend, the bride, the wife,  
With him, where summer never dies,  
with Love, the Sun of Life!

## XII.

O would I were in Edwin's arms—  
once more—to feel his breath  
Upon my cheek—on Edwin's ship,  
with Edwin, ev'n in death,  
Tho' all about the shuddering wreck  
the death-white sea should rave,  
Or if lip were laid to lip on the pillows  
of the wave.

## XIII.

Shall I take *him*? I kneel with *him*?  
I swear and swear forsworn  
To love him most, whom most I  
loathe, to honor whom I scorn?  
The Fiend would yell, the grave  
would yawn, my mother's ghost  
would rise—  
To lie, to lie—in God's own house—  
the blackest of all lies!

## XIV.

Why—rather than that hand in mine,  
tho' every pulse would freeze  
I'd sooner fold an icy corpse dead of  
some foul disease:  
Wed him? I will not wed him, let  
them spurn me from the doors,  
And I will wander till I die about the  
barren moors.

## XV.

The dear, mad bride who stabb'd her  
bridegroom on her bridal  
night—  
If mad, then I am mad, but sane, if  
she were in the right.  
My father's madness makes me mad—  
but words are only words!  
I am not mad, not yet, not quite—  
There! listen how the birds

## XVI.

Begin to warble yonder in the budding  
orchard trees!  
The lark has past from earth to  
Heaven upon the morning  
breeze!  
How gladly, were I one of those, how  
early would I wake!  
And yet the sorrow that I bear is  
sorrow for *his* sake.

## XVII.

They love their mates, to whom they  
sing; or else their songs, that  
meet  
The morning with such music, would  
never be so sweet!  
And tho' these fathers will not hear,  
the blessed Heavens are just,  
And Love is fire, and burns the feet  
would trample it to dust.

## XVIII.

A door was open'd in the house—  
who? who? my father sleeps!  
A stealthy foot upon the stair! he—  
some one—this way creeps!  
If he? yes, he . . . lurks, listens, fears  
his victim may have fled—  
He! where is some sharp-pointed  
thing? he comes, and finds me  
dead.

## XIX.

Not he, not yet! and time to act—but  
how my temples burn!  
And idle fancies flutter me, I know  
not where to turn;  
Speak to me, sister; counsel me; this  
marriage must not be.  
You only know the love that makes  
the world a world to me!

## XX.

Our gentle mother, had *she* lived—but  
we were left alone:  
That other left us to ourselves; he  
cared not for his own;  
So all the summer long we roam'd in  
these wild woods of ours,  
My Edwin loved to call us then 'His  
two wild woodland flowers.'

## XXI.

Wild flowers blowing side by side in  
 God's free light and air,  
 Wild flowers of the secret woods, when  
 Edwin found us there,  
 Wild woods in which we roved with  
 him, and heard his passionate  
 vow,  
 Wild woods in which we rove no  
 more, if we be parted now!

## XXII.

You will not leave me thus in grief to  
 wander forth forlorn;  
 We never changed a bitter word, not  
 once since we were born;  
 Our dying mother join'd our hands;  
 she knew this father well;  
 She bad us love, like souls in Heaven,  
 and now I fly from Hell,

## XXIII.

And you with me; and we shall light  
 upon some lonely shore,  
 Some lodge within the waste sea-  
 dunes, and hear the waters roar,  
 And see the ships from out the West  
 go dipping thro' the foam,  
 And sunshine on that sail at last which  
 brings our Edwin home.

## XXIV.

But look, the morning grows apace,  
 and lights the old church-tower,  
 And lights the clock! the hand points  
 five—O me—it strikes the  
 hour—  
 I bide no more, I meet my fate, what-  
 ever ills betide!  
 Arise, my own true sister, come forth!  
 the world is wide.

## XXV.

And yet my heart is ill at ease, my  
 eyes are dim with dew,  
 I seem to see a new-dug grave up  
 yonder by the yew!  
 If we should never more return, but  
 wander hand in hand  
 With breaking hearts, without a friend,  
 and in a distant land.

## XXVI.

O sweet, they tell me that the world  
 is hard, and harsh of mind,  
 But can it be so hard, so harsh, as  
 those that should be kind?  
 That matters not: let come what will,  
 at last the end is sure,  
 And every heart that loves with truth  
 is equal to endure.

## TO-MORROW.

## I.

HER, that yer Honor was spakin' to?  
 Whin, yer Honor? last year—  
 Standin' here be the bridge, when last  
 yer Honor was here?  
 An' yer Honor ye gev her the top of  
 the mornin', 'Tomorra' says  
 she.  
 What did they call her, yer Honor?  
 They call'd her Molly Magee.  
 An' yer Honor's the thrue ould blood  
 that always manes to be kind,  
 But there's rason in all things, yer  
 Honor, for Molly was out of  
 her mind.

## II.

Shure, an' meself remimbers wan  
 night comin' down be the  
 strame,  
 An' it seems to me now like a bit of  
 yisther-day in a dhrame—  
 Here where yer Honor seen her—  
 there was but a slip of a moon,  
 But I hard thim—Molly Magee wid  
 her batchelor, Danny O'Roon—  
 'You've been takin' a dhrop o' the  
 crathur' an' Danny says 'Troth,  
 an' I been  
 Dhrinkin' yer health wid Shamus  
 O'Shea at Katty's shebeen;<sup>1</sup>  
 But I must be lavin' ye soon.'  
 'Ochone are ye goin' away?'  
 'Goin' to cut the Sassenach whate' he  
 says 'over the say'—

<sup>1</sup> Grog-shop.



THE PRIEST IN HORROR ABOUT HIS ALTAR.<sup>11</sup>—Page 109.





'An' whin will ye meet me agin?' an'  
I hard him 'Molly ashore,  
I'll meet you agin tomorra,' says he,  
'be the chapel-door.'  
'An' whin are ye goin' to lave me?'  
'O' Monday mornin'' says he;  
'An' shure thin ye'll meet me to-  
morra?'  
'Tomorra, tomorra, Machree!'  
Thin Molly's ould mother, yer Honor,  
that had no likin' for Dan,  
Call'd from her cabin an' tould her to  
come away from the man,  
An' Molly Magee kem flyin' across  
me, as light as a lark,  
An' Dan stood there for a minute, an'  
thin went into the dark.  
But wirrahl the storm that night—  
the tundher, an' rain that fell,  
An' the strhames runnin' down at the  
back o' the glin 'ud 'a dhrowned  
Hell.

III.

But airth was at pace nixt mornin',  
an' Hiven in its glory smiled,  
As the Holy Mother o' Glory that  
smiles at her sleepin' child—  
Ethen—she stept an the chapel-green,  
an' she turn'd herself roun'  
Wid a diamond dhrop in her eye, for  
Danny was not to be foun',  
An' many's the time that I watch'd  
her at mass lettin' down the  
tear,  
For the Divil a Danny was there, yer  
Honor, for forty year.

IV.

Och, Molly Magee, wid the red o' the  
rose an' the white o' the May,  
An' yer hair as black as the night, an'  
yer eyes as bright as the day!  
Achora, yer laste little whisper was  
sweet as the lilt of a bird!  
Acushla, ye set me heart batin' to  
music wid ivery word!  
An' sorra the Queen wid her sceptre  
in sich an illigant han',  
An' the fall of yer foot in the dance  
was as light as snow an the  
lan',

An' the sun kem out of a cloud whin-  
iver ye walkt in the shstreet,  
An' Shamus O'Shea was yer shadda,  
an' laid himself undher yer  
feet,  
An' I loved ye meself wid a heart  
and a half, me darlin', and he  
'Ud 'a shot his own sowl dead for a  
kiss of ye, Molly Magee.

V.

But shure we wor betther frinds whin  
I crack'd his skull for her  
sake,  
An' he ped me back wid the best he  
could give at ould Donovan's  
wake—  
For the boys wor about her agin whin  
Dan didn't come to the fore,  
An' Shamus along wid the rest, but  
she put thin all to the door.  
An', afther, I thried her meself av the  
bird 'ud come to me call,  
But Molly, begorrah, 'ud listen to  
naither at all, at all.

VI.

An' her nabours an frinds 'ud consowl  
an' condowl wid her, airly and  
late,  
'Your Danny,' they says, 'niver crasht  
over say to the Sassenach  
whate;  
He's gone to the States, aroon, an'  
he's married another wite,  
An' ye'll niver set eyes an the face of  
the thraithur agin in life!  
An' to dhrame of a married man,  
death alive, is a mortal sin.'  
But Molly says 'I'd his hand-promise,  
an' shure he'll meet me agin.'

VII.

An' afther her paärints had inter'd  
glory, an' both in wan day,  
She began to spake to herself, the  
crathur, an' whisper, an' say  
'Tomorra, Tomorra!' an' Father  
Molowny he tuk her in han',  
'Molly, you're manin', he says, 'me  
dear, av I undherstan',

That ye'll meet your paärints agin an'  
yer Danny O'Roon afore God  
Wid his blessed Marthurs an' Saints ;  
an' she gev him a frindly nod,  
' Tomorra, Tomorra,' she says, an'  
she didn't intind to desave,  
But her wits wor dead, an' her hair  
was as white as the snow an a  
grave.

## VIII.

Arrah now, here last month they wor  
diggin' the bog, an' they foun'  
Dhrownded in black bog-wather a  
corp lyin' undher groun'.

## IX.

Yer Honor's own agint, he says to me  
wanst, at Katty's shebeen,  
' The Divil take all the black lan', for  
a blessin' 'ud come wid the  
green !'  
An' where 'ud the poor man, thin, cut  
his bit o' turf for the fire ?  
But och ! bad scran to the bogs whin  
they swallies the man intire !  
An' sorra the bog that's in Hiven wid  
all the light an' the glow,  
An' there's hate enough, shure, wid-  
out *thin* in the Divil's kitchen  
below.

## X.

Thim ould blind nagers in Egypt, I  
hard his Riverence say,  
Could keep their haithen kings in the  
flesh for the Jidgemint day,  
An', faix, be the pipér o' Moses, they  
kep the cat an' the dog,  
But it 'ud 'a been aisier work a they  
lived be an Irish bog.

## XI.

How-an-iver they laid this body they  
foun' an the grass  
Be the chapel-door, an' the people 'ud  
see it that wint in to mass—  
But a frish generation had riz, an'  
most of the ould was few,  
An' I didn't know him meself, an'  
none of the parish knew.

## XII.

But Molly kem limpín' up wid her  
stick, she was lamed iv a knee,  
Thin a slip of a gossoon call'd, ' Div  
ye know him, Molly Magee ?'  
An' she stood up strait as the Queen  
of the world—she lifted her  
head—  
' He said he would meet me tomorra !'  
an' dhropt down dead an the  
dead.

## XIII.

Och, Molly, we thought, machree, ye  
would start back agin into life,  
Whin we laid yez, aich be aich, at yer  
wake like husban' an' wife.  
Sorra the dhry eye thin but was wet  
for the frinds that was gone !  
Sorra the silent throat but we hard it  
cryin' ' Ochone !'  
An' Shamus O'Shea that has now  
ten childer, hansom an' tall,  
Him an' his childer wor keenin' as if  
he had lost thim all.

## XIV.

Thin his Riverence buried thim both  
in wan grave be the dead boor-  
tree,<sup>1</sup>  
The young man Danny O'Roon wid  
his ould woman, Molly Magee.

## XV.

May all the flowers o' Jeroosilim  
blossom an' spring from the  
grass,  
Imbrashin' an' kissin' aich other—as  
ye did—over yer Crass !  
An' the lark fly out o' the flowers wid  
his song to the Sun an' the  
Moon,  
An' tell thim in Hiven about Molly  
Magee an' her Danny O'Roon,  
Till Holy St. Pether gets up wid his  
kays an' opens the gate !  
An' shure, be the Crass, that's betther  
nor cuttin' the Sassenach whate

<sup>1</sup> Elder-tree.

To be there wid the Blessed Mother,  
 an' Saints an' Marthyrs galore,  
 An' singin' yer 'Aves' an' 'Pathers',  
 for iver an' ivermore.

XVI.

An' now that I tould yer Honor what-  
 iver I hard an' seen,  
 Yer Honor 'ill give me a thrifle to  
 dhrink yer health in potheen.

THE SPINSTER'S SWEET-  
 ARTS.

I.

MILK for my sweet-arts, Bess! fur it  
 mun be the time about now  
 When Molly cooms in fro' the far-end  
 close wi' her paäils fro' the cow.  
 Eh! tha be new to the plaäce—thou'rt  
 gaäpin'—doesn't tha see  
 I calls' em arter the fellers es once  
 was sweet upo' me?

II.

Naäy to be sewer it be past'er time.  
 What maäkes 'er sa laäte?  
 Goä to the laäne at the back, an'  
 loök thruf Maddison's gaäte!

III.

Sweet-arts! Molly belike may'a  
 lighted to-night upo' one.  
 Sweet-arts! thanks to the Lord that I  
 niver not listen'd to noän!  
 So I sits i' my oän armchair wi' my oän  
 kettle there o' the hob,  
 An' Tommy the fust, an' Tommy the  
 second, an' Steevie an' Rob.

IV.

Rob, coom oop 'ere o' my knee. Thou  
 sees that i' spite o' the men  
 I 'a kep' thruf thick an' thin my two  
 'conderd a-year to mysen;  
 Yis! thaw tha call'd me es pretty es  
 ony lass i' the Shere;  
 An' thou be es pretty a Tabby, but  
 Robby I seed thruf ya there.

v.

Feyther 'ud saäy I wur ugly es sin,  
 an' I beänt not vaäin,  
 But I niver wur downright buggy, thaw  
 soom 'ud 'a thowt ma plaäin,  
 An' I wasn't sa plaäin i' pink ribbons,  
 ye said I wur pretty i' pinks,  
 An' I liked to 'ear it I did, but I beänt  
 sich a fool as ye thinks;  
 Ye was stroäkin ma down wi' the 'air,  
 as I be a-stroäkin o' you,  
 But whiniver I loöked i' the glass I  
 wur sewer that it couldn't be  
 true;  
 Niver wur pretty, not I, but ye know'd  
 it wur pleasant to 'ear,  
 Thaw it warn't not me es wur pretty,  
 but my two 'oonderd a-year.

VI.

D'ya mind the murnin' when we was  
 a-walkin' together, an' stood  
 By the claäy'd-ooop pond, that the  
 foälk be sa scared at, i'  
 Gigglesby wood,  
 Wheer the poor wrench drowndid  
 hersen, black Sal, es 'ed been  
 disgraäced?  
 An' I feel'd thy arm es I stood wur a-  
 creeäpin about my waäist;  
 An' me es wur allus afear'd of a man's  
 gittin' ower fond,  
 I sidled awaäy an' awaäy till I plumpt  
 foot fust i' the pond;  
 And, Robby, I niver 'a liked tha sa  
 well, as I did that daäy,  
 Fur tha joompt in thysen, an' tha  
 hoickt my feet wi' a flop fro'  
 the claäy.  
 Ay, stick oop thy back, an' set oop  
 thy taäil, tha may gie me a kiss,  
 Fur I walk'd wi' tha all the way hoam  
 an' wur niver sa nigh saäyin'  
 Yis.  
 But wa boäth was i' sich a clat we was  
 shaamed to cross Gigglesby  
 Greäcän,  
 Fur a cat may loök at a king thou  
 knaws but the cat mun be cleän.  
 Sa we boäth on us kep out o' sight o'  
 the winders o' Gigglesby  
 Hinn—

Naäy, but the claws o' tha! quiet!  
they pricks cleän thru' to the  
skin—

An' wa boäth slinkt 'oäm by the  
brocken shed i' the laäne at the  
back,

Wheer the poodle runn'd at tha once,  
an' thou runn'd oop o' the  
thack;

An' tha squeeze'd my 'and i' the shed,  
fur theree we was forced to 'ide,  
Fur I seed that Steevie wur coomin',  
and one o' the Tommiés beside.

## VII.

Theree now, what art'a mewin at,  
Steevie? for ow't I can tell—  
Robby wur fust to be sewer, or I mowt  
'a liked tha as well.

## VIII.

But, Robby, I thowt o' tha all the  
while I wur chaängin' my gown,  
An' I thowt shall I chaänge my  
staäte? but, O Lord, upo'  
coomin' down—

My bran-new carpet es fresh es a  
midder o' flowers i' Maäy—

Why 'edn't tha wiped thy shoes? it  
wur clatted all ower wi' claäy.

An' I could a' cried ammost, fur I  
seed that it couldn't be,

An' Robby I gied tha a raätin that  
sattled thy coortin o' me.

An' Molly an' me was agreed, as we  
was a-cleänin' the floor,

That a man be a durty thing an' a  
trouble an' plague wi' indoor.

But I rued it arter a bit, fur I stuck  
to tha moor na the rest,

But I couldn't 'a lived wi' a man an' I  
knows it be all fur the best.

## IX.

Naäy—let ma stroäk tha down till I  
maäkes tha es smooth es silk,

But if I 'ed married tha, Robby, thou'd  
nor 'a been worth thy milk,

Thou'd niver 'a catch'd ony mice but  
'a left me the work to do,

And 'a taäen to the bottle beside, so  
es all that I 'ears be true;  
But I loovs tha to maäke thysen 'appy,  
an' soa purr awaäy, my dear,  
Thou' ed wellnigh purr'd ma awaäy fro'  
my oän two 'oonderd a-year.

## X.

Sweärin agean, you Toms, as ye used  
to do twelve year sin'!

Ye niver 'eärd Steevie swear 'cep' it  
wur at a dog coomin' in.

An' boath o' ye mun be fools to be  
hallus a-shawin' your claws,

Fur I niver cared nothink for neither—  
an' one o' ye deäd ye knows!

Coom give hoäver then, weant ye? I  
warrant ye soom fine daäy—

Theree, lig down—I shall hev to gie  
one or tother awaäy.

Can't ye taäke pattern by Steevie? ye  
shant hev a drop fro' the paäl.

Steevie be right good manners bang  
thru' to the tip o' the taäl.

## XI.

Robby, git down wi' tha, wilt tha? let  
Steevie coom oop o' my knee.

Steevie, my lad, thou 'ed very nigh  
been the Steevie fur me!

Robby wur fust to be sewer, 'e wur  
burn an' bred i' the 'ouse,

But thou be es 'ansom a tabby es iver  
patted a mouse.

## XII.

An' I beänt not vaän, but I knows I  
'ed led tha a quieter life

Nor her wi' the hepithaph yonder!  
"A faäithful an' loovin' wife!"

An' 'cos o' thy farm by the beck, an'  
thy windmill oop o' the croft.

Tha thowt tha would marry ma, did  
tha? but that wur a bit ower  
soft,

Thaw thou was es soäber es daäy, wi'  
a niced red faäce, an' es cleän

Es a shillin' fresh fro' the mint wi' a  
bran-new 'eäd o' the Queeän.

An' thy farmin' es cleän es thysen',  
fur, Steevie, tha kep' it sa neät

That I niver not spied sa much es a  
poppy along wi' the wheät,  
An' the wool of a thistle a-flyin' an'  
scea'din' tha haated to see;  
'Twur es bad es a battle-twig<sup>1</sup> 'ere i'  
my oän blue chaumber to me.  
Ay, roob thy whiskers ageän ma, fur  
I could 'a taäen to tha well,  
But fur thy bairns, poor Steevie, a  
bouncin' boy an' a gell.

XIII.

An' thou was es fond o' thy bairns es  
I be mysen o' my cats,  
But I niver not wish'd fur childer, I  
hevn't naw likin' fur brats;  
Pretty anew when ya dresses 'em oop,  
an' they goäs fur a walk,  
Or sits wi' their 'ands afoor 'em, an'  
doesn't not 'inder the talk!  
But their bottles o' pap, an' their  
mucky bibs, an' the clats an'  
the clouts,  
An' their mashin' their toys to picäes  
an' maäkin' ma deäf wi' their  
shouts,  
An' hallus a-jooupin' about ma as if  
they was set upo' springs,  
An' a haxin' ma hawkard questions,  
an' saäyin' ondecnt things,  
An' a-callin' ma 'hugly' mavhap to  
my faäce, or a teärin' my  
gown—  
Dear! dear! dear! I mun part them  
Tommies—Steevie git down.

XIV.

Ye be wuss nor the men-tommies,  
you. I tell'd ya, na moor o'  
that!  
Tom, lig there o' the cushion, an'  
tother Tom 'ere o' the mat.

XV.

There! I ha' master'd *them!* Hed  
I married the Tommies—O  
Lord,  
To loove an' obaäy the Tommies! I  
couldn't 'a stuck by my word.

<sup>1</sup> Earwig.

To be horder'd about, an' waäked,  
when Molly 'd put out the  
light.  
By a man coomin' in wi' a hiccup at  
ony hour o' the night!  
An' the taäble staäin'd wi' 'is aäle, an'  
the mud o' 'is boots o' the stairs,  
An' the stink o' 'is pipe i' the 'ouse,  
an' the mark o' 'is 'eäd o' the  
chairs!  
An' noän o' my four sweet-arts 'ud 'a  
let me 'a hed my oän waäy,  
Sa I likes 'em best wi' taäils when  
they 'evn't a word to saäy.

XVI.

An' I sits i' my oän little parlor, an'  
sarved by my oän little lass,  
Wi' my oän little garden outside, an'  
my oän bed o' sparrow-grass,  
An' my oän door porch wi' the wood-  
bine an' jessmine a-dressin' it  
greeän,  
An' my oän fine Jackman i' purple a  
roäbin' the 'ouse like a Quecän.

XVII.

An' the little gells hobs to ma hoffens  
es I be abroad i' the laänes,  
When I goäs fur to coomfit the poor  
es be down wi' their haäches  
an' their paäins:  
An' a haäf-pot o' jam, or a mossel o'  
meät when it beänt too dear,  
They maäkes ma a graäter Laädy nor  
'er 'i the mansion theer,  
Hes 'es hallust o hax of a man how  
much to spare or to spend;  
An' a spinster I be an' I will be, if  
soä pleäse God, to the hend.

XVIII.

Mew! mew!—Bess wi' the milk!  
what ha maäde our Molly sa  
lääte?  
It should 'a been 'ere by seven, an'  
theere—it be strikin' height—  
'Cushie wur craäzed fur 'er cauf' well  
—I 'eärd 'er a maäkin' 'er  
moän,

An' I thowt to mysen 'thank God  
that I hev'n't naw cauf o' my  
oän.'

Theere!

Set it down!

Now Robby!  
You Tommies shall waait to-  
night  
'Till Robby an' Steevie 'es 'ed their  
lap—an' it sarves ye right.

### LOCKSLEY HALL

#### SIXTY YEARS AFTER.

LATE, my grandson! half the morning have I paced these sandy tracts,  
Watch'd again the hollow ridges roaring into cataracts,

Wander'd back to living boyhood while I heard the curlews call,  
I myself so close on death, and death itself in Locksley Hall.

So—your happy suit was blasted—she the faultless, the divine;  
And you liken—boyish babble—this boy-love of yours with mine.

I myself have often babbled doubtless of a foolish past;  
Babble, babble; our old England may go down in babble at last.

'Curse him!' curse your fellow-victim? call him dotard in your rage?  
Eyes that lured a doting boyhood well might fool a dotard's age.

Jilted for a wealthier! wealthier? yet perhaps she was not wise;  
I remember how you kiss'd the miniature with those sweet eyes.

In the hall there hangs a painting—Amy's arms about my neck—  
Happy children in a sunbeam sitting on the ribs of wreck.

In my life there was a picture, she that clasp'd my neck had flown;  
I was left within the shadow sitting on the wreck alone.

Yours has been a slighter ailment, will you sicken for her sake?  
You, not you! your modern amourist is of easier, earthlier make.

Amy loved me, Amy fail'd me, Amy was a timid child;  
But your Judith—but your worldling—*she* had never driven me wild.

She that holds the diamond necklace dearer than the golden ring,  
She that finds a winter sunset fairer than a morn of Spring.

She that in her heart is brooding on his briefer lease of life,  
While she vows 'till death shall part us,' she the would-be-widow wife.

She the worldling born of worldlings—father, mother—be content,  
Ev'n the homely farm can teach us there is something in descent.

Yonder in that chapel, slowly sinking now into the ground,  
Lies the warrior, my forefather, with his feet upon the hound.

Cross'd! for once he sail'd the sea to crush the Moslem in his pride;  
Dead the warrior, dead his glory, dead the cause in which he died.

Yet how often I and Amy in the mouldering aisle have stood,  
Gazing for one pensive moment on that founder of our blood.

There again I stood to-day, and where of old we knelt in prayer,  
Close beneath the casement crimson with the shield of Locksley—there,

All in white Italian marble, looking still as if she smiled,  
Lies my Amy dead in child-birth, dead the mother, dead the child.

Dead—and sixty years ago, and dead her aged husband now—  
I this old white-headed dreamer stoopt and kiss'd her marble brow.

Gone the fires of youth, the follies, furies, curses, passionate tears,  
Gone like fires and floods and earthquakes of the planet's dawning years.

Fires that shook me once, but now to silent ashes fall'n away.  
Cold upon the dead volcano sleeps the gleam of dying day.

Gone the tyrant of my youth, and mute below the chancel stones,  
All his virtues—I forgive them—black in white above his bones.

Gone the comrades of my bivouac, some in fight against the foe,  
Some thro' age and slow diseases, gone as all on earth will go.

Gone with whom for forty years my life in golden sequence ran,  
She with all the charm of woman, she with all the breadth of man,

Strong in will and rich in wisdom, Edith, yet so lowly-sweet,  
Woman to her inmost heart, and woman to her tender feet,

Very woman of very woman, nurse of ailing body and mind,  
She that link'd again the broken chain that bound me to my kind.

Here to-day was Amy with me, while I wander'd down the coast,  
Near us Edith's holy shadow, smiling at the slighter ghost.

Gone our sailor son thy father, Leonard early lost at sea;  
Thou alone, my boy, of Amy's kin and mine art left to me.

Gone thy tender-natured mother, wearying to be left alone,  
Pining for the stronger heart that once had beat beside her own.

Truth, for Truth is Truth, he worshipt, being true as he was brave;  
Good, for Good is Good, he follow'd, yet he look'd beyond the grave,

Wiser there than you, that crowning barren Death as lord of all,  
Deem this over-tragic drama's closing curtain is the pall!

Beautiful was death in him, who saw the death, but kept the deck,  
Saving women and their babes, and sinking with the sinking wreck,

Gone for ever! Ever? no—for since our dying race began,  
Ever, ever, and for ever was the leading light of man.

Those that in barbarian burials kill'd the slave, and slew the wife  
Felt within themselves the sacred-passion of the second life.

Indian warriors dream of ampler hunting grounds beyond the night;  
Ev'n the black Australian dying hopes he shall return, a white.

Truth for truth, and good for good! The Good, the True, the Pure, the Just—  
Take the charm 'For ever' from them, and they crumble into dust.

Gone the cry of 'Forward, Forward,' lost within a growing gloom;  
Lost, or only heard in silence from the silence of a tomb.

Half the marvels of my morning, triumphs over time and space,  
Staled by frequency, shrunk by usage into commonest commonplace!

'Forward' rang the voices then, and of the many mine was one.  
Let us hush this cry of 'Forward' till ten thousand years have gone.

Far among the vanish'd races, old Assyrian kings would flay  
Captives whom they caught in battle—iron-hearted victors they.

Agas after, while in Asia, he that led the wild Moguls,  
Timur built his ghastly tower of eighty thousand human skulls,

Then, and here in Edward's time, an age of noblest English names,  
Christain conquerors took and flung the conquer'd Christian into flames.

Love your enemy, bless your haters, said the Greatest of the great;  
Christian love among the Churches look'd the twin of heathen hate.

From the golden alms of Blessing man had coin'd himself a curse:  
Rome of Cæsar, Rome of Peter, which was crueller? which was worse?

France had shown a light to all men, preach'd a Gospel, all men's good;  
Celtic Demos rose a Demon, shriek'd and slaked the light with blood.

Hope was ever on her mountain, watching till the day begun—  
Crown'd with sunlight—over darkness—from the still unrisen sun.

Have we grown at last beyond the passions of the primal clan?  
'Kill your enemy, for you hate him,' still, 'your enemy' was a man.

Have we sunk below them? peasants maim the helpless horse, and drive  
Innocent cattle under thatch, and burn the kindlier brutes alive.

Brutes, the brutes are not your wrongers—burnt at midnight, found at morn,  
Twisted hard in mortal agony with their offspring, born-unborn,

Clinging to the silent mother! Are we devils? are we men?  
Sweet St. Francis of Assisi, would that he were here again.



He that in his Catholic wholeness used to call the very flowers  
Sisters, brothers—and the beasts—whose pains are hardly less than ours!

Chaos, Cosmos! Cosmos, Chaos! who can tell how all will end?  
Read the wide world's annals, you, and take their wisdom for your friend.

Hope the best, but hold the Present fatal daughter of the Past,  
Shape your heart to front the hour, but dream not that the hour will last.

Ay, if dynamite and revolver leave you courage to be wise:  
When was age so cramm'd with menace? madness? written, spoken lies?

Envy wears the mask of Love, and, laughing sober fact to scorn,  
Cries to Weakest as to Strongest, 'Ye are equals, equal-born.'

Equal-born? O yes, if yonder hill be level with the flat.  
Charm us, Orator, till the Lion look no larger than the Cat,

Till the Cat thro' that mirage of overheated language loom  
Larger than the Lion,—Demos end in working its own doom.

Russia bursts our Indian barrier, shall we fight her? shall we yield?  
Pause! before you sound the trumpet, hear the voices from the field.

Those three hundred millions under one Imperial sceptre now,  
Shall we hold them? shall we loose them? take the suffrage of the plow.

Nay, but these would feel and follow Truth if only you and you,  
Rivals of realm-ruining party, when you speak were wholly true.

Plowmen, Shepherds, have I found, and more than once, and still could find,  
Sons of God, and kings of men in utter nobleness of mind,

Truthful, trustful, looking upward to the practised hustings-liar;  
So the Higher wields the Lower, while the Lower is the Higher.

Here and there a cotter's babe is royal-born by right divine;  
Here and there my lord is lower than his oxen or his swine.

Chaos, Cosmos! Cosmos, Chaos! once again the sickening game:  
Freedom, free to slay herself, and dying while they shout her name.

Step by step we gain'd a freedom known to Europe, known to all;  
Step by step we rose to greatness,—thro' the tonguesters we may fall.

You that woo the Voices—tell them 'old experience is a fool,'  
Teach your flatter'd kings that only those who cannot read can rule.

Pluck the mighty from their seat, but set no meek ones in their place;  
Pillory Wisdom in your markets, pelt your offal at her face.

Tumble Nature heel o'er head, and, yelling with the yelling street,  
Set the feet above the brain and swear the brain is in the feet.

Bring the old dark ages back without the faith, without the hope,  
Break the State, the Church, the Throne, and roll their ruins down the slope.

Authors—essayist, atheist, novelist, realist, rhymester, play your part,  
Paint the mortal shame of nature with the living hues of Art.

Rip your brothers' vices open, strip your own foul passions bare; [stare.  
Down with Reticence, down with Reverence—forward—naked—let them

Feed the budding rose of boyhood with the drainage of your sewer;  
Send the drain into the fountain, lest the stream should issue pure.

Set the maiden fancies wallowing in the troughs of Zolaism,—  
Forward, forward, ay and backward, downward too into the abysm.

Do your best to charm the worst, to lower the rising race of men;  
Have we risen from out the beast, then back into the beast again?

Only 'dust to dust' for me that sicken at your lawless din,  
Dust in wholesome old-world dust before the newer world begin.

Heated am I? you—you wonder—well, it scarce becomes mine age—  
Patience! let the dying actor mouth his last upon the stage.

Cries of unprogressive dotage ere the dotard fall asleep?  
Noises of a current narrowing, not the music of a deep?

Ay, for doubtless I am old, and think gray thoughts, for I am gray:  
After all the stormy changes shall we find a changeless May?

After madness, after massacre, Jacobinism and Jacquerie,  
Some diviner force to guide us thro' the days I shall not see?

When the schemes and all the systems, Kingdoms and Republics fall,  
Something kindlier, higher, holier—all for each and each for all?

All the full-brain, half-brain races, led by Justice, Love, and Truth;  
All the millions one at length with all the visions of my youth?

All diseases quench'd by Science, no man halt, or deaf or blind;  
Stronger ever born of weaker, lustier body, larger mind?

Earth at last a warless world, a single race, a single tongue—  
I have seen her far away—for is not Earth as yet so young?—

Every tiger madness muzzled, every serpent passion kill'd,  
Every grim ravine a garden, every blazing desert till'd,

Robed in universal harvest up to either pole she smiles,  
Universal ocean softly washing all her warless Isles.

Warless? when her tens are thousands, and her thousands millions, then—  
All her harvest all too narrow—who can fancy warless men?

Warless? war will die out late then. Will it ever? late or soon?  
Can it, till this outworn earth be dead as yon dead world the moon?

Dead the new astronomy calls her. . . . On this day and at this hour,  
In this gap between the sandhills, whence you see the Locksley tower,

Here we met, our latest meeting—Amy—sixty years ago—  
She and I—the moon was falling greenish thro' a rosy glow,

Just above the gateway tower, and even where you see her now—  
Here we stood and claspt each other, swore the seeming-deathless vow. . . .

Dead, but how her living glory lights the hall, the dune, the grass!  
Yet the moonlight is the sunlight, and the sun himself will pass.

Venus near her! smiling downward at this earthlier earth of ours,  
Closer on the Sun, perhaps a world of never fading flowers.

Hesper, whom the poet call'd the Bringer home of all good things.  
All good things may move in Hesper, perfect peoples, perfect kings.

Hesper—Venus—were we native to that splendor or in Mars,  
We should see the Globe we groan in, fairest of their evening stars.

Could we dream of wars and carnage, craft and madness, lust and spite,  
Roaring London, raving Paris, in that point of peaceful light?

Might we not in glancing heavenward on a star so silver-fair,  
Yearn, and clasp the hands and marmur, 'Would to God that we were there?'

Forward, backward, backward, forward, in the immeasurable sea,  
Sway'd by vaster ebbs and flows than can be known to you or me.

All the suns—are these but symbols of innumerable man,  
Man or Mind that sees a shadow of the planner or the plan?

Is there evil but on earth? or pain in every peopled sphere?  
Well be grateful for the sounding watchword 'Evolution' here,

Evolution ever climbing after some ideal good,  
And Reversion ever dragging Evolution in the mud.

What are men that He should heed us? cried the king of sacred song;  
Insects of an hour, that hourly work their brother insect wrong,

While the silent Heavens roll, and Suns along their fiery way,  
All their planets whirling round them, flash a million miles a day.

Many an Æon moulded earth before her highest, man, was born,  
Many an Æon too may pass when earth is manless and forlorn,

Earth so huge, and yet so bounded—pools of salt, and plots of land—  
Shallow skin of green and azure—chains of mountain, grains of sand!

Only That which made us, meant us to be mightier by and by,  
Set the sphere of all the boundless Heavens within the human eye,

Sent the shadow of Himself, the boundless, thro' the human soul;  
Boundless inward, in the atom, boundless outward, in the Whole.

\* \* \* \* \*

Here is Locksley Hall, my grandson, here the lion-guarded gate.  
Not to-night in Locksley Hall—to-morrow—you, you come so late.

Wreck'd—your train—or all but wreck'd? a shatter'd wheel? a vicious boy!  
Good, this forward, you that preach it, is it well to wish you joy?

Is it well that while we range with Science, glorying in the Time,  
City children soak and blacken soul and sense in city slime?

There among the glooming alleys Progress halts on palsied feet,  
Crime and hunger cast our maidens by the thousand on the street.

There the Master scrimps his haggard sempstress of her daily bread,  
There a single sordid attic holds the living and the dead.

There the smouldering fire of fever creeps across the rotted floor,  
And the crowded couch of incest in the warrens of the poor.

Nay, your pardon, cry your 'forward,' yours are hope and youth, but I—  
Eighty winters leave the dog too lame to follow with the cry,

Lame and old, and past his time, and passing now into the night;  
Yet I would the rising race were half as eager for the light.

Light the fading gleam of Even? light the glimmer of the dawn?  
Aged eyes may take the growing glimmer for the gleam withdrawn.

Far away beyond her myriad coming changes earth will be  
Something other than the wildest modern guess of you and me.

Earth may reach her earthly-worst, or if she gain her earthly-best,  
Would she find her human offspring this ideal man at rest?

Forward then, but still remember how the course of Time will swerve,  
Crook and turn upon itself in many a backward streaming curve.

Not the Hall to-night, my grandson! Death and Silence hold their own.  
Leave the Master in the first dark hour of his last sleep alone.

Worthier soul was he than I am, sound and honest, rustic Squire,  
Kindly landlord, boon companion—youthful jealousy is a liar.

Cast the poison from your bosom, oust the madness from your brain.  
Let the trampled servant show you that you have not lived in vain.

Youthful! youth and age are scholars yet but in the lower school,  
Nor is he the wisest man who never proved himself a fool.

Yonder lies our young sea-village—Art and Grace are less and less:  
Science grows and Beauty dwindles—roofs of slated hideousness!

There is one old Hostel left us where they swing the Locksley shield,  
Till the peasant cow shall butt the 'Lion passant' from his field.

Poor old Heraldry, poor old History, poor old Poetry, passing hence,  
In the common deluge drowning old political common-sense!

Poor old voice of eighty crying after voices that have fled!  
All I loved are vanish'd voices, all my steps are on the dead.

All the world is ghost to me, and as the phantom disappears,  
Forward far and far from here is all the hope of eighty years.

\* \* \* \* \*

In this Hostel—I remember—I repent it o'er his grave—  
Like a clown—by chance he met me—I refused the hand he gave.

From that casement where the trailer mantles all the mouldering bricks—  
I was then in early boyhood, Edith but a child of six—

While I shelter'd in this archway from a day of driving showers—  
Peeped the winsome face of Edith like a flower among the flowers.

Here to-night! the Hall to-morrow, when they toll the Chapel bell!  
Shall I hear in one dark room a wailing, 'I have loved thee well.'

Then a peal that shakes the portal—one has come to claim his bride,  
Her that shrank, and put me from her, shriek'd, and started from my side—

Silent echoes! You, my Leonard, use and not abuse your day,  
Move among your people, know them, follow him who led the way,

Strove for sixty widow'd years to help his homelier brother men,  
Served the poor, and built the cottage, raised the school, and drain'd the fen.

Hears he now the Voice that wrong'd him? who shall swear it cannot be?  
Earth would never touch her worst, were one in fifty such as he.

Ere she gain her Heavenly-best, a God must mingle with the game:  
Nay, there may be those about us whom we neither see nor name,

Felt within us as ourselves, the Powers of Good, the Powers of Ill,  
Strowing balm, or shedding poison in the fountains of the Will.

Follow you the Star that lights a desert pathway, yours or mine.  
Forward, till you see the highest Human Nature is divine.

Follow Light, and do the Right—for man can half-control his doom—  
Till you find the deathless Angel seated in the vacant tomb.

Forward, let the stormy moment fly and mingle with the Past.  
I that loathed, have come to love him. Love will conquer at the last.

Gone at eighty, mine own age, and I and you will bear the pall;  
Then I leave thee Lord and Master, latest Lord of Locksley Hall.

### PROLOGUE

#### TO GENERAL HAMLEY.

OUR birches yellowing and from each  
The light leaf falling fast,  
While squirrels from our fiery beech  
Were bearing off the mast,  
You came, and look'd and loved the  
view

Long-known and loved by me,  
Green Sussex fading into blue  
With one gray glimpse of sea;  
And, gazing from this height alone,  
We spoke of what had been  
Most marvellous in the wars your own  
Crimean eyes had seen;  
And now—like old-world inns that  
take

Some warrior for a sign  
That therewithin a guest may make  
True cheer with honest wine—  
Because you heard the lines I read  
Nor utter'd word of blame,  
I dare without your leave to head  
These rhymings with your name,  
Who know you but as one of those  
I fain would meet again,  
Yet know you, as your England knows  
That you and all your men  
Were soldiers to her heart's desire,  
When, in the vanish'd year,  
You saw the league-long rampart-fire  
Flare from Tel-el-Kebir  
Thro' darkness, and the foe was driven,  
And Wolsley overthrew  
Arâbi, and the stars in heaven  
Paled, and the glory grew.

### THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE AT BALACLAVA.

OCTOBER 25, 1854.

#### I.

THE charge of the gallant three hun-  
dred, the Heavy Brigade!  
Down the hill, down the hill, thousands  
of Russians,  
Thousands of horsemen, drew to the  
valley—and stay'd;  
For Scarlett and Scarlett's three hun-  
dred were riding by  
When the points of the Russian lances  
arose in the sky;  
And he call'd 'Left wheel into line!'  
and they wheel'd and obey'd.  
Then he look'd at the host that had  
halted he knew not why,  
And he turn'd half round, and he bad  
his trumpeter sound  
To the charge, and he rode on ahead,  
as he waved his blade  
To the gallant three hundred whose  
glory will never die—  
'Follow,' and up the hill, up the hill,  
up the hill,  
Follow'd the Heavy Brigade.

#### II.

The trumpet, the gallop, the charge,  
and the might of the fight!  
Thousands of horsemen had gather'd  
there on the height,  
With a wing push'd out to the left  
and a wing to the right,

And who shall escape if they close?  
but he dash'd up alone  
Thro' the great gray slope of men,  
Sway'd his sabre, and held his own  
Like an Englishman there and then;  
All in a moment follow'd with force  
Three that were next in their fiery  
course,  
Wedge'd themselves in' between horse  
and horse,  
Fought for their lives in the narrow  
gap they had made—  
Four amid thousands! and up the  
hill, up the hill,  
Gallop the gallant three hundred, the  
Heavy Brigade.

III.

Fell like a cannonshot,  
Burst like a thunderbolt,  
Crash'd like a hurricane,  
Broke thro' the mass from below,  
Drove thro' the midst of the foe,  
Plunged up and down, to and fro,  
Rode flashing blow upon blow,  
Brave Inniskillens and Greys  
Whirling their sabres in circles of  
light!  
And some of us, all in amaze,  
Who were held for a while from the  
fight,  
And were only standing at gaze,  
When the dark-muffled Russian  
crowd  
Folded its wings from the left and  
the right,  
And roll'd them around like a  
cloud,—  
O mad for the charge and the battle  
were we,  
When our own good redcoats sank  
from sight,  
Like drops of blood in a dark-gray  
sea,  
And we turn'd to each other, whisper-  
ing, all dismay'd,  
'Lost are the gallant three hundred of  
Scarlett's Brigade!'

IV.

'Lost one and all' were the words  
Mutter'd in our dismay;

But they rode like Victors and Lords  
Thro' the forest of lances and swords  
In the heart of the Russian hordes,  
They rode, or they stood at bay—  
Struck with the sword-hand and slew,  
Down with the bridle-hand drew  
The foe from the saddle and threw  
Underfoot there in the fray—  
Ranged like a storm or stood like a  
rock  
In the wave of a stormy day;  
Till suddenly shock upon shock  
Stagger'd the mass from without,  
Drove it in wild disarray,  
For our men gallopt up with a cheer  
and a shout,  
And the foeman surged, and waver'd,  
and reel'd  
Up the hill, up the hill, up the hill,  
out of the field,  
And over the brow and away.

V.

Glory to each and to all, and the  
charge that they made!  
Glory to all the three hundred, and  
all the Brigade!

NOTE.—The 'three hundred' of the  
'Heavy Brigade' who made this famous  
charge were the Scots Greys and the 2nd  
squadron of Inniskillings; the remainder  
of the 'Heavy Brigade' subsequently  
dashing up to their support.

The 'three' were Scarlett's aid-de-camp,  
Elliot, and the trumpeter and Shegog the  
orderly, who had been close behind him.

EPILOGUE.

IRENE.

NOT this way will you set your name  
A star among the stars.

POET.

What way?

IRENE.

You praise when you should  
blame

The barbarism of wars.  
A juster epoch has begun.

POET.

Yet tho' this cheek be gray,  
And that bright hair the modern sun,  
Those eyes the blue to-day,  
You wrong me, passionate little friend.  
I would that wars should cease,  
I would the globe from end to end  
Might sow and reap in peace,  
And some new Spirit o'erbear the old,  
Or Trade re-frain the Powers  
From war with kindly links of gold,  
Or Love with wreaths of flowers.  
Slav, Teuton, Kelt, I count them all  
My friends and brother souls,  
With all the peoples, great and small,  
That wheel between the poles.  
But since, our mortal shadow, ill  
To waste this earth began—  
Perchance from some abuse of Will  
In worlds before the man  
Involving ours—he needs must fight  
To make true peace his own,  
He needs must combat might with  
might,  
Or Might would rule alone ;  
And who loves War for War's own  
sake  
Is fool, or crazed, or worse ;  
But let the patriot-soldier take  
His meed of fame in verse ;  
Nay—tho' that realm were in the  
wrong  
For which her warriors bleed,  
It still were right to crown with song  
The warrior's noble deed—  
A crown the Singer hopes may last,  
For so the deed endures ;  
But Song will vanish in the Vast ;  
And that large phrase of yours  
' A Star among the stars,' my dear,  
Is girlish talk at best ;  
For dare we dally with the sphere  
As he did half in jest,  
Old Horace ? ' I will strike ' said he  
' The stars with head sublime,'  
But scarce could see, as now we see,  
The man in Space and Time,  
So drew perchance a happier lot  
Than ours, who rhyme to-day.

The fires that arch this dusky dot—  
Yon myriad-worlded way—  
The vast sun-clusters' gather'd blaze,  
World-isles in lonely skies,  
Whole heavens within themselves,  
amaze  
Our brief humanities ;  
And so does Earth ; for Homer's  
fame,  
Tho' carved in harder stone—  
The falling drop will make his name.  
As mortal as my own.

IRENE.

No !

POET.

Let it live then—ay, till when ?  
Earth passes, all is lost  
In what they prophesy, our wise men,  
Sun-flame or sunless frost,  
And deed and song alike are swept  
Away, and all in vain  
As far as man can see, except  
The man himself remain ;  
And tho', in this lean age forlorn,  
' Too many a voice may cry  
That man can have no after-morn,  
Not yet of these am I.  
The man remains, and whatsoever  
He wrought of good or brave  
Will mould him thro' the cycle-year  
That dawns behind the grave.

And here the Singer for his Art  
Not all in vain may plead  
' The song that nerves a nation's  
heart,  
Is in itself a deed.'

TO VIRGIL.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE  
MANTUANS FOR THE NINETEENTH  
CENTENARY OF VIRGIL'S DEATH.

1.

ROMAN VIRGIL, thou that singest  
Iliion's lofty temples robed in  
fire,



Ilion falling, Rome arising,  
wars, and filial faith, and Dido's  
pyre;

II.

Landscape-lover, lord of language  
more than he that sang the  
Works and Days,  
All the chosen coin of fancy  
flashing out from many a golden  
phrase;

III.

Thou that singest wheat and woodland,  
tilth and vineyard, hive and  
horse and herd;  
All the charm of all the Muses  
often flowering in a lonely word;

IV.

Poet of the happy Tityrus  
piping underneath his beechen  
bowers;  
Poet of the poet-satyr  
whom the laughing shepherd  
bound with flowers;

V.

Chauter of the Pollio, glorying  
in the blissful years again to be,  
Summers of the snakeless meadow,  
unlaborious earth and oarless  
sea;

VI.

Thou that seest Universal  
Nature moved by Universal  
Mind;  
Thou majestic in thy sadness  
at the doubtful doom of human  
kind;

VII.

Light among the vanish'd ages;  
star that gildest yet this phan-  
tom shore;  
Golden branch amid the shadows,  
kings and realms that pass to  
rise no more;

VIII.

Now thy Forum roars no longer,  
fallen every purple Cæsar's  
dome—  
Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm  
sound for ever of Imperial  
Rome—

IX.

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd,  
and the Rome of freemen holds  
her place,  
I, from out the Northern Island  
sunder'd once from all the  
human race,

X.

I salute thee, Mantovano,  
I that loved thee since my day  
began,  
Wielder of the stateliest measure  
ever moulded by the lips of  
man.

THE DEAD PROPHET.

182-

I.

DEAD!  
And the Muses cried with a stormy  
cry  
'Send them no more, for evermore.  
Let the people die.'

II.

Dead!  
'Is it *he* then brought so low?'  
And a careless people flock'd from  
the fields  
With a purse to pay for the show.

III.

Dead, who had served his time,  
Was one of the people's kings,  
Had labor'd in lifting them out of  
slime,  
And showing them, souls have  
wings!

## IV.

Dumb on the winter heath he lay.  
His friends had stript him bare,  
And roll'd his nakedness everyway  
That all the crowd might stare.

## V.

A storm-worn signpost not to be read,  
And a tree with a moulder'd nest  
On its barkless bones, stood stark by  
the dead;  
And behind him, low in the West,

## VI.

With shifting ladders of shadow and  
light,  
And blurr'd in color and form,  
The sun hung over the gates of Night,  
And glared at a coming storm.

## VII.

Then glided a vulturous Beldam  
forth,  
That on dumb death had thriven;  
They call'd her 'Reverence' here  
upon earth,  
And 'The Curse of the Prophet' in  
Heaven.

## VIII.

She knelt—'We worship him'—all  
but wept—  
'So great so noble was he!'  
She clear'd her sight, she arose, she  
swept  
The dust of earth from her knee.

## IX.

'Great! for he spoke and the people  
heard,  
And his eloquence caught like a  
flame  
From zone to zone of the world, till  
his Word  
Had won him a noble name.

## X.

Noble! he sung, and the sweet sound  
ran

Thro' palace and cottage door,  
For he touch'd on the whole sad  
planet of man,  
The kings and the rich and the  
poor;

## XI.

And he sung not alone of an old sun  
set,  
But a sun coming up in his youth!  
Great and noble—O yes—but yet—  
For man is a lover of Truth,

## XII.

And bound to follow, wherever she go  
Stark-naked, and up or down,  
Thro' her high hill-passes of stainless  
snow,  
Or the foulest sewer of the town—

## XIII.

Noble and great—O ay—but then,  
Tho' a prophet should have his due,  
Was he noblier-fashion'd than other  
men?  
Shall we see to it, I and you?

## XIV.

For since he would sit on a Prophet's  
seat,  
As a lord of the Human soul,  
We needs must scan him from head  
to feet  
Were it but for a wart or a mole?'

## XV.

His wife and his child stood by him in  
tears,  
But she—she push'd them aside.  
'Tho' a name may last for a thousand  
years,  
Yet a truth is a truth,' she cried.

## XVI.

And she that had haunted his pathway  
still,  
Had often truckled and cower'd  
When he rose in his wrath, and had  
yielded her will  
To the master, as overpower'd,

XVII.

She tumbled his helpless corpse about.  
 'Small blemish upon the skin!  
 But I think we know what is fair  
 without  
 Is often as foul within.'

XVIII.

She crouch'd, she tore him part from  
 part,  
 And out of his body she drew  
 The red 'Blood-eagle'<sup>1</sup> of liver and  
 heart;  
 She held them up to the view;

XIX.

She gabbled, as she groped in the  
 dead,  
 And all the people were pleased;  
 'See, what a little heart,' she said,  
 'And the liver is half-diseased!'

XX.

She tore the Prophet after death,  
 And the people paid her well.  
 Lightnings flicker'd along the heath;  
 One shriek'd 'The fires of Hell!'

EARLY SPRING.

I.

ONCE more the Heavenly Power  
 Makes all things new,  
 And domes the red-plow'd hills  
 With loving blue;  
 The blackbirds have their wills,  
 The throistles too.

II.

Opens a door in Heaven;  
 From skies of glass  
 A Jacob's ladder falls  
 On greening grass,

<sup>1</sup> Old Viking term for lungs, liver, etc., when torn by the conqueror out of the body of the conquered.

And o'er the mountain-walls  
 Young angels pass.

III.

Before them fleets the shower,  
 And burst the buds,  
 And shine the level lands,  
 And flash the floods;  
 The stars are from their hands  
 Flung thro' the woods,

IV.

The woods with living airs  
 How softly fann'd,  
 Light airs from where the deep,  
 All down the sand,  
 Is breathing in his sleep,  
 Heard by the land.

V.

O follow, leaping blood,  
 The season's lure!  
 O heart, look down and up  
 Serene, secure,  
 Warm as the crocus cup,  
 Like snowdrops, pure!

VI.

Past, Future glimpse and fade  
 Thro' some slight spell,  
 A gleam from yonder vale,  
 Some far blue fell,  
 And sympathies, how frail,  
 In sound and smell!

VII.

Till at thy chuckled note,  
 Thou twinkling bird,  
 The fairy fancies range,  
 And, lightly stirr'd,  
 Ring little bells of change  
 From word to word.

VIII.

For now the Heavenly Power  
 Makes all things new,  
 And thaws the cold, and fills  
 The flower with dew;  
 The blackbirds have their wills,  
 The poets too.

PREFATORY POEM TO MY  
BROTHER'S SONNETS.

*Midnight, June 30, 1879.*

I.

MIDNIGHT—in no midsummer tune  
The breakers lash the shores:  
The cuckoo of a joyless June  
Is calling out of doors:

And thou hast vanish'd from thine own  
To that which looks like rest,  
True brother, only to be known  
By those who love thee best.

II.

Midnight—and joyless June gone by,  
And from the deluged park  
The cuckoo of a worse July  
Is calling thro' the dark:

But thou art silent underground,  
And o'er thee streams the rain,  
True poet, surely to be found  
When Truth is found again.

III.

And, now to these unsummer'd skies  
The summer bird is still,  
Far off a phantom cuckoo cries  
From out a phantom hill;

And thro' this midnight breaks the sun  
Of sixty years away,  
The light of days when life begun,  
The days that seem to-day,

When all my griefs were shared with  
thee,  
As all my hopes were thine—  
As all thou wert was one with me,  
May all thou art be mine!

'FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE.'

Row us out from Descenzano, to your  
Sirmione row!  
So they row'd, and there we landed—  
'O venusta Sirmio!'

There to me thro' all the groves of  
olive in the summer glow,  
There beneath the Roman ruin where  
the purple flowers grow,  
Came that 'Ave atque Vale' of the  
Poet's hopeless woe,  
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen-  
hundred years ago,  
'Frater Ave atque Vale'—as we wan-  
der'd to and fro  
Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the  
Garda Lake below  
Sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-  
silvery Sirmio!

HELEN'S TOWER.<sup>1</sup>

HELEN'S TOWER, here I stand,  
Dominant over sea and land.  
Son's love built me, and I hold  
Mother's love in letter'd gold.  
Love is in and out of time,  
I am mortal stone and lime.  
Would my granite girth were strong  
As either love, to last as long!  
I should wear my crown entire  
To and thro' the Doomsday fire,  
And be found of angel eyes  
In earth's recurring Paradise.

EPITAPH ON LORD STRAT-  
FORD DE REDCLIFFE.

IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

THOU third great Canning, stand  
among our best  
And noblest, now thy long day's  
work hath ceased,  
Here silent in our Minster of the  
West  
Who wert the voice of England in  
the East.

<sup>1</sup> Written at the request of my friend, Lord  
Dufferin.

EPITAPH  
ON GENERAL GORDON.

IN THE GORDON BOYS' NATIONAL  
MEMORIAL HOME NEAR WOKING.

WARRIOR of God, man's friend, and  
tyrant's foe,  
Now somewhere dead far in the  
waste Soudan,  
Thou livest in all hearts, for all men  
know  
This earth has never borne a nobler  
man.

EPITAPH ON CANTON.

IN ST. MARGARET'S, WESTMINSTER.

FIAT LUX (his motto).

THY prayer was 'Light—more Light—  
while Time shall last!'  
Thou sawest a glory growing on the  
night,  
But not the shadows which that light  
would cast,  
Till shadows vanish in the Light of  
Light.

TO THE DUKE OF ARGYLL.

O PATRIOT Statesman, be thou wise to  
know  
The limits of resistance, and the  
bounds  
Determining concession; still be bold  
Not only to slight praise but suffer  
scorn;  
And be thy heart a fortress to main-  
tain  
The day against the moment, and the  
year  
Against the day· thy voice, a music  
heard  
Thro' all the yells and counter-yells of  
feud

And faction, and thy will, a power to  
make  
This ever-changing world of circum-  
stance,  
In changing, chime with never-chang-  
ing Law.

HANDS ALL ROUND.

FIRST pledge our Queen this solemn  
night,  
Then drink to England, every guest;  
That man's the best Cosmopolite  
Who loves his native country best.  
May freedom's oak for ever live  
With stronger life from day to day;  
That man's the true Conservative  
Who lops the moulder'd branch  
-away.  
Hands all round!  
God the traitor's hope confound!  
To this great cause of Freedom drink,  
my friends,  
And the great name of England,  
round and round.

To all the loyal hearts who long  
To keep our English Empire whole!  
To all our noble sons, the strong  
New England of the Southern Pole!  
To England under Indian skies,  
To those dark millions of her realm!  
To Canada whom we love and prize,  
Whatever statesman hold the helm.  
Hands all round!  
God the traitor's hope confound!  
To this great name of England drink,  
my friends,  
And all her glorious empire, round  
and round.

To all our statesmen so they be  
True leaders of the land's desire!  
To both our Houses, may they see  
Beyond the borough and the shire!  
We sail'd wherever ship could sail,  
We founded many a mighty state;  
Pray God our greatness may not fail  
Thro' craven fears of being great.  
Hands all round!

God the traitor's hope confound !  
To this great cause of Freedom drink,  
my friends,  
And the great name of England,  
round and round.

### FREEDOM.

#### I.

O THOU so fair in summers gone,  
While yet thy fresh and virgin soul  
Inform'd the pillar'd Parthenon,  
The glittering Capitol ;

#### II.

So fair in southern sunshine bathed,  
But scarce of such majestic mien  
As here with forehead vapor-swathed  
In meadows ever green ;

#### III.

For thou—when Athens reign'd and  
Rome,  
Thy glorious eyes were dimm'd with  
pain  
To mark in many a freeman's home  
The slave, the scourge, the chain ;

#### IV.

O follower of the Vision, still  
In motion to the distant gleam,  
Howe'er blind force and brainless will  
May jar thy golden dream

#### V.

Of Knowledge fusing class with class,  
Of civic Hate no more to be,  
Of Love to leaven all the mass,  
Till every Soul be free ;

#### VI.

Who yet, like Nature, wouldst not mar  
By changes all too fierce and fast  
This order of Her Human Star,  
This heritage of the past ;

#### VII.

O scorner of the party cry  
That wanders from the public good,  
Thou—when the nations rear on high  
Their idol smear'd with blood,

#### VIII.

And when they roll their idol down—  
Of saner worship sanely proud ;  
Thou loather of the lawless crown  
As of the lawless crowd ;

#### IX.

How long thine ever-growing mind  
Hath still'd the blast and strown  
the wave,  
Tho' some of late would raise a wind  
To sing thee to thy grave,

#### X.

Men loud against all forms of power—  
Unfurnish'd brows, tempestuous  
tongues—  
Expecting all things in an hour—  
Brass mouths and iron lungs !

### TO H. R. H. PRINCESS BEATRICE.

Two Suns of Love make day of human  
life,  
Which else with all its pains, and  
griefs, and deaths,  
Were utter darkness—one, the Sun of  
dawn  
That brightens thro' the Mother's ten-  
der eyes,  
And warms the child's awakening  
world—and one  
The later-rising Sun of spousal Love,  
Which from her household orbit draws  
the child  
To move in other spheres. The  
Mother weeps  
At that white funeral of the single life,  
Her maiden daughter's marriage ; and  
her tears  
Are half of pleasure, half of pain—the  
child

Is happy—ev'n in leaving *her!* but  
 Thou,  
 True daughter, whose all-faithful, filial  
 eyes  
 Have seen the loneliness of earthly  
 thrones,  
 Wilt neither quit the widow'd Crown,  
 nor let  
 This later light of Love have risen in  
 vain,  
 But moving thro' the Mother's home,  
 between  
 The two that love thee, lead a sum-  
 mer life,  
 Sway'd by each Love, and swaying to  
 each Love,  
 Like some conjectured planet in mid  
 heaven  
 Between two Suns, and drawing down  
 from both  
 The light and genial warmth of double  
 day.

THE FLEET.<sup>1</sup>

## I.

You, you, *if* you shall fail to under-  
 stand  
 What England is, and what her all-  
 in-all,  
 On you will come the curse of all the  
 land,  
 Should this old England fall  
 Which Nelson left so great.

<sup>1</sup> The speaker said that 'he should like to be assured that other outlying portions of the Empire, the Crown colonies, and important coaling stations were being as promptly and as thoroughly fortified as the various capitals of the self-governing colonies. He was credibly informed this was not so. It was impossible, also, not to feel some degree of anxiety about the efficacy of present provision to defend and protect, by means of swift well-armed cruisers, the immense mercantile fleet of the Empire. A third source of anxiety, so far as the colonies were concerned, was the apparently insufficient provision for the rapid manufacture of armaments and their prompt

## II.

His isle, the mightiest Ocean-power  
 on earth,  
 Our own fair isle, the lord of every  
 sea—  
 Her fuller franchise—what would that  
 be worth—  
 Her ancient fame of Free—  
 Were she . . . a fallen state?

## III.

Her dauntless army scatter'd, and so  
 small,  
 Her island-myriads fed from alien  
 lands—  
 The fleet of England is her all-in-all;  
 Her fleet is in your hands,  
 And in her fleet her Fate.

despatch when ordered to their colonial destination. Hence the necessity for manufacturing appliances equal to the requirements, not of Great Britain alone, but of the whole Empire. But the keystone of the whole was the necessity for an overwhelmingly powerful fleet and efficient defence for all necessary coaling stations. This was as essential for the colonies as for Great Britain. It was the one condition for the continuance of the Empire. All that Continental Powers did with respect to armies England should effect with her navy. It was essentially a defensive force, and could be moved rapidly from point to point, but it should be equal to all that was expected from it. It was to strengthen the fleet that colonists would first readily tax themselves, because they realized how essential a powerful fleet was to the safety, not only of that extensive commerce sailing in every sea, but ultimately to the security of the distant portions of the Empire. Who could estimate the loss involved in even a brief period of disaster to the Imperial Navy? Any amount of money timely expended in preparation would be quite insignificant when compared with the possible calamity he had referred to.'—*Extract from Sir Graham Berry's Speech at the Colonial Institute, 9th November, 1886*

## IV.

You, you, that have the ordering of  
her fleet,  
If you should only compass her dis-  
grace,  
When all men starve, the wild mob's  
million feet  
Will kick you from your place,  
But then too late, too late.

OPENING OF THE INDIAN  
AND COLONIAL EXHIBI-  
TION BY THE QUEEN.

*Written at the Request of the Prince  
of Wales.*

## I.

WELCOME, welcome with one voice!  
In your welfare we rejoice,  
Sons and brothers that have sent,  
From isle and cape and continent,  
Produce of your field and flood,  
Mount and mine, and primal wood;  
Works of subtle brain and hand,  
And splendors of the morning land,  
Gifts from every British zone;  
Britons, hold your own!

## II.

May we find, as ages run,  
The mother featured in the son;  
And may yours for ever be  
That old strength and constancy  
Which has made your fathers great  
In our ancient island State,  
And wherever her flag fly,  
Glorying between sea and sky,  
Makes the might of Britain known;  
Britons, hold your own!

## III.

Britain fought her sons of yore—  
Britain fail'd; and never more,  
Careless of our growing kin,  
Shall we sin our fathers' sin,  
Men that in a narrower day—  
Unprophetic rulers they—

Drove from out the mother's nest  
That young eagle of the West  
To forage for herself alone;  
Britons, hold your own!

## IV.

Sharers of our glorious past,  
Brothers, must we part at last?  
Shall we not thro' good and ill  
Cleave to one another still?  
Britain's myriad voices call,  
' Sons, be welded each and all,  
Into one imperial whole,  
One with Britain, heart and soul  
One life, one flag, one fleet, one  
Throne!'  
Britons, hold your own!

POETS AND THEIR BIBLIO-  
GRAPHIES.

OLD poets foster'd under friendlier  
skies,  
Old Virgil who would write ten  
lines, they say,  
At dawn, and lavish all the golden  
day  
To make them wealthier in his reader's  
eyes;  
And you, old popular Horace, you the  
wise  
Adviser of the nine-years-ponder'd  
lay,  
And you, that wear a wreath of  
sweeter bay,  
Catullus, whose dead songster never  
dies;  
If, glancing downward on the kindly  
sphere  
That once had roll'd you round and  
round the Sun,  
You see your Art still shrined in  
human shelves,  
You should be jubilant that you flour-  
ished here  
Before the Love of Letters, over-  
done,  
Had swampt the sacred poets with  
themselves.



# DEMETER

## AND OTHER POEMS.

### TO THE MARQUIS OF DUFFERIN AND AVA.

I.

At times our Britain cannot rest,  
At times her steps are swift and rash;  
She moving, at her girdle clash  
The golden keys of East and West.

II.

Not swift or rash, when late she lent  
The sceptres of her West, her East,  
To one, that ruling has increased  
Her greatness and her self-content.

III.

Your rule has made the people love  
Their ruler. Your viceregal days  
Have added fulness to the phrase  
Of 'Gauntlet in the velvet glove.'

IV.

But since your name will grow with  
Time,  
Not all, as honoring your fair fame  
Of Statesman, have I made the name  
A golden portal to my rhyme:

V.

But more, that you and yours may  
know  
From me and mine, how dear a debt  
We owed you, and are owing yet  
To you and yours, and still would owe.

VI.

For he—your India was his Fate,  
And drew him over sea to you—  
He fain had ranged her thro' and  
thro',  
To serve her myriads and the State,—

VII.

A soul that, watch'd from earliest  
youth,

And on thro' many a brightening  
year,  
Had never swerved for craft or fear,  
By one side-path, from simple truth;

VIII.

Who might have chased and claspt  
Renown  
And caught her chaplet here—and  
there  
In haunts of jungle-poison'd air  
The flame of life went wavering down;

IX.

But ere he left your fatal shore,  
And lay on that funereal boat,  
Dying, 'Unspeakable' he wrote  
'Their kindness,' and he wrote no  
more;

X.

And sacred is the latest word;  
And now the Was, the Might-have-  
been,  
And those lone rites I have not seen,  
And one drear sound I have not  
heard,

XI.

Are dreams that scarce will let me be,  
Not there to bid my boy farewell,  
When That within the coffin fell,  
Fell—and flash'd into the Red Sea,

XII.

Beneath a hard Arabian moon,  
And alien stars. To question, why  
The sons before the fathers die,  
Not mine! and I may meet him soon;

XIII.

But while my life's late eve endures,  
Nor settles into hueless gray,  
My memories of his briefer day  
Will mix with love for you and yours.

ON THE JUBILEE OF QUEEN  
VICTORIA.

## I.

FIFTY times the rose has flower'd  
and faded,  
Fifty times the golden harvest fallen,  
Since our Queen assumed the globe,  
the sceptre.

## II.

She beloved for a kindliness  
Rare in Fable or History,  
Queen, and Empress of India,  
Crown'd so long with a diadem  
Never worn by a worthier,  
Now with prosperous auguries  
Comes at last to the bounteous  
Crowning year of her Jubilee.

## III.

Nothing of the lawless, of the Despot,  
Nothing of the vulgar, or vainglori-  
ous,  
All is gracious, gentle, great and  
Queenly.

## IV.

You then joyfully, all of you,  
Set the mountain aflame to-night,  
Shoot your stars to the firma-  
ment,  
Deck your houses, illuminate  
All your towns for a festival,  
And in each let a multitude  
Loyal, each, to the heart of it,  
One full voice of allegiance,  
Hail the fair Ceremonial  
Of this year of her Jubilee.

## V.

Queen, as true to womanhood as  
Queenhood,  
Glorying in the glories of her people,  
Sorrowing with the sorrows of the  
lowest!

## VI.

You, that wanton in affluence,  
Spare not now to be bountiful,  
Call your poor to regale with  
you,  
All the lowly, the destitute,  
Make their neighborhood health-  
fuller,  
Give your gold to the Hospital,  
Let the weary be comforted,  
Let the needy be banqueted,  
Let the main'd in his heart  
rejoice  
At this glad Ceremonial,  
And this year of her Jubilee.

## VII.

Henry's fifty years are all in shadow,  
Gray with distance Edward's fifty  
summers,  
Ev'n her Grandsire's fifty half forgot-  
ten.

## VIII.

You, the Patriot Architect,  
You that shape for Eternity,  
Raise a stately memorial,  
Make it regally gorgeous,  
Some Imperial Institute,  
Rich in symbol, in ornament,  
Which may speak to the centu-  
ries,  
All the centuries after us,  
Of this great Ceremonial,  
And this year of her Jubilee.

## IX.

Fifty years of ever-broadening Com-  
merce!  
Fifty years of ever-brightening  
Science!  
Fifty years of ever-widening Empire!

## X.

You, the Mighty, the Fortunate,  
You, the Lord-territorial,  
You, the Lord-manufacturer,  
You, the hardy, laborious,  
Patient children of Albion,  
You, Canadian, Indian,

Australasian, African,  
All your hearts be in harmony,  
All your voices in unison,  
Singing 'Hail to the glorious  
Golden year of her Jubilee!'

XI.

Are there thunders moaning in the distance?  
Are there spectres moving in the darkness?  
Trust the Hand of Light will lead her people,  
Till the thunders pass, the spectres vanish,  
And the Light is Victor, and the darkness  
Dawns into the Jubilee of the Ages.

TO PROFESSOR JEBB,

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

FAIR things are slow to fade away,  
Bear witness you, that yesterday<sup>1</sup>  
From out the Ghost of Pindar in  
you  
Roll'd an Olympian; and they say<sup>2</sup>  
That here the torpid mummy wheat  
Of Egypt bore a grain as sweet  
As that which gilds the glebe of  
England,  
Sunn'd with a summer of milder heat.

So may this legend for awhile,  
If greeted by your classic smile,  
Tho' dead in its Trinacrian Enna,  
Blossom again on a colder isle.

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE.

(IN ENNA.)

FAINT as a climate-changing bird that  
flies  
All night across the darkness, and at  
dawn

<sup>1</sup> In Bologna.

<sup>2</sup> They say, for the fact is doubtful.

Falls on the threshold of her native  
land,  
And can no more, thou camest, O my  
child,  
Led upward by the God of ghosts and  
dreams,  
Who laid thee at Eleusis, dazed and  
dumb  
With passing thro' at once from state  
to state,  
Until I brought thee hither, that the  
day,  
When here thy hands let fall the  
gather'd flower,  
Might break thro' clouded memories  
once again  
On thy lost self. A sudden nightingale  
Saw thee, and flash'd into a frolic of  
song  
And welcome; and a gleam as of the  
moon,  
When first she peers along the trem-  
ulous deep,  
Fled wavering o'er thy face, and  
chased away  
That shadow of a likeness to the  
king  
Of shadows, thy dark mate. Perse-  
phone!  
Queen of the dead no more—my  
child! Thine eyes  
Again were human-godlike, and the  
Sun  
Burst from a swimming fleece of win-  
ter gray,  
And robed thee in his day from head  
to feet—  
'Mother!' and I was folded in thine  
arms.

Child, those imperial, disimpas-  
sion'd eyes  
Awed even me at first, thy mother—  
eyes  
That oft had seen the serpent-wanded  
power  
Draw downward into Hades with  
his drift  
Of flickering spectres, lighted from  
below  
By the red race of fiery Phlegethon;  
But when before have Gods or men  
beheld

The Life that had descended re-arise,  
 And lighted from above him by the  
 Sun?  
 So mighty was the mother's childless  
 cry,  
 A cry that rang thro' Hades, Earth,  
 and Heaven!

So in this pleasant vale we stand  
 again,  
 The field of Enna, now once more  
 ablaze  
 With flowers that brighten as thy  
 footstep falls,  
 All flowers—but for one black blur of  
 earth  
 Left by that closing chasm, thro' which  
 the car  
 Of dark Aidoneus rising rapt thee  
 hence.  
 And here, my child, tho' folded in  
 thine arms,  
 I feel the deathless heart of mother-  
 hood  
 Within me shudder, lest the naked  
 glebe  
 Should yawn once more into the gulf,  
 and thence  
 The shrilly whinnings of the team of  
 Hell,  
 Ascending, pierce the glad and song-  
 ful air,  
 And all at once their arch'd necks, mid-  
 night-maned,  
 Jet upward thro' the mid-day blossom.  
 No!  
 For, see, thy foot has touch'd it; all  
 the space  
 Of blank earth-baldness clothes itself  
 afresh,  
 And breaks into the crocus-purple  
 hour  
 That saw thee vanish.

Child, when thou wert gone,  
 I envied human wives, and nested  
 birds,  
 Yea, the cubb'd lioness; went in  
 search of thee  
 Thro' many a palace, many a cot, and  
 gave  
 Thy breast to ailing infants in the  
 night,

And set the mother waking in amaze  
 To find her sick one whole; and forth  
 again

Among the wail of midnight winds,  
 and cried,

'Where is my loved one? Wherefore  
 do ye wail?'

And out from all the night an answer  
 shrill'd,

'We know not, and we know not why  
 we wail.'

I climb'd on all the cliffs of all the seas,  
 And ask'd the waves that moan about  
 the world

'Where? do ye make your moaning  
 for my child?'

And round from all the world the  
 voices came

'We know not, and we know not why  
 we moan.'

'Where?' and I stared from every  
 eagle-peak,

I thridded the black heart of all the  
 woods,

I peer'd thro' tomb and cave, and in  
 the storms

Of Autumn swept across the city, and  
 heard

The murmur of their temples chanting  
 me,

Me, me, the desolate Mother!  
 'Where?'—and turn'd,

And fled by many a waste, forlorn of  
 man,

And grieved for man thro' all my grief  
 for thee,—

The jungle rooted in his shatter'd  
 hearth,

The serpent coil'd about his broken  
 shaft,

The scorpion crawling over naked  
 skulls;—

I saw the tiger in the ruin'd fane  
 Spring from his fallen God, but trace  
 of thee

I saw not; and far on, and, following  
 out

A league of labyrinthine darkness,  
 came

On three gray heads beneath a gleam-  
 ing rift.

'Where?' and I heard one voice from  
 all the three

' We know not, for we spin the lives of men,  
And not of Gods, and know not why we spin!  
There is a Fate beyond us.' Nothing knew.

Last as the likeness of a dying man,  
Without his knowledge, from him flits to warn  
A far-off friendship that he comes no more,  
So he, the God of dreams, who heard my cry,  
Drew from thyself the likeness of thyself  
Without thy knowledge, and thy shadow past  
Before me, crying ' The Bright one in the highest  
Is brother of the Dark one in the lowest,  
And Bright and Dark have sworn that I, the child  
Of thee, the great Earth-Mother, thee, the Power  
That lifts her buried life from gloom to bloom,  
Should be for ever and for evermore  
The Bride of Darkness.'

So the Shadow wail'd.  
Then I, Earth-Goddess, cursed the Gods of Heaven.  
I would not mingle with their feasts;  
to me  
Their nectar smack'd of hemlock on the lips,  
Their rich ambrosia tasted aconite.  
The man, that only lives and loves an hour,  
Seem'd nobler than their hard Eternities.  
My quick tears kill'd the flower, my ravings hush'd  
The bird, and lost in utter grief I fail'd  
To send my life thro' olive-yard and vine  
And golden grain, my gift to helpless man.  
Rain-rotten died the wheat, the barley-spears  
Were hollow-husk'd, the leaf fell, and the sun,

Pale at my grief, drew down before his time  
Sickening, and Ætna kept her winter snow.

Then He, the brother of this Darkness, He  
Who still is highest, glancing from his height  
On earth a fruitless fallow, when he miss'd  
The wonted steam of sacrifice, the praise  
And prayer of men, decreed that thou should'st dwell  
For nine white moons of each whole year with me,  
Three dark ones in the shadow with thy King.

Once more the reaper in the gleam of dawn  
Will see me by the landmark far away,  
Blessing his field, or seated in the dusk  
Of even, by the lonely threshing-floor,  
Rejoicing in the harvest and the grange.

Yet I, Earth-Goddess, am but ill-content  
With them, who still are highest.  
Those gray heads,  
What meant they by their ' Fate beyond the Fates '  
But younger kindlier Gods to bear us down,  
As we bore down the Gods before us?  
To quench, not hurl the thunderbolt, to stay,  
Not spread the plague, the famine; Gods indeed,  
To send the moon into the night and break  
The sunless halls of Hades into Heaven?  
Till thy dark lord accept and love the Sun,  
And all the Shadow die into the Light,  
When thou shalt dwell the whole bright year with me,  
And souls of men, who grew beyond their race,

And made themselves as Gods against  
the fear  
Of Death and Hell; and thou that  
hast from men,  
As Queen of Death, that worship  
which is Fear,  
Henceforth, as having risen from out  
the dead,  
Shalt ever send thy life along with  
mine  
From buried grain thro' springing  
blade, and bless  
Their garner'd Autumn also, reap  
with me,  
Earth-mother, in the harvest hymns of  
Earth  
The worship which is Love, and see  
no more  
The Stone, the Wheel, the dimly-  
glimmering lawns  
Of that Elysium, all the hateful  
fires  
Of torment, and the shadowy warrior  
glide  
Along the silent field of Asphodel.

OWD ROÄ.<sup>1</sup>

NAÄY, noä mander<sup>2</sup> o' use to be callin'  
'im Roä, Roä, Roä,  
Fur the dog's stoän-deäf, an' e's blind,  
'e can naither stan' nor goä.

But I meäns fur to maäke 'is owd aäge  
as 'appy as iver I can,  
Fur I oäws oäd Roäver moor nor I  
iver oäwd mottal man.

Thou's rode of 'is back when a babby,  
afoor thou was gotten too owd,  
Fur 'e'd fetch an' carry like owt, 'e  
was allus as good as gowd.

Eh, but 'e'd fight wi' a will *when* 'e  
fowt; 'e could howd<sup>3</sup> is oan,  
An' Roä was the dog as knaw'd when  
an' where to bury his boane.

<sup>1</sup> Old Rover.    <sup>2</sup> Manner.    <sup>3</sup> Hold.

An' 'e kep his heäd hoop like a king,  
an' 'e'd niver not down wi' 'is  
taäil,  
Fur 'e'd niver done nowt to be  
ashaämed oan, when we was i'  
Howlaby Daäle.

An' 'e sarved me sa well when 'e  
lived, that, Dick, when 'e cooms  
to be deäd,  
I thinks as I'd like fur to hev soom  
soort of a sarvice rääd.

Fur 'e's moor good sense na the Parli-  
ament man 'at stans fur us 'ere,  
An' I'd voät fur 'im, my oän sen, if 'e  
could but stan fur the Shere.

' Faäithful an' True—them words be  
i' Scriptur—an' Faäithful an'  
True  
Ull be fun<sup>4</sup> upo' four short legs ten  
times fur one upo' two.

An' maäybe they'll walk upo' two but  
I knaws they runs upo' four<sup>2</sup>—  
Bedtime, Dicky! but waäit till tha 'eärs  
it be strikin' the hour.

Fur I wants to tell tha o' Roä when  
we lived i' Howlaby Daäle,  
Ten year sin—Naäy—naäy! tha mun  
nobbut hev' one glass of aäle.

Straänge an' owd-farran'd<sup>5</sup> the 'ouse,  
an' belt<sup>4</sup> long afoor my daäy  
Wi' haäfe o' the chimleys a-twizzen'd<sup>6</sup>  
an' twined like a band o' haäy.

The fellers as maäkes them pictur<sup>8</sup>  
'ud coom at the fall o' the year,  
An' saddle their ends upo stools to  
pictur the door-porch there,

An' the Heagle 'as hed two heäds  
stannin' there o' the brokken  
stick;<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Found.    <sup>2</sup> 'Ou' as in 'house.'

<sup>3</sup> 'Owd-farran'd,' old-fashioned.

<sup>4</sup> Built.

<sup>5</sup> 'Twizzen'd,' twisted.

<sup>6</sup> On a staff *ragull*.

An' they niver 'ed seed sich ivin'<sup>1</sup> as  
graw'd hall ower the brick;

An' there i' the 'ouse one night—  
but it's down, an' all on it now  
Goan into mangles an' tonups,<sup>2</sup> an'  
raäved slick thruf by the plow—

Theere, when the 'ouse wur a house,  
one night I wur sittin' aloän,  
Wi Koäver athurt my fecät, an'  
siecäpin still as a stoän,

Of a Christmas Eäve, an' as cowl'd as  
this, an' the midders<sup>3</sup> as white,  
An' the fences all on 'em bolster'd oop  
wi' the windle<sup>4</sup> that night;

An' the cat wur a-sleeäpin alongside  
Roäver, but I wur awaäke,  
An' smoäkin' an' thinkin' o' things—  
Doänt maäke thysen sick wi' the caäke.

Fur the men ater supper 'ed sung their  
songs an' 'ed 'ed their beer,  
An' 'ed goän their waäys; ther was  
nobbut three, an' noän on 'em  
theere.

They was all on 'em fear'd o' the  
Ghoäst an' dussn't not sleeäp i'  
the 'ouse,  
But Dicky, the Ghoäst moästlins<sup>5</sup> was  
nobbut a rat or a mouse.

An' I loökt out wonst<sup>6</sup> at the night,  
an' the daäle was all of a thaw,  
Fur I seed the beck coomin' down like  
a long black snaäke i' the snaw,

An' I heärd greät heäps o' the snaw  
slushin' down fro' the bank to  
the beck,

An' then as I stood i' the doorwaäy, I  
fecäld it drip o' my neck.

Saw I turn'd in ageän, an' I thowt o'  
the good owd times 'at was  
goan,  
An' the munney they maäde by the  
war, an' the times 'at was  
coomin' on;

Fur I thowt if the Staäte was a gawin'  
to let in furriners' wheät,  
Howiver was British farmers to stan'  
ageän o' their fecät.

Howiver was I fur to find my rent an'  
to paäy my men?  
An' all along o' the feller<sup>1</sup> as turn'd  
'is back of hissen.

Thou slep i' the chamber above us,  
we couldn't ha' 'eärd tha call,  
Moother 'ed tell'd ma to bring tha  
down, an' thy craädle an' all;

Fur the gell o' the farm 'at slep wi'  
tha then 'ed gotten wer leäve,  
Fur to goä that night to 'er foälk by  
cause o' the Christmas Eäve;

But I cleän forgot tha, my lad, when  
Moother 'ed gotten to bed.  
An' I slep i' my chair hup-on-end, an'  
the Freeä Traäde runn'd 'i my  
'ead,

Till I dreäm'd 'at Squire walkt in, an'  
I says to him 'Squire, ya're  
lääte,  
Then I seed at 'is faäce wur as red as  
the Yule-block theer i' the  
graäte.

An' 'e says 'can ya paäy me the rent  
to-night?' an' I says to 'im  
'Noä,  
An' 'e cotch'd howd hard o' my hairm<sup>2</sup>  
'Then hout to-night tha shall  
goä.'

'Tha'll niver,' says I, 'be a-turmin ma  
hout upo' Christmas Eäve?'  
Then I waäked an' I fun it was  
Roäver a-tuggin' an' teärin' my  
slicäve.

<sup>1</sup> Ivy.      <sup>2</sup> Mangolds and turnips.  
<sup>3</sup> Meadows.      <sup>4</sup> Drifted snow.  
<sup>5</sup> Moästlins, for the most part, generally.  
<sup>6</sup> Once.

<sup>1</sup> Peel.

<sup>2</sup> Arm.

An' I thowt as 'e'd goän cleän-wud<sup>1</sup>,  
fur I noäwaäys knaw'd 'is  
intent;

An' I says 'Git awaäy, ya beäst,' an' I  
fetcht 'im a kick an' 'e went.

Then 'e tumbled up stairs, fur I 'eärd  
'im, as if 'e'd 'a brokken 'is  
neck,

An' I'd cleär forgot, little Dicky, thy  
chamber door wouldn't sneck;<sup>2</sup>

An' I slep' i' my chair ageän wi' my  
hairm hingin' down to the floor,  
An' I thowt it was Roäver a-tuggin' an'  
teärin' me wuss nor afoor,

An' I thowt 'at I kick'd 'im ageän,  
but I kick'd thy Moother  
istead.

'What arta snorin' theree fur? the  
house is afire,' she said.

Thy Moother 'ed beän a-naggin about  
the gell o' the farm,  
She offens 'ud spy summut wrong  
when there warn't not a mossel  
o' harm;

An' she didn't not solidly meän I wur  
gawin' that waäy to the bad,  
Fur the gell<sup>3</sup> was as howry a trollope  
as iver traäpes'd i' the squad.

But Moother was free of 'er tongne, as  
I offens 'ev tell'd 'er mysen,  
Sa I kep i' my chair, fur I thowt she  
was nobbut a-rilin' ma then.

An' I says 'I'd be good to tha, Bess, if  
tha'd onywaäys let ma be good,'  
But she skelpt ma haäfe ower i'  
the chair, an' screeäd like a Howl  
gone wud<sup>4</sup>—

<sup>1</sup> Mad.

<sup>2</sup> Latch.

<sup>3</sup> The girl was as dirty a slut as ever  
trudged in the mud, but there is a sense of  
slatternliness in 'traäpes'd' which is not  
expressed in 'trudged.'

<sup>4</sup> She half overturned me and shrieked  
like an owl gone mad.

'Ya mum run fur the leather.' Git  
oop, if ya're onywaäys good for  
owt.'

And I says ' If I beänt noäwaäys—not  
nowadaäys—good fur nowt—

Yit I beänt sich a Nowt<sup>2</sup> of all Nowts  
as 'ull hallus do as 'e's bid.'

'But the stairs is afire,' she said; then  
I seed 'er a-cryin', I did.

An' she beäld 'Ya mun saäve little  
Dick, an' be sharp about it an'  
all,'

Sa I runs to the yard fur a lether, an'  
sets 'im ageän the wall,

An' I claums an' I mashes the winder  
hin, when I gits to the top,  
But the heat druv hout i' my heyes till  
I feäld mysen ready to drop.

Thy Moother was howdin' the lether,  
an' tellin' me not to be skeärd,  
An' I wasn't afeärd, or I thinks leäst-  
waäys as I wasn't afeärd;

But I couldn't see fur the smoäke  
wheree thou was a-liggin, my  
lad,

An' Roäver was theree i' the chaum-  
ber a-yowlin' an' yaupin' like  
mad;

An' thon was a-beälan' likewise, an' a-  
squeälin', as if tha was bit,  
An' it wasn't a bite but a burn, fur the  
merk's<sup>3</sup> o' thy shon'der yit;

Then I call'd out Roä, Roä, Roä, thaw  
I didn't haäfe think as 'e'd 'ear,  
*But 'e coom'd thruf the fire wi' my  
bairn i' 'is mouth to the winder  
theree!*

He coom'd like a Hangel o' marcy as  
soon as 'e 'eärd 'is naäme,  
Or like tuther Hangel i' Scriptor 'at  
summun seed i' the flaäme,

<sup>1</sup> Ladder. <sup>2</sup> A thoroughly insignifi-  
cant or worthless person. <sup>3</sup> Mark.



When summun 'ed hax'd fur a son, an  
'e promised a son to she,  
An' Roä was as good as the Hangel i'  
saävin' a son fur me.

Sa I browt tha down, an' I says' 'I  
mun gaw up ageän fur Roä.'  
'Gaw up ageän fur the varmint?' I  
tell'd 'er 'Yes I mun goä.'

An' I claumb'd up ageän to the winder,  
än' clemm'd<sup>1</sup> owd Roä by the  
'eäd,  
An' 'is 'air coom'd off i' my 'ands an'  
I taäked 'im at fust fur deäd;

Fur 'e smell'd like a herse a-singein',  
an' seem'd as blind as a poop,  
An' haäfe on 'im bare as a bublin'.<sup>2</sup>  
I couldn't wakken 'im oop,

But I browt 'im down, an' we got to  
the barn, fur the barn wouldn't  
burn  
Wif the wind blawin' hard tother waäy,  
an' the wind wasn't like to turn.

An' I kep a-callin' o' Roä till 'e wag-  
gled 'is taäil fur a bit,  
But the cocks kep a-crawin' an'  
crawin' all night, an' I 'ears 'em  
yit;

An' the dogs was a-yowlin' all round,  
and thou was a-squeälin' thysen,  
An' Moother was naggin' an' groänin'  
an' moänin' an' naggin' ageän;

An' I 'eärd the bricks an' the baulks<sup>3</sup>  
runmle down when the roof  
gev waäy,  
Fur the fire was a-raägin' an' raävin'  
an' roarin' like judgment daäy.

Warm enew there sewer-ly, but the  
barn was as cowl as owt,  
An' we cuddled and huddled together,  
an' happt<sup>4</sup> wersens oop as we  
mowt.

<sup>1</sup> Clutched.

<sup>2</sup> ' Bubbling,' a young unfledged bird.

<sup>3</sup> Beams.    <sup>4</sup> Wrapt ourselves.

An' I browt Roä round, but Moother  
'ed bean sa soäk'd wi' the thaw  
'At she cotch'd 'er death o' cowl that  
night, poor soul, i' the straw.

Haäfe o' the parish runn'd oop when  
the rigtree<sup>1</sup> was tummlin' in—  
Too laäte—but it's all ower now—hall  
hower—an' ten year sin;

Too laäte, tha mun git tha to bed, but  
I'll coom an' I'll squench the  
light,  
Fur we moät 'ev naw moor fires—and  
soa little Dick, good-night.

## VASTNESS.

## I.

MANY a hearth upon our dark globe  
sighs after many a vanish'd  
face,  
Many a planet by many a sun may roll  
with the dust of a vanish'd race.

## II.

Raving politics, never at rest—as this  
poor earth's pale history runs,—  
What is it all but a trouble of ants in  
the gleam of a million million  
of suns?

## III.

Lies upon this side, lies upon that side,  
truthless violence mourn'd by  
the Wise,  
Thousands of voices drowning his own  
in a popular torrent of lies upon  
lies;

## IV.

Stately purposes, valor in battle, glori-  
ous annals of army and fleet,  
Death for the right cause, death for the  
wrong cause, trumpets of victory,  
groans of defeat;

<sup>1</sup> The beam that runs along the roof of  
the house just beneath the ridge.

## V.

Innocence seethed in her mother's  
milk, and Charity setting the  
martyr aflame ;  
Thralldom who walks with the banner  
of Freedom, and recks not  
to ruin a realm in her name.

## VI.

Faith at her zenith, or all but lost in  
the gloom of doubts that darken  
the schools ;  
Craft with a bunch of all-heal in her  
hand, follow'd up by her vassal  
legion of fools ;

## VII.

Trade flying over a thousand seas with  
her spice and her vintage, her  
silk and her corn ;  
Desolate offing, sailorless harbors,  
famishing populace, wharves  
forlorn ;

## VIII.

Star of the morning, Hope in the sun-  
rise ; gloom of the evening, Life  
at a close ;  
Pleasure who flaunts on her wide  
downway with her flying robe  
and her poison'd rose ;

## IX.

Pain, that has crawl'd from the corpse  
of Pleasure, a worm which  
writhes all day, and at night  
Stirs up again in the heart of the  
sleeper, and stings him back to  
the curse of the light ;

## X.

Wealth with his wines and his wedded  
harlots ; honest Poverty, bare  
to the bone ;  
Opulent Avarice, lean as Poverty ;  
Flattery gilding the rift in a  
throne ;

## XI.

Fame blowing out from her golden  
trumpet a jubilant challenge to  
Time and to Fate ;  
Slander, her shadow, sowing the nettle  
on all the laurel'd graves of  
the Great ;

## XII.

Love for the maiden, crown'd with  
marriage, no regrets for aught  
that has been,  
Household happiness, gracious chil-  
dren, debtless competence,  
golden mean ;

## XIII.

National hatreds of whole genera-  
tions, and pigmy spites of the  
village spire ;  
Vows that will last to the last death-  
ruckle, and vows that are snapt  
in a moment of fire ;

## XIV.

He that has lived for the lust of the  
minute, and died in the doing  
it, flesh without mind ;  
He that has nail'd all flesh to the  
Cross, till Self died out in the  
love of his kind ;

## XV.

Spring and Summer and Autumn and  
Winter, and all these old  
revolutions of earth ;  
All new-old revolutions of Empire—  
change of the tide—what is all  
of it worth ?

## XVI.

What the philosophies, all the sci-  
ences, poesy, varying voices of  
prayer ?  
All that is noblest, all that is basest,  
all that is filthy with all that is  
fair ?

XVII.

What is it all, if we all of us end but  
in being our own corpse-coffins  
at last,  
Swallow'd in Vastness, lost in Silence,  
drown'd in the deeps of a  
meaningless Past?

XVIII.

What but a murmur of gnats in the  
gloom, or a moment's anger of  
bees in their hive?—

\* \* \* \*

Peace, let it be! for I loved him, and  
love him for ever: the dead are  
not dead but alive.

Dedicated to the  
Hon. J. Russell Lowell.

THE RING.

MIRIAM AND HER FATHER.

*Miriam (singing).*

MELLOW moon of heaven,  
Bright in blue,  
Moon of married hearts,  
Hear me, you!

Twelve times in the year  
Bring me bliss,  
Globing Honey Moons  
Bright as this.

Moon, you fade at times  
From the night.  
Young again you grow  
Out of sight.

Silver crescent-curve,  
Coming soon,  
Globe again, and make  
Honey Moon.

Shall not *my* love last,  
Moon, with you,  
For ten thousand years  
Old and new?

*Father.* And who was he with  
such love-drunken eyes  
They made a thousand honey moons  
of one?

*Miriam.* The prophet of his own,  
my Hubert—his  
The words, and mine the setting.  
'Air and Words,'  
Said Hubert, when I sang the song,  
'are bride  
And bridegroom.' Does it please  
you?

*Father.* Mainly, child,  
Because I hear your Mother's voice  
in yours.  
She—, why, you shiver tho' the  
wind is west  
With all the warmth of summer.

*Miriam.* Well, I felt  
On a sudden I know not what, a  
breath that past  
With all the cold of winter.

*Father (muttering to himself).*  
Even so.

The Ghost in Man, the Ghost that  
once was Man,  
But cannot wholly free itself from  
Man,  
Are calling to each other thro' a  
dawn  
Stranger than earth has ever seen;  
the veil

Is rending, and the Voices of the day  
Are heard across the Voices of the  
dark.

No sudden heaven, nor sudden hell,  
for man,  
But thro' the Will of One who knows  
and rules—  
And utter knowledge is but utter  
love—

Æonian Evolution, swift or slow,  
Thro' all the Spheres—an ever open-  
ing height,

An ever lessening earth—and she  
perhaps,  
My *Miriam*, breaks her latest earthly  
link

With me to-day.

*Miriam.* You speak so low, what  
is it?  
Your '*Miriam* breaks'—is making a  
new link

Breaking an old one ?

*Father.* No, for we, my child,  
Have been till now each other's all-in-  
all.

*Miriam.* And you the lifelong  
guardian of the child.

*Father.* I, and one other whom  
you have not known.

*Miriam.* And who? what other?  
*Father.* Whither are you bound?

For Naples which we only left in May?

*Miriam.* No! father, Spain, but  
Hubert brings me home  
With April and the swallow. Wish  
me joy!

*Father.* What need to wish when  
Hubert weds in you  
The heart of Love, and you the soul  
of Truth

In Hubert?

*Miriam.* Tho' you used to call me  
once

The lonely maiden-Princess of the  
wood,

Who meant to sleep her hundred  
summers out

Before a kiss should wake her.

*Father.* Ay, but now  
Your fairy Prince has found you, take  
this ring.

*Miriam.* 'Io t'amo'—and these  
diamonds—beautiful!

'From Walter,' and for me from you  
then?

*Father.* Well,  
One way for Miriam.

*Miriam.* Miriam am I not?

*Father.* This ring bequeath'd you  
by your mother, child,

Was to be given you—such her dying  
wish—

Given on the morning when you came  
of age

Or on the day you married. Both the  
days

Now close in one. The ring is doubly  
yours.

Why do you look so gravely at the  
tower?

*Miriam.* I never saw it yet so all  
ablaze

With creepers crimsoning to the pin-  
nacles,

As if perpetual sunset linger'd there,  
And all ablaze too in the lake below!  
And how the birds that circle round  
the tower

Are cheeping to each other of their  
flight

To summer lands!

*Father.* And that has made you  
grave?

Fly—care not. Birds and brides  
must leave the nest.

Child, I am happier in your happiness  
Than in my own.

*Miriam.* It is not that!

*Father.* What else?

*Miriam.* That chamber in the  
tower.

*Father.* What chamber, child?  
Your nurse is here?

*Miriam.* My Mother's nurse and  
mine.

She comes to dress me in my bridal  
veil.

*Father.* What did she say?

*Miriam.* She said, that you and I  
Had been abroad for my poor health  
so long

She fear'd I had forgotten her, and I  
ask'd

About my Mother, and she said, 'Thy  
hair

Is golden like thy Mother's, not so  
fine.'

*Father.* What then? what more?

*Miriam.* She said—perhaps indeed  
She wander'd, having wander'd now  
so far

Beyond the common date of death—  
that you,

When I was smaller than the statuette  
Of my dear Mother on your bracket

here—  
You took me to that chamber in the

tower,  
The topmost—a chest there, by which  
you knelt—

And there were books and dresses—  
left to me,

A ring too which you kiss'd, and I, she  
said,

I babbled, Mother, Mother—as I used  
To prattle to her picture—stretch'd

my hands

As if I saw her; then a woman came  
And caught me from my nurse. I  
hear her yet—

A sound of anger like a distant storm.

*Father.* Garrulous old crone.

*Miriam.* Poor nurse!

*Father.* I bad her keep,  
Like a seal'd book, all mention of the  
ring,

For I myself would tell you all to-day.

*Miriam.* 'She too might speak to-  
day,' she mumbled. Still,

I scarce have learnt the title of your  
book,

But you will turn the pages.

*Father.* Ay, to-day!

I brought you to that chamber on your  
third

September birthday with your nurse,  
and felt

An icy breath play on me, while I  
stoopt

To take and kiss the ring.

*Miriam.* This very ring  
lo t'amo?

*Father.* Yes, for some wild hope  
was mine

That, in the misery of my married life,  
Miriam your Mother might appear to  
me.

She came to you, not me. The storm,  
you hear

Far-off, is Muriel—your step-mother's  
voice.

*Miriam.* Vext, that you thought  
my Mother came to me?

Or at my crying 'Mother?' or to find  
My Mother's diamonds hidden from  
her there,

Like worldly beauties in the Cell, not  
shown

To dazzle all that see them?

*Father.* Wait a while.

Your Mother and step-mother—Mir-  
iam Erne

And Muriel Erne—the two were cous-  
ins—lived

With Muriel's mother on the down,  
that sees

A thousand squares of corn and  
meadow, far

As the gray deep, a landscape which  
your eyes

Have many a time ranged over when  
a babe.

*Miriam.* I climb'd the hill with  
Hubert yesterday,

And from the thousand squares, one  
silent voice

Came on the wind, and seem'd to say  
'Again.'

We saw far off an old forsaken house,  
Then home, and past the ruin'd mill.

*Father.* And there  
I found these cousins often by the

brook,  
For Miriam sketch'd and Muriel threw

the fly;

The girls of equal age, but one was fair,  
And one was dark, and both were

beautiful.

No voice for either spoke within my  
heart

Then, for the surface eye, that only  
doats

On outward beauty, glancing from the  
one

To the other, knew not that which  
pleased it most,

The raven ringlet or the gold; but  
both

Were dowerless, and myself, I used to  
walk

This Terrace—morbid, melancholy;  
mine

And yet not mine the hall, the farm,  
the field;

For all that ample woodland whisper'd  
'debt,'

The brook that feeds this lakelet mur-  
mur'd 'debt,'

And in yon arching avenue of old elms,  
Tho' mine, not mine, I heard the sober

rook  
And carrion crow cry 'Mortgage.'

*Miriam.* Father's fault  
Visited on the children!

*Father.* Ay, but then  
A kinsman, dying, summon'd me to

Rome—  
He left me wealth—and while I jour-  
ney'd hence,

And saw the world fly by me like a  
dream,

And while I communed with my  
truest self,

I woke to all of truest in myself,  
Till, in the gleam of those mid-sum-  
mer dawns,  
The form of Muriel faded, and the  
face

Of Miriam grew upon me, till I knew ;  
And past and future mix'd in Heaven  
and made

The rosy twilight of a perfect day.

*Miriam.* So glad? no tear for him,  
who left you wealth,  
Your kinsman?

*Father.* I had seen the man but  
once;

He loved my name not me; and then  
I pass'd  
Home, and thro' Venice, where a jew-  
eller,

So far gone down, or so far up in life,  
That he was nearing his own hundred,  
sold

This ring to me, then laugh'd 'the  
ring is weird.'

And weird and worn and wizard-like  
was he.

'Why weird?' I ask'd him; and he  
said 'The souls

Of two repentant Lovers guard the  
ring;'

Then with a ribald twinkle in his  
bleak eyes—

'And if you give the ring to any maid,  
They still remember what it cost them  
here,

And bind the maid to love you by the  
ring;

And if the ring were stolen from the  
maid,

The theft were death or madness to  
the thief,

So sacred those Ghost Lovers hold  
the gift.'

And then he told their legend:

'Long ago  
Two lovers parted by a scurrilous tale  
Had quarrell'd, till the man repenting  
sent

This ring "Io t'amo" to his best be-  
loved,

And sent it on her birthday. She in  
wrath

Return'd it on her birthday, and that  
day

His death-day, when, half-frenzied by  
the ring,  
He wildly fought a rival suitor, him  
The causer of that scandal, fought and  
fell;

And she that came to part them all too  
late,

And found a corpse and silence, drew  
the ring

From his dead finger, wore it till her  
death,

Shrined him within the temple of her  
heart,

Made every moment of her after life  
A virgin victim to his memory,

And dying rose, and rear'd her arms,  
and cried

"I see him, Io t'amo, Io t'amo."

*Miriam.* Legend or true? so ten-  
der should be true!

Did he believe it? did you ask him?

*Father.* Ay!

But that half skeleton, like a barren  
ghost

From out the fleshless world of spirits,  
laugh'd:

A hollow laughter!

*Miriam.* Vile, so near the ghost  
Himself, to laugh at love in death!

But you?

*Father.* Well, as the bygone lover  
thro this ring

Had sent his cry for her forgiveness, I  
Would call thro' this 'Io t'amo' to the  
heart

Of Miriam; then I bad the man en-  
grave

'From Walter' on the ring, and send  
it—wrote

Name, surname, all as clear as noon,  
but he—

Some younger hand must have  
engraven the ring—

His fingers were so stiffen'd by the  
frost

Of seven and ninety winters, that he  
scrawl'd

A 'Miriam' that might seem a  
'Muriel';

And Muriel claim'd and open'd what I  
meant

For Miriam, took the ring, and  
flaunted it

Before that other whom I loved and love.

A mountain stay'd me here, a minster there,

A galleried palace, or a battlefield,  
Where stood the sheaf of Peace: but—  
coming home—

And on your Mother's birthday—all  
but yours—

A week betwixt—and when the tower  
as now

Was all ablaze with crimson to the  
roof,

And all ablaze too plunging in the  
lake

Head-foremost—who were those that  
stood between

The tower and that rich phantom of  
the tower?

Muriel and Miriam, each in white, and  
like

May-blossoms in mid autumn—was it  
they?

A light shot upward on them from the  
lake.

What sparkled there? whose hand  
was that? they stood

So close together. I am not keen of  
sight,

But coming nearer—Muriel had the  
ring—

'O Miriam! have you given your ring  
to her?

O Miriam!' Miriam redder'd, Muriel  
clench'd

The hand that wore it, till I cried  
again:

'O Miriam, if you love me take the  
ring!'

She glanced at me, at Muriel, and was  
mute.

'Nay, if you cannot love me, let it be.'  
Then—Muriel standing ever statue-  
like—

She turn'd, and in her soft imperial  
way

And saying gently: 'Muriel, by your  
leave,'

Unclosed the hand, and from it drew  
the ring,

And gave it me, who pass'd it down  
her own,

'Io t'amo, all is well then.' Muriel fled.

*Miriam.* Poor Muriel!

*Father.* Ay, poor Muriel

when you hear

What follows! Miriam loved me  
from the first,

Not thro' the ring; but on her  
marriage-morn

This birthday, death-day, and be-  
trothal ring,

Laid on her table overnight, was gone;

And after hours of search and doubt  
and threats,

And hubbub, Muriel enter'd with it,  
'See!—

Found in a chink of that old moulder'd  
floor!'

My Miriam nodded with a pitying  
smile,

As who should say 'that those who  
lose can find.'

Then I and she were married for a  
year,

One year without a storm, or even a  
cloud;

And you my Miriam born within the  
year;

And she my Miriam dead within the  
year.

I sat beside her dying, and she  
gaspt:

'The books, the miniature, the lace  
are hers,

My ring too when she comes of age, or  
when

She marries; you—you loved me,  
kept your word.

You love me still "Io t'amo."—  
Muriel—no—

She cannot love; she loves her own  
hard self,

Her firm will, her fix'd purpose. Pro-  
mise me,

Miriam not Muriel—she shall have  
the ring.'

And there the light of other life, which  
lives

Beyond our burial and our buried eyes,  
Glean'd for a moment in her own on  
earth.

I swore the vow, then with my latest  
kiss

Upon them, closed her eyes, which  
would not close,

But kept their watch upon the ring  
and you.

Your birthday was her death-day.

*Miriam.* O poor Mother!  
And you, poor desolate Father, and  
poor me,

The little senseless, worthless, word-  
less babe,

Saved when your life was wreck'd!

*Father.* Desolate? yes!

Desolate as that sailor, whom the  
storm

Had parted from his comrade in the  
boat,

And dash'd half dead on barren sands,  
was I.

Nay, you were my one solace; only—  
you

Were always ailing. Muriel's mother  
sent,

And sure am I, by Muriel, one day  
came

And saw you, shook her head, and  
patted yours,

And smiled, and making with a kindly  
pinch

Each poor pale cheek a momentary  
rose—

'That should be fix'd,' she said; 'your  
pretty bud,

So blighted here, would flower into  
full health

Among our heath and bracken. Let  
her come!

And we will feed her with our moun-  
tain air,

And send her home to you rejoicing.'  
No—

We could not part. And once, when  
you my girl

Rode on my shoulder home—the tiny  
fist

Had graspt a daisy from your Mother's  
grave—

By the lych-gate was Muriel. 'Ay,'  
she said,

'Among the tombs in this damp vale  
of yours!

You scorn my Mother's warning, but  
the child

Is paler than before. We often walk  
in open sun, and see beneath our  
feet

The mist of autumn gather from your  
lake,

And shroud the tower; and once we  
only saw

Your gilded vane, a light above the  
mist'—

(Our old bright bird that still is veer-  
ing there

Above his four gold letters) 'and the  
light,'

She said, 'was like that light'—and  
there she paused,

And long, till I believing that the  
girl's

Lean fancy, groping for it, could not  
find

One likeness, laugh'd a little and found  
her two—

'A warrior's crest above the cloud of  
war'—

'A fiery phoenix rising from the smoke,  
The pyre he burnt in.'—'Nay,' she

said, 'the light

That glimmers on the marsh and on  
the grave.'

And spoke no more, but turn'd and  
pass'd away.

Miriam, I am not surely one of those  
Caught by the flower that closes on  
the fly,

But after ten slow weeks her fix'd  
intent,

In aiming at an all but hopeless mark  
To strike it, struck; I took, I left you

there;

I came, I went, was happier day by  
day;

For Muriel nursed you with a mother's  
care;

Till on that clear and heather-scented  
height

The rounder cheek had brighten'd into  
bloom.

She always came to meet me carrying  
you,

And all her talk was of the babe she  
loved;

So, following her old pastime of the  
brook,

She threw the fly for me; but oftener  
left

That angling to the mother. 'Muriel's  
health



Had weaken'd, nursing little Miriam.  
 Strange!  
 She used to shun the wailing babe,  
 and doats  
 On this of yours.' But when the  
 matron saw  
 That hinted love was only wasted bait,  
 Not risen to, she was bolder. 'Ever  
 since  
 You sent the fatal ring'—I told her  
 'sent  
 To Miriam,' 'Doubtless—ay, but ever  
 since  
 In all the world my dear one sees but  
 you—  
 In your sweet babe she finds but you  
 —she makes  
 Her heart a mirror that reflects but  
 you.'  
 And then the tear fell, the voice  
 broke. *Her* heart!  
 I gazed into the mirror, as a man  
 Who sees his face in water, and a  
 stone,  
 That glances from the bottom of the  
 pool,  
 Strike upward thro' the shadow; yet  
 at last,  
 Gratitude—loneliness—desire to keep  
 So skilled a nurse about you always—  
 nay!  
 Some half remorseful kind of pity  
 too—  
 Well! well, you know I married  
 Muriel Erne.  
 'I take thee Muriel for my wedded  
 wife'—  
 I had forgotten it was your birthday,  
 child—  
 When all at once with some electric  
 thrill  
 A cold air pass'd between us, and the  
 hands  
 Fell from each other, and were join'd  
 again.  
 No second cloudless honeymoon  
 was mine.  
 For by and by she sicken'd of the  
 farce,  
 She dropt the gracious mask of  
 motherhood,  
 She came no more to meet me, carry-  
 ing you,

Nor ever cared to set you on her knee,  
 Nor ever let you gambol in her sight,  
 Nor ever cheer'd you with a kindly  
 smile,  
 Nor ever ceased to clamor for the  
 ring;  
 Why had I sent the ring at first to her?  
 Why had I made her love me thro'  
 the ring,  
 And then had changed? so fickle are  
 men—the best!  
 Not she—but now my love was hers  
 again,  
 The ring by right, she said, was hers  
 again.  
 At times too shrilling in her angrier  
 moods,  
 'That weak and watery nature love  
 you? No!  
 "Io t'amo, Io t'amo!"' flung herself  
 Against my heart, but often while her  
 lips  
 Were warm upon my cheek, an icy  
 breath,  
 As from the grating of a sepulchre,  
 Past over both. I told her of my  
 vow,  
 No pliable idiot I to break my vow;  
 But still she made her outcry for the  
 ring;  
 For one monotonous fancy madden'd  
 her,  
 Till I myself was madden'd with her  
 cry,  
 And even that 'Io t'amo,' those three  
 sweet  
 Italian words, became a weariness.  
 My people too were scared with  
 eerie sounds,  
 A footstep, a low throbbing in the  
 walls,  
 A noise of falling weights that never  
 fell,  
 Weird whispers, bells that rang with-  
 out a hand,  
 Door-handles turn'd when none was  
 at the door,  
 And bolted doors that open'd of them-  
 selves:  
 And one betwixt the dark and light  
 had seen  
*Her*, bending by the cradle of her  
 babe.

*Miriam.* And I remember once  
that being waked  
By noises in the house—and, no one  
near—  
I cried for nurse, and felt a gentle  
hand  
Fall on my forehead, and a sudden  
face  
Look'd in upon me like a gleam and  
pass'd,  
And I was quieted, and slept again.  
Or is it some half memory of a  
dream?

*Father.* Your fifth September  
birthday.

*Miriam.* And the face,  
The hand,—my Mother.

*Father.* Miriam, on that day  
Two lovers parted by no scurrilous  
tale—

Mere want of gold—and still for  
twenty years

Bound by the golden cord of their  
first love—

Had ask'd us to their marriage, and to  
share

Their marriage-banquet. Muriel,  
paler then

Than ever you were in your cradle,  
moan'd,

'I am fitter for my bed, or for my  
grave,

I cannot go, go you.' And then she  
rose,

She clung to me with such a hard  
embrace,

So lingeringly long, that half-amazed  
I parted from her, and I went alone.

And when the bridegroom murmur'd,  
'With this ring,'

I felt for what I could not find, the key,  
The guardian of her relics, of her ring.

I kept it as a sacred amulet  
About me,—gone! and gone in that  
embrace!

Then, hurrying home, I found her not  
in house

Or garden—up the tower—an icy air  
Fled by me.—There, the chest was  
open—all

The sacred relics tost about the floor—  
Among them Muriel lying on her  
face—

I raised her, call'd her 'Muriel, Muriel  
wake!'

The fatal ring lay near her; the glazed  
eye

Glared at me as in horror. Dead! I  
took

And chafed the freezing hand. A red  
mark ran

All round one finger pointed straight,  
the rest

Were crumpled inwards. Dead!—  
and maybe stung

With some remorse, had stolen, worn  
the ring—

Then torn it from her finger, or as  
if—

For never had I seen her show re-  
morse—

As if—

*Miriam.* —those two Ghost lov-  
ers—

*Father.* Lovers yet—

*Miriam.* Yes, yes!

*Father.* —but dead so long, gone  
up so far,

That now their ever-rising life has  
dwarf'd

Or lost the moment of their past on  
earth,

As we forget our wail at being born.

As if—

*Miriam.* a dearer ghost had—

*Father.* —wrench'd it away.

*Miriam.* Had floated in with sad  
reproachful eyes,

Till from her own hand she had torn  
the ring

In fright, and fallen dead. And I  
myself

Am half afraid to wear it.

*Father.* Well, no more!

No bridal music this! but fear not  
you!

You have the ring she guarded; that  
poor link

With earth is broken, and has left her  
free,

Except that, still drawn downward for  
an hour,

Her spirit hovering by the church,  
where she

Was married too, may linger, till she  
sees

Her maiden coming like a Queen,  
 who leaves  
 Some colder province in the North to  
 gain  
 Her capital city, where the loyal bells  
 Clash welcome—linger, till her own,  
 the babe  
 She lean'd to from her Spiritual  
 sphere,  
 Her lonely maiden-Princess, crown'd  
 with flowers,  
 Has enter'd on the larger woman-  
 world  
 Of wives and mothers.

But the bridal veil—  
 Your nurse is waiting. Kiss me child  
 and go.

## FORLORN.

## I.

'HE is fled—I wish him dead—  
 He that wrought my ruin—  
 O the flattery and the craft  
 Which were my undoing . . .  
 In the night, in the night,  
 When the storms are blowing.

## II.

'Who was witness of the crime?  
 Who shall now reveal it?  
 He is fled, or he is dead,  
 Marriage will conceal it . . .  
 In the night, in the night,  
 While the gloom is growing.'

## III.

Catherine, Catherine, in the night,  
 What is this you're dreaming?  
 There is laughter down in Hell  
 At your simple scheming . . .  
 In the night, in the night,  
 When the ghosts are fleeing.

## IV.

You to place a hand in his  
 Like an honest woman's,  
 You that lie with wasted lungs

Waiting for your summons . . .  
 In the night, O the night!  
 O the deathwatch beating!

## V.

There will come a witness soon  
 Hard to be confuted,  
 All the world will hear a voice  
 Scream you are polluted . . .  
 In the night! O the night,  
 When the owls are wailing!

## VI.

Shame and marriage, Shame and  
 marriage,  
 Fright and foul dissembling,  
 Bantering bridesman, reddening  
 priest,  
 Tower and altar trembling . . .  
 In the night, O the night,  
 When the mind is failing!

## VII.

Mother, dare you kill your child?  
 How your hand is shaking!  
 Daughter of the seed of Cain,  
 What is this you're taking? . . .  
 In the night, O the night,  
 While the house is sleeping.

## VIII.

Dreadful! has it come to this,  
 O unhappy creature?  
 You that would not tread on a worm  
 For your gentle nature . . .  
 In the night, O the night,  
 O the night of weeping!

## IX.

Murder would not veil your sin,  
 Marriage will not hide it,  
 Earth and Hell will brand your  
 name,  
 Wretch you must abide it . . .  
 In the night, O the night,  
 Long before the dawning.

## X.

Up, get up, and tell him all,  
 Tell him you were lying!

Do not die with a lie in your mouth,  
You that know you're dying . . .  
In the night, O the night,  
While the grave is yawning.

## XI.

No—you will not die before,  
Tho' you'll ne'er be stronger;  
You will live till *that* is born,  
Then a little longer . . .  
In the night, O the night,  
While the Fiend is prowling.

## XII.

Death and marriage, Death and  
marriage!  
Funeral hearses rolling!  
Black with bridal favors mixt!  
Bridal bells with tolling! . . .  
In the night, O the night,  
When the wolves are howling.

## XIII.

Up, get up, the time is short,  
Tell him now or never!  
Tell him all before you die,  
Lest you die for ever . . .  
In the night, O the night,  
Where there's no forgetting.

## XIV.

Up she got, and wrote him all,  
All her tale of sadness,  
Blister'd every word with tears,  
And eased her heart of mad-  
ness . . .  
In the night, and nigh the dawn,  
And while the moon was setting.

## HAPPY.

## THE LEPER'S BRIDE.

## I.

WHY wail you, pretty plover? and  
what is it that you fear?  
Is he sick your mate like mine?  
Have you lost him, is he fled?

And there—the heron rises from his  
watch beside the mere,  
And flies above the leper's hut,  
where lives the living-dead.

## II.

Come back, nor let me know it!  
would he live and die alone?  
And has he not forgiven me yet,  
his over-jealous bride,  
Who am, and was, and will be his,  
his own and only own,  
To share his living death with him,  
die with him side by side?

## III.

Is that the leper's hut on the solitary  
moor,  
Where noble Ulric dwells forlorn,  
and wears the leper's weed?  
The door is open. He! is he stand-  
ing at the door,  
My soldier of the Cross? it is he  
and he indeed!

## IV.

My roses—will he take them *now*—  
mine, his—from off the tree  
We planted both together, happy  
in our marriage morn?  
O God, I could blaspheme, for he  
fought Thy fight for Thee,  
And Thou hast made him leper to  
compass him with scorn—

## V.

Hast spared the flesh of thousands,  
the coward and the base,  
And set a crueller mark than Cain's  
on him, the good and brave!  
He sees me, waves me from him. I  
will front him face to face.  
You need not wave me from you.  
I would leap into your grave.

\* \* \* \*

## VI.

My warrior of the Holy Cross and of  
the conquering sword,

The roses that you cast aside—once  
more I bring you these,  
No nearer? do you scorn me when  
you tell me, O my lord,  
You would not mar the beauty of  
your bride with your disease.

## VII.

You say your body is so foul—then  
here I stand apart,  
Who yearn to lay my loving head  
upon your leprous breast.  
The leper plague may scale my skin  
but never taint my heart;  
Your body is not foul to me, and  
body is foul at best.

## VIII.

I loved you first when young and fair,  
but now I love you most;  
The fairest flesh at last is filth on  
which the worm will feast;  
This poor rib-grated dungeon of the  
holy human ghost,  
This house with all its hateful needs  
no cleaner than the beast,

## IX.

This coarse diseaseful creature which  
in Eden was divine,  
This Satan-haunted ruin, this little  
city of sewers,  
This wall of solid flesh that comes be-  
tween your soul and mine,  
Will vanish and give place to the  
beauty that endures,

## x.

The beauty that endures on the Spirit-  
ual height,  
When we shall stand transfigured,  
like Christ on Hermon hill,  
And moving each to music, soul in soul  
and light in light,  
Shall flash thro' one another in a  
moment as we will.

## XI.

Foul! foul! the word was yours not  
mine, I worship that right hand

Which fell'd the foes before you as  
the woodman fells the wood,  
And sway'd the sword that lighten'd  
back the sun of Holy land,  
And clove the Moslem crescent  
moon, and changed it into blood.

## XII.

And once I worshipt all too well this  
creature of decay,  
For Age will chink the face, and  
Death will freeze the supplest  
limbs—  
Yet you in your mid manhood—O the  
grief when yesterday  
They bore the Cross before you to  
the chant of funeral hymns.

## XIII.

'Libera me, Domine!' you sang the  
Psalm, and when  
The Priest pronounced you dead,  
and flung the mould upon your  
feet,  
A beauty came upon your face, not  
that of living men,  
But seen upon the silent brow when  
life has ceased to beat.

## XIV.

'Libera nos, Domine!'—you knew not  
one was there  
Who saw you kneel beside your bier,  
and weeping scarce could see;  
May I come a little nearer, I that heard,  
and changed the prayer  
And sang the married '*nos*' for the  
solitary 'me.'

## XV.

My beauty marred by you? by you!  
so be it. All is well  
If I lose it and myself in the higher  
beauty, yours.  
My beauty lured that falcon from his  
ery on the fell,  
Who never caught one gleam of the  
beauty which endures—

## XVI.

The Count who sought to snap the  
bond that link'd us life to life,  
Who whisper'd me 'your Ulric  
loves'—a little nearer still—  
He hiss'd, 'Let us revenge ourselves,  
your Ulric woos my wife'—  
A lie by which he thought he could  
subdue me to his will.

## XVII.

I knew that you were near me when I  
let him kiss my brow;  
*Did* he touch me on the lips? I was  
jealous, anger'd, vain,  
And I meant to make *you* jealous.  
Are you jealous of me now?  
Your pardon, O my love, if I ever  
gave you pain.

## XVIII.

You never once accused me, but I  
wept alone, and sigh'd  
In the winter of the Present for the  
summer of the Past;  
That icy winter silence—how it froze  
you from your bride,  
Tho' I made one barren effort to  
break it at the last.

## XIX.

I brought you, you remember, these  
roses, when I knew  
You were parting for the war, and  
you took them tho' you frown'd;  
You frown'd and yet you kiss'd them.  
All at once the trumpet blew,  
And you spurr'd your fiery horse,  
and you hurl'd them to the  
ground.

## XX.

You parted for the Holy War without  
a word to me,  
And clear myself unask'd—not I.  
My nature was too proud.  
And him I saw but once again, and far  
away was he,  
When I was praying in a storm—the  
crash was long and loud—

## XXI.

That God would ever slant His bolt  
from falling on your head—  
Then I lifted up my eyes, he was  
coming down the fell—  
I clapt my hands. The sudden fire  
from Heaven had dash'd him  
dead,  
And sent him char'd and blasted  
to the deathless fire of Hell.

## XXII.

See, I sinn'd but for a moment. I re-  
pent and repent,  
And trust myself forgiven by the  
God to whom I kneel.  
A little nearer? Yes. I shall hardly  
be content  
Till I be leper like yourself, my love,  
from head to heel.

## XXIII.

O foolish dreams, that you, that I,  
would slight our marriage oath:  
I held you at that moment even  
dearer than before;  
Now God has made you leper in His  
loving care for both,  
That we might cling together, never  
doubt each other more.

## XXIV.

The Priest, who join'd you to the dead,  
has join'd our hands of old;  
If man and wife be but one flesh, let  
mine be leprous too,  
As dead from all the human race as if  
beneath the mould:  
If you be dead, then I am dead, who  
only live for you.

## XXV.

Would Earth tho' hid in cloud not be  
follow'd by the Moon?  
The leech forsake the dying bed for  
terror of his life?  
The shadow leave the Substance in the  
brooding light of noon?  
Or if I had been the leper would  
you have left the wife?

## XXVI.

Not take them? Still you wave me off  
 —poor roses—must I go—  
 I have worn them year by year—  
 from the bush we both had set—  
 What? fling them to you?—well—that  
 were hardly gracious. No!  
 Your plague but passes by the touch.  
 A little nearer yet!

## XVII.

There, there! he buried you, the  
 Priest; the Priest is not to  
 blame,  
 He joins us once again, to his either  
 office true:  
 I thank him. I am happy, happy.  
 Kiss me. In the name  
 Of the everlasting God, I will live  
 and die with you.

[DEAN MILMAN has remarked that the protection and care afforded by the Church to this blighted race of lepers was among the most beautiful of its offices during the Middle Ages. The leprosy of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was supposed to be a legacy of the crusades, but was in all probability the offspring of meagre and unwholesome diet, miserable lodging and clothing, physical and moral degradation. The services of the Church in the seclusion of these unhappy sufferers were most affecting. The stern duty of looking to the public welfare is tempered with exquisite compassion for the victims of this loathsome disease. The ritual for the sequestration of the leprous differed little from the burial service. After the leper had been sprinkled with holy water, the priest conducted him into the church, the leper singing the psalm 'Libera me domine,' and the crucifix and bearer going before. In the church a black cloth was stretched over two trestles in front of the altar, and the leper leaning at its side devoutly beard mass. The priest, taking up a little earth in his cloak, threw it on one of the leper's feet, and put him out of the church, if it did not rain too heavily; took him to his hut in the midst of the fields, and then uttered the prohibitions: 'I forbid you entering the church

... or entering the company of others. I forbid you quitting your home without your leper's dress.' He concluded: 'Take this dress, and wear it in token of humility; take these gloves, take this clapper, as a sign that you are forbidden to speak to any one. You are not to be indignant at being thus separated from others, and as to your little wants, good people will provide for you, and God will not desert you.' Then in this old ritual follow these sad words: 'When it shall come to pass that the leper shall pass out of this world, he shall be buried in his hut, and not in the churchyard.' At first there was a doubt whether wives should follow their husbands who had been leprous, or remain in the world and marry again. The church decided that the marriage-tie was indissoluble, and so bestowed on these unhappy beings this immense source of consolation. With a love stronger than this living death, lepers were followed into banishment from the haunts of men by their faithful wives. Readers of Sir J. Stephen's *Essays on Ecclesiastical Biography* will recollect the description of the founder of the Franciscan order, how, controlling his involuntary disgust, St. Francis of Assisi washed the feet and dressed the sores of the lepers, once at least reverently applying his lips to their wounds.—BOUCHER-JAMES.]

This ceremony of *quasi*-burial varied considerably at different times and in different places. In some cases a grave was dug, and the leper's face was often covered during the service.

## TO ULYSSES. 1

## 1.

ULYSSES, much-experienced man,  
 Whose eyes have known this  
 globe of ours,  
 Her tribes of men, and trees, and  
 flowers,  
 From Corrientes to Japan,

<sup>1</sup> 'Ulysses,' the title of a number of essays by W. G. Palgrave. He died at Monte Video before seeing my poem.

## II.

To you that bask below the Line,  
I soaking here in winter wet—  
The century's three strong eights  
have met  
To drag me down to seventy-nine

## III.

In summer if I reach my day—  
To you, yet young, who breathe the  
balm  
Of summer-winters by the palm  
And orange grove of Paraguay,

## IV.

I tolerant of the colder time,  
Who love the winter woods, to trace  
On paler heavens the branching  
grace  
Of leafless elm, or naked lime,

## V.

And see my cedar green, and there  
My giant ilex keeping leaf  
When frost is keen and days are  
brief—  
Or marvel how in English air

## VI.

My yucca, which no winter quells,  
Altho' the months have scarce  
begun,  
Has push'd toward our faintest sun  
A spike of half-accomplish'd bells—

## VII.

Or watch the waving pine which here  
The warrior of Caprera set,<sup>1</sup>  
A name that earth will not forget  
Till earth has roll'd her latest year—

## VIII.

I, once half-crazed for larger light  
On broader zones beyond the foam,  
But chaining fancy now at home  
Among the quarried downs of Wight,

<sup>1</sup> Garibaldi said to me, alluding to his barren island, 'I wish I had your trees.'

## IX.

Not less would yield full thanks to you  
For your rich gift, your tale of lands  
I know not,<sup>1</sup> your Arabian sands;  
Your cane, your palm, tree-fern, bam-  
boo,

## X.

The wealth of tropic bower and brake;  
Your Oriental Eden-isles,<sup>2</sup>  
Where man, nor only Nature smiles;  
Your wonder of the boiling lake;<sup>3</sup>

## XI.

Phra-Chai, the Shadow of the Best,<sup>4</sup>  
Phra-bat<sup>5</sup> the step; your Pontic  
coast;  
Crag-cloister;<sup>6</sup> Anatolian Ghost;<sup>7</sup>  
Hong-Kong,<sup>8</sup> Karnac,<sup>9</sup> and all the  
rest.

## XII.

Thro' which I follow'd line by line  
Your leading hand, and came, my  
friend,  
To prize your various book, and  
send  
A gift of slenderer value, mine.

## TO MARY BOYLE.

## WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

## I.

'SPRING-FLOWERS'! While you still  
delay to take  
Your leave of Town,

<sup>1</sup> The tale of Nejd. <sup>2</sup> The Philippines.

<sup>3</sup> In Dominica.

<sup>4</sup> The shadow of the Lord. Certain obscure markings on a rock in Siam, which express the image of Buddha to the Buddhist more or less distinctly according to his faith and his moral worth.

<sup>5</sup> The footstep of the Lord on another rock. <sup>6</sup> The monastery of Sumelas.

<sup>7</sup> Anatolian Spectre stories.

<sup>8</sup> The Three Cities. <sup>9</sup> Travels in Egypt.



Our elm tree's ruddy-hearted blossom-  
flake  
Is fluttering down.

II.

Be truer to your promise. There! I  
heard

Our cuckoo call.

Be needle to the magnet of your word,  
Nor wait, till all

III.

Our vernal bloom from every vale and  
plain

And garden pass,

And all the gold from each laburnum  
chain

Drop to the grass.

IV.

Is memory with your Marian gone to  
rest,

Dead with the dead?

For ere she left us, when we met, you  
prest

My hand, and said

V.

'I come with your spring-flowers.

You came not, friend;

My birds would sing,

You heard not. Take then this spring-  
flower I send,

This song of spring,

VI.

Found yesterday—forgotten mine own  
rhyme

By mine old self,

As I shall be forgotten by old Time,  
Laid on the shelf—

VII.

A rhyme that flower'd betwixt the  
whitening sloe

And kingcup blaze,

And more than half a hundred years  
ago,

In rick-fire days,

VIII.

When Dives loathed the times, and  
paced his land

In fear of worse,

And sanguine Lazarus felt a vacant  
hand

Fill with *his* purse.

IX.

For lowly minds were madden'd to  
the height

By tongueter tricks,

And once—I well remember that red  
night

When thirty ricks,

X.

All flaming, made an English home-  
stead Hell—

These hands of mine

Have helpt to pass a bucket from the  
well

Along the line,

XI.

When this bare dome had not begun  
to gleam

Thro' youthful curls,

And you were then a lover's fairy  
dream,

His girl of girls;

XII.

And you, that now are lonely, and with  
Grief

Sit face to face.

Might find a flickering glimmer of  
relief

In change of place.

XIII.

What use to brood? this life of  
mingled pains

And joys to me,

Despite of every Faith and Creed,  
remains

The Mystery.

## XIV.

Let golden youth bewail the friend,  
 the wife,  
 For ever gone.  
 He dreams of that long walk thro'  
 desert life  
 Without the one.

## XV.

The silver year should cease to mourn  
 and sigh—  
 Not long to wait—  
 So close are we, dear Mary, you and I  
 To that dim gate.

## XVI.

Take, read! and be the faults your  
 Poet makes  
 Or many or few,  
 He rests content, if his young music  
 wakes  
 A wish in you

## XVII.

To change our dark Queen-city, all  
 her realm  
 Of sound and smoke,  
 For his clear heaven, and these few  
 lanes of elm  
 And whispering oak.

## THE PROGRESS OF SPRING.

## I.

THE groundflame of the crocus breaks  
 the mould,  
 Fair Spring slides hither o'er the  
 Southern sea,  
 Wavers on her thin stem the snow-  
 drop cold  
 That trembles not to kisses of the  
 bee:  
 Come, Spring, for now from all the  
 dripping eaves  
 The spear of ice has wept itself  
 away,  
 And hour by hour unfolding woodbine  
 leaves

O'er his uncertain shadow droops  
 the day.  
 She comes! The loosen'd rivulets  
 run;  
 The frost-bead melts upon her  
 golden hair;  
 Her mantle, slowly greening in the  
 Sun,  
 Now wraps her close, now arching  
 leaves her bare  
 To breaths of balmier air;

## II.

Up leaps the lark, gone wild to wel-  
 come her,  
 About her glance the tits, and shriek  
 the jays,  
 Before her skims the jubilant wood-  
 pecker,  
 The linnet's bosom blushes at her  
 gaze,  
 While round her brows a woodland  
 culver flits,  
 Watching her large light eyes and  
 gracious looks,  
 And in her open palm a halcyon sits  
 Patient—the secret splendor of the  
 brooks.  
 Come, Spring! She comes on waste  
 and wood,  
 On farm and field: but enter also  
 here,  
 Diffuse thyself at will thro' all my  
 blood,  
 And, tho' thy violet sicken into sere,  
 Lodge with me all the year!

## III.

Once more a downy drift against the  
 brakes,  
 Self-darken'd in the sky, descending  
 slow!  
 But gladly see I thro' the wavering  
 flakes  
 Yon blanching apricot like snow in  
 snow.  
 These will thine eyes not brook in  
 forest-paths,  
 On their perpetual pine, nor round  
 the beech;  
 They fuse themselves to little spicy  
 baths,

Solved in the tender blushes of the peach;  
They lose themselves and die  
On that new life that gems the hawthorn line;  
Thy gay lent-lilies wave and put them by,  
And out once more in varnish'd glory shine  
Thy stars of celandine.

IV.

She floats across the hamlet. Heaven lours,  
But in the tearful splendor of her smiles  
I see the slowly-thickening chestnut towers  
Fill out the spaces by the barren tiles.  
Now past her feet the swallow circling flies,  
A clamorous cuckoo stoops to meet her hand;  
Her light makes rainbows in my closing eyes,  
I hear a charm of song thro' all the land.  
Come, Spring! She comes, and Earth is glad  
To roll her North below thy deepening dome,  
But ere thy maiden birk be wholly clad,  
And these low bushes dip their twigs in foam,  
Make all true hearths thy home.

V.

Across my garden! and the thicket stirs,  
The fountain pulses high in sunnier jets,  
The blackcap warbles, and the turtle purrs,  
The starling claps his tiny castanets.  
Still round her forehead wheels the woodland dove,  
And scatters on her throat the sparks of dew,  
The kingcup fills her footprint, and above

Broaden the glowing isles of vernal blue.  
Hail ample presence of a Queen,  
Bountiful, beautiful, apparell'd gay,  
Whose mantle, every shade of glancing green,  
Flies back in fragrant breezes to display  
A tunic white as May!

VI.

She whispers, 'From the South I bring you balm,  
For on a tropic mountain was I born,  
While some dark dweller by the cocopalms  
Watch'd my far meadow zoned with airy morn;  
From under rose a muffled moan of floods;  
I sat beneath a solitude of snow;  
There no one came, the turf was fresh, the woods  
Plunged gulf on gulf thro' all their vales below.  
I saw beyond their silent tops  
The steaming marshes of the scarlet cranes,  
The slant seas leaning on the mangrove copse,  
And summer basking in the sultry plains  
About a land of canes;

VII.

'Then from my vapor girdle soaring forth  
I scaled the buoyant highway of the birds,  
And drank the dews and drizzle of the North,  
That I might mix with men, and hear their words  
On pathway'd plains; for—while my hand exults  
Within the bloodless heart of lowly flowers  
To work old laws of Love to fresh results,  
Thro' manifold effect of simple powers—

I too would teach the man  
 Beyond the darker hour to see the  
 bright,  
 That his fresh life may close as it  
 began,  
 The still-fulfilling promise of a  
 light  
 Narrowing the bounds of night.'

## VIII.

So wed thee with my soul, that I may  
 mark  
 The coming year's great good and  
 varied ills,  
 And new developments, whatever  
 spark  
 Be struck from out the clash of  
 warring wills;  
 Or whether, since our nature cannot  
 rest,  
 The smoke of war's volcano burst  
 again  
 From hoary deeps that belt the  
 changeful West,  
 Old Empires, dwellings of the kings  
 of men;  
 Or should those fail, that hold the  
 helm,  
 While the long day of knowledge  
 grows and warms,  
 And in the heart of this most ancient  
 realm  
 A hateful voice be utter'd, and  
 alarms  
 Sounding 'To arms! to arms!'

## IX

A simpler, saner lesson might he  
 learn  
 Who reads thy gradual process,  
 Holy Spring,  
 Thy leaves possess the season in  
 their turn,  
 And in their time thy warblers rise  
 on wing.  
 How surely glidest thou from March  
 to May,  
 And changest, breathing it, the  
 sullen wind,  
 Thy scope of operation, day by day,  
 Larger and fuller, like the human  
 mind!

Thy warmths from bud to bud  
 Accomplish that blind model in the  
 seed,  
 And men have hopes, which race the  
 restless blood,  
 That after many changes may suc-  
 ceed  
 Life, which is Life indeed.

## MERLIN AND THE GLEAM.

## I.

O YOUNG Mariner,  
 You from the haven  
 Under the sea-cliff,  
 You that are watching  
 The gray Magician  
 With eyes of wonder,  
 I am Merlin,  
 And I am dying,  
 I am Merlin  
 Who follow The Gleam.

## II.

Mighty the Wizard  
 Who found me at sunrise  
 Sleeping, and woke me  
 And learn'd me Magic!  
 Great the Master,  
 And sweet the Magic,  
 When over the valley,  
 In early summers,  
 Over the mountain,  
 On human faces,  
 And all around me,  
 Moving to melody,  
 Floated The Gleam.

## III.

Once at the croak of a Raven  
 who crost it,  
 A barbarous people,  
 Blind to the magic,  
 And deaf to the melody,  
 Snarl'd at and cursed me.  
 A demon vext me,  
 The light retreated,  
 The landskip darken'd,  
 The melody deaden'd,  
 The Master whisper'd  
 'Follow The Gleam.'

## IV.

Then to the melody,  
Over a wilderness  
Gliding, and glancing at  
Elf of the woodland,  
Gnome of the cavern,  
Griffin and Giant,  
And dancing of Fairies  
In desolate hollows,  
And wraiths of the mountain,  
And rolling of dragons  
By warble of water,  
Or cataract music  
Of falling torrents,  
Flitted The Gleam.

## V.

Down from the mountain  
And over the level,  
And streaming and shining on  
Silent river,  
Silvery willow,  
Pasture and plowland,  
Innocent maidens,  
Garrulous children,  
Homestead and harvest,  
Reaper and gleaner,  
And rough-ruddy faces  
Of lowly labor,  
Slided The Gleam—

## VI.

Then, with a melody  
Stronger and statelier,  
Led me at length  
To the city and palace  
Of Arthur the king;  
Touch'd at the golden  
Cross of the churches  
Flash'd on the Tournament,  
Flicker'd and bicker'd  
From helmet to helmet,  
And last on the forehead  
Of Arthur the blameless  
Rested The Gleam.

## VII.

Clouds and darkness  
Closed upon Camelot;  
Arthur had vanish'd  
I knew not whither,

The king who loved me,  
And cannot die;  
For out of the darkness  
Silent and slowly  
The Gleam, that had waned to  
a wintry glimmer  
On icy fallow  
And faded forest,  
Drew to the valley  
Named of the shadow,  
And slowly brightening  
Out of the glimmer,  
And slowly moving again to a  
melody  
Yearningly tender,  
Fell on the shadow,  
No longer a shadow,  
But clothed with The Gleam.

## VIII.

And broader and brighter  
The Gleam flying onward,  
Wed to the melody,  
Sang thro' the world;  
And slower and fainter.  
Old and weary,  
But eager to follow,  
I saw, whenever  
In passing it glanced upon  
Hamlet or city,  
That under the Crosses  
The dead man's garden,  
The mortal hillock,  
Would break into blossom;  
And so to the land's  
Last limit I came—  
And can no longer,  
But die rejoicing,  
For thro' the Magic  
Of Him the Mighty,  
Who taught me in childhood,  
There on the border  
Of boundless Ocean,  
And all but in Heaven  
Hovers The Gleam.

## IX.

Not of the sunlight,  
Not of the moonlight,  
Not of the starlight!  
O young Mariner,  
Down to the haven,

Call your companions,  
Launch your vessel,  
And crowd your canvas,  
And, ere it vanishes  
Over the margin,  
After it, follow it,  
Follow The Gleam.

#### ROMNEY'S REMORSE.

'I READ Hayley's Life of Romney the other day—Romney wanted but education and reading to make him a very fine painter; but his ideal was not high nor fixed. How touching is the close of his life! He married at nineteen, and because Sir Joshua and others had said that "marriage spoils an artist" almost immediately left his wife in the North and scarce saw her till the end of his life; when old, nearly mad and quite desolate, he went back to her and she received him and nursed him till he died. This quiet act of hers is worth all Romney's pictures! even as a matter of Art, I am sure.' (*Letters and Literary Remains of Edward Fitzgerald*, vol. i.)

'BEAT, little heart—I give you this  
and this'  
Who are you? What! the Lady  
Hamilton?  
Good, I am never weary painting you.  
To sit once more? Cassandra, Hebe,  
Joan,  
Or spinning at your wheel beside the  
vine—  
Bacchante, what you will; and if I  
fail  
To conjure and concentrate into form  
And color all you are, the fault is less  
In me than Art. What Artist ever  
yet  
Could make pure light live on the  
canvas? Art!  
Why should I so disrelish that short  
word?  
Where am I? snow on all the hills!  
so hot,  
So fever'd! never colt would more  
delight

To roll himself in meadow grass than  
I

To wallow in that winter of the hills.

Nurse, were you hired? or came of  
your own will

To wait on one so broken, so forlorn?  
Have I not met you somewhere long  
ago?

I am all but sure I have—in Kendal  
church—

O yes! I hired you for a season there,  
And then we parted; but you look so  
kind

That you will not deny my sultry  
throat

One draught of icy water. There—  
you spill

The drops upon my forehead. Your  
hand shakes.

I am ashamed. I am a trouble to  
you,

Could kneel for your forgiveness.

Are they tears?

For me—they do me too much grace  
—for me?

O Mary, Mary!

Vexing you with words!

Words only, born of fever, or the  
fumes

Of that dark opiate dose you gave me,  
—words,

Wild babble. I have stumbled back  
again

Into the common day, the sounder  
self.

God stay me there, if only for your  
sake,

The truest, kindest, noblest-hearted  
wife

That ever wore a Christian marriage-  
ring.

My curse upon the Master's apo-  
thegm,

That wife and children drag an Artist  
down!

This seem'd my lodestar in the  
Heaven of Art,

And lured me from the household fire  
on earth.

To you my days have been a life-long  
lie,

Grafted on half a truth; and tho' you  
say...

'Take comfort you have won the  
Painter's fame,'  
The best in me that sees the worst in  
me,  
And groans to see it, finds no comfort  
there.

What fame? I am not Raphaël,  
Titian—no  
Nor even a Sir Joshua, some will cry.  
Wrong there! The painter's fame?  
but mine, that grew  
Blown into glittering by the popular  
breath,  
May float awhile beneath the sun, may  
roll  
The rainbow hues of heaven about  
it—

There!  
The color'd bubble bursts above the  
abyss  
Of Darkness, utter Lethe.

Is it so?  
Her sad eyes plead for my own fame  
with me  
To make it dearer.

Look, the sun has risen  
To flame along another dreary day.  
Your hand. How bright you keep  
your marriage-ring!  
Raise me. I thank you.

Has your opiate then  
Bred this black mood? or am I  
conscious, more  
Than other Masters, of the chasm  
between  
Work and Ideal? Or does the gloom  
of Age  
And suffering cloud the height I  
stand upon  
Even from myself? stand? stood . . .  
no more.

And yet  
The world would lose, if such a wife  
as you  
Should vanish unrecorded. Might I  
crave  
One favor? I am bankrupt of all  
claim  
On your obedience, and my strongest  
wish

Falls flat before your least unwilling-  
ness.  
Still would you—if it please you—sit  
to me?

I dream'd last night of that clear  
summer noon,  
When seated on a rock, and foot to  
foot  
With your own shadow in the placid  
lake,  
You claspt our infant daughter, heart  
to heart.  
I had been among the hills, and  
brought you down  
A length of staghorn-moss, and this  
you twined

About her cap. I see the picture yet,  
Mother and child. A sound from far  
away,  
No louder than a bee among the  
flowers,  
A fall of water lull'd the noon asleep.  
You still'd it for the moment with a  
song  
Which often echo'd in me, while I  
stood  
Before the great Madonna-master-  
pieces

Of ancient Art in Paris, or in Rome.  
Mary, my crayons! if I can, I will.  
You should have been—I might have  
made you once,  
Had I but known you as I know you  
now—  
The true Alcestis of the time. Your  
song—  
Sit, listen! I remember it, a proof  
That I—even I—at times remember'd  
you.

'Beat upon mine, little heart! beat,  
beat!  
Beat upon mine! you are mine, my  
sweet!  
All mine from your pretty blue  
eyes to your feet,  
My sweet.'

Less profile! turn to me—three-quarter  
face.

'Sleep, little blossom, my honey,  
my bliss!

For I give you this, and I give you  
this!

And I blind your pretty blue eyes  
with a kiss!

Sleep!

Too early blinded by the kiss of  
death—

'Father and Mother will watch you  
grow!—

You watch'd not I, she did not grow,  
she died.

'Father and Mother will watch you  
grow,  
And gather the roses whenever  
they blow,  
And find the white heather wher-  
ever you go,

My sweet.'

Ah, my white heather only blooms in  
heaven

With Milton's amaranth. There,  
there, there! a child

Had shamed me at it—Down, you idle  
tools,

Stamp'd into dust—tremulous, all  
awry,

Blurr'd like a landskip in a ruffled  
pool,—

Not one stroke firm. This Art, that  
harlot-like

Seduc'd me from you, leaves me har-  
lot-like,

Who love her still, and whimper, im-  
potent

To win her back before I die—and  
then—

Then, in the loud world's bastard  
judgment-day,

One truth will damn me with the  
mindless mob,

Who feel no touch of my temptation,  
more

Than all the myriad lies, that blacken  
round

The corpse of every man that gains a  
name;

'This model husband, this fine  
Artist!' Fool,

What matters? Six foot deep of  
burial mould

Will dull their comments! Ay, but  
when the shout

Of His descending peals from Heaven,  
and throbs

Thro' earth, and all her graves, if *He*  
should ask

'Why left you wife and children? for  
my sake,

According to my word?' and I  
replied

'Nay, Lord, for *Art*,' why, that would  
sound so mean

That all the dead, who wait the doom  
of Hell

For bolder sins than mine, adulteries,  
Wife-murders,—nay, the ruthless

Mussulman

Who flings his bowstrung Harem in  
the sea,

Would turn, and glare at me, and  
point and jeer,

And gibber at the worm, who, living,  
made

The wife of wives a widow-bride, and  
lost

Salvation for a sketch.

I am wild again!  
The coals of fire you heap upon my  
head

Have crazed me. Someone knock-  
ing there without?

No! Will my Indian brother come?  
to find

Me or my coffin? Should I know the  
man?

This worn-out Reason dying in her  
house

May leave the windows blinded, and  
if so,

Bid him farewell for me, and tell  
him—

Hope!

I hear a death-bed Angel whisper  
'Hope.'

"The miserable have no medicine  
But only Hope!" He said it . . .

in the play.

His crime was of the senses; of the  
mund

Mine; worse, cold, calculated.  
Tell my son—



O let me lean my head upon your  
 breast.  
 'Beat little heart' on this fool brain  
 of mine.  
 I once had friends—and many—none  
 like you.  
 I love you more than when we mar-  
 ried. Hope!  
 O yes, I hope, or fancy that, per-  
 haps,  
 Human forgiveness touches heaven,  
 and thence—  
 For you forgive me, you are sure of  
 that—  
 Reflected, sends a light on the for-  
 given.

PARNASSUS.

Exegi monumentum . . .  
 Quod non . . .  
 Possit diruere . . .  
 . . . innumerabilis  
 Annorum series et fuga temporum.—  
 HORACE.

I.

WHAT be those crown'd forms high  
 over the sacred fountain?  
 Bards, that the mighty Muses have  
 raised to the heights of the  
 mountain,  
 And over the flight of the Ages! O  
 Goddesses, help me up thither!  
 Lightning may shrivel the laurel of  
 Cæsar, but mine would not  
 wither.  
 Steep is the mountain, but you, you  
 will help me to overcome it,  
 And stand with my head in the  
 zenith, and roll my voice from  
 the summit,  
 Sounding for ever and ever thro'  
 Earth and her listening na-  
 tions,  
 And mixt with the great Sphere-  
 music of stars and of constella-  
 tions.

II.

What be those two shapes high over  
 the sacred fountain,  
 Taller than all the Muses, and huger  
 than all the mountain?  
 On those two known peaks they stand  
 ever spreading and heighten-  
 ing;  
 Poet, that evergreen laurel is blasted  
 by more than lightning!  
 Look, in their deep double shadow  
 the crown'd ones all disappear-  
 ing!  
 Sing like a bird and be happy, nor  
 hope for a deathless hearing!  
 'Sounding for ever and ever?' pass  
 on! the sight confuses—  
 These are Astronomy and Geology,  
 terrible Muses!

III.

If the lips were touch'd with fire from  
 off a pure Pierian altar,  
 Tho' their music here be mortal need  
 the singer greatly care?  
 Other songs for other worlds! the fire  
 within him would not falter;  
 Let the golden Iliad vanish, Homer  
 here is Homer there.

BY AN EVOLUTIONIST.

THE Lord let the house of a brute to  
 the soul of a man,  
 And the man said 'Am I your  
 debtor?'  
 And the Lord—'Not yet: but make  
 it as clean as you can,  
 And then I will let you a better.'

I.

If my body come from brutes, my  
 soul uncertain, or a fable,  
 Why not bask amid the senses  
 while the sun of morning  
 shines,  
 I, the finer brute rejoicing in my  
 hounds, and in my stable,  
 Youth and Health, and birth and  
 wealth, and choice of women  
 and of wines?

## II.

What hast thou done for me, grim  
Old Age, save breaking my  
bones on the rack?

Would I had past in the morning  
that looks so bright from afar!

## OLD AGE.

Done for thee? starved the wild  
beast that was linkt with thee  
eighty years back.

Less weight now for the ladder-of-  
heaven that hangs on a star.

## I.

If my body come from brutes, tho'  
somewhat finer than their own,  
I am heir, and this my kingdom.  
Shall the royal voice be mute?

No, but if the rebel subject seek to  
drag me from the throne.

Hold the sceptre, Human Soul, and  
rule thy Province of the brute.

## II.

I have climb'd to the snows of Age,  
and I gaze at a field in the  
Past,

Where I sank with the body at  
times in the sloughs of a low  
desire,

But I hear no yelp of the beast, and  
the Man is quiet at last

As he stands on the heights of his  
life with a glimpse of a height  
that is higher.

## FAR—FAR—AWAY.

(FOR MUSIC.)

WHAT sight so lured him thro' the  
fields he knew

As where earth's green stole into  
heaven's own hue,

Far—far—away?

What sound was dearest in his na-  
tive dells?

The mellow lin-lan-lone of evening  
bells

Far—far—away.

What vague world-whisper, mystic  
pain or joy,  
Thro' those three words would haunt  
him when a boy,

Far—far—away?

A whisper from his dawn of life? a  
breath

From some fair dawn beyond the  
doors of death

Far—far—away?

Far, far, how far? from o'er the gates  
of Birth,

The faint horizons, all the bounds of  
earth,

Far—far—away?

What charm in words, a charm no  
words could give?

O dying words, can Music make you  
live

Far—far—away?

## POLITICS.

WE move, the wheel must always  
move,

Nor always on the plain,  
And if we move to such a goal  
As Wisdom hopes to gain,

Then you that drive, and know your  
Craft,

Will firmly hold the rein,  
Nor lend an ear to random cries,  
Or you may drive in vain,

For some cry 'Quick' and some cry  
'Slow,'

But, while the hills remain,  
Up hill 'Too-slow' will need the  
whip,

Down hill 'Too-quick,' the chain.

## BEAUTIFUL CITY.

BEAUTIFUL city, the centre and crater  
of European confusion,

O you with your passionate shriek for  
the rights of an equal human-  
ity,  
How often your Re-volution has  
proven but E-volution  
Roll'd again back on itself in the tides  
of a civic insanity!

THE ROSES ON THE  
TERRACE.

ROSE, on this terrace fifty years ago,  
When I was in my June, you in  
your May,  
Two words, 'My Rose' set all your  
face aglow.  
And now that I am white, and you  
are gray,  
That blush of fifty years ago, my  
dear,  
Blooms in the Past, but close to me  
to-day  
As this red rose, which on our terrace  
here  
Glows in the blue of fifty miles  
away.

THE PLAY.

ACT first, this Earth, a stage so  
gloom'd with woe  
You all but sicken at the shifting  
scenes.  
And yet be patient. Our Playwright  
may show  
In some fifth Act what this wild  
Drama means.

ON ONE WHO AFFECTED AN  
EFFEMINATE MANNER.

WHILE man and woman still are in-  
complete,  
I prize that soul where man and  
woman meet,  
Which types all Nature's male and  
female plan,  
But, friend, man-woman is not woman-  
man.

TO ONE WHO RAN DOWN  
THE ENGLISH.

YOU make our faults too gross, and  
thence maintain  
Our darker future. May your fears  
be vain!  
At times the small black fly upon the  
pane  
May seem the black ox of the distant  
plain.

THE SNOWDROP.

MANY, many welcomes  
February fair-maid,  
Ever as of old time,  
Solitary firstling,  
Coming in the cold time,  
Prophet of the gay time,  
Prophet of the May time,  
Prophet of the roses,  
Many, many welcomes  
February fair-maid!

THE THROSTLE.

'SUMMER is coming, summer is com-  
ing.  
I know it, I know it, I know it.  
Light again, leaf again, life again, love  
again,'  
Yes, my wild little Poet.

Sing the new year in under the blue.  
Last year you sang it as gladly.  
'New, new, new, new'! Is it then so  
new  
That you should carol so madly?

'Love again, song again, nest again,  
young again,'  
Never a prophet so crazy!  
And hardly a daisy as yet, little  
friend,  
See, there is hardly a daisy.

'Here again, here, here, here, happy  
year!'

O warble unhidden, unbidden!  
 Summer is coming, is coming, my  
 dear,  
 And all the winters are hidden.

#### THE OAK.

LIVE thy Life,  
 Young and old,  
 Like yon oak,  
 Bright in spring,  
 Living gold;

Summer-rich  
 Then; and then  
 Autumn-changed,  
 Soberer-hued  
 Gold again.

All his leaves  
 Fall'n at length,  
 Look, he stands,  
 Trunk and bough,  
 Naked strength.

#### IN MEMORIAM.

W. G. WARD.

FAREWELL, whose like on earth I  
 shall not find,  
 Whose Faith and Work were bells  
 of full accord,

My friend, the most unworldly of  
 mankind,  
 Most generous of all Ultramon-  
 tanes, Ward,  
 How subtle at tierce and quart of  
 mind with mind,  
 How loyal in the following of thy  
 Lord!

#### CROSSING THE BAR.

SUNSET and evening star,  
 And one clear call for me!  
 And may there be no moaning of the  
 bar,  
 When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems  
 asleep,  
 Too full for sound and foam,  
 When that which drew from out the  
 boundless deep  
 Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
 And after that the dark!  
 And may there be no sadness of fare-  
 well,  
 When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time  
 and Place  
 The flood may bear me far,  
 I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
 When I have crost the bar.

## INDEX TO FIRST LINES OF VOLUME I.

---

- ACT first, this Earth, a stage so gloom'd  
with woe, 463.  
Ah God! the petty fools of rhyme, 109.  
Airy, fairy Lilian, 6.  
All along the valley, stream that flashest  
white, 106.  
And Willy, my eldest-born, is gone, you  
say, little Anne? 96.  
A plague upon the people fell, 109.  
Are you sleeping? have you forgotten? do  
not sleep, my sister dear! 402.  
A spirit haunts the year's last hours, 13.  
A storm was coming, but the winds were  
still, 245.  
As when with downcast eyes we muse and  
brood, 26.  
Athelstan King, 383.  
A thousand summers ere the time of Christ,  
397.  
At times our Britain cannot rest, 429.
- 'BEAT, little heart—I give you this and  
this,' 458.  
Beautiful city, the centre and crater, 462.  
Below the thunders of the upper deep, 6.  
Brooks, for they call'd you so that knew  
you best, 382.  
Bury the Great Duke, 88.
- CARESS'D or chidden by the slender hand,  
28.  
Clear-headed friend, whose joyful scorn, 8.  
Clearly the blue river chimes in its flow-  
ing, 3.  
Come, when no graver cares employ, 105.
- DAGONET, the fool, whom Gawain in his  
mood, 37.  
Dainty little maiden, whither would you  
wander? 108.  
Dead! 421.  
Dear, near and true—no truer Time him-  
self, 112.  
Dostn't thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they  
canters awa'y? 101.
- ELAINE the fair, Elaine the loveable, 262.  
Eyes not down-dropt nor over-bright, but  
fed, 6.
- FAINT as a climate-changing bird that flies,  
431.  
Fair is her cottage in its place, 107.  
Fair things are slow to fade away, 431.  
Farewell, whose like on earth I shall not  
find, 464.  
Fifty times the rose has flower'd and faded,  
430.  
First pledge our Queen this solemn night,  
425.  
Flower in the crannied wall, 112.  
From noiseful arms, and acts of prowess  
done, 288.
- GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory of  
song, 120.  
Golden-hair'd Ally whose name is one  
with mine, 381.
- HALF a league, half a league, 93.  
'He is fled—I wish him dead—, 447.  
Helen's Tower, here I stand, 424.  
Her, that yer Honor was spakin' to? Whin,  
yer Honor? last year—, 404.  
Here far away, seen from the topmost cliff,  
355.  
Here, it is here, the close of the year, 109.  
He rose at dawn and, fired with hope, 107.  
He thought to quell the stubborn hearts of  
oak, 27.  
Hide me, Mother! my Fathers belong'd to  
the church of old, 390.  
How long, O God, shall men be ridden  
down, 27.
- IF I were loved, as I desire to be, 28.  
Is it you, that preach'd in the chapel there  
looking over the sand? 304.  
I wish I were as in the years of old, 387.

- KING ARTHUR made new knights to fill the gap, 305.  
 King, that hast reign'd six hundred years, and grown, 386.
- LATE, my grandson! half the morning have I paced these sandy tracts, 410.  
 Leodogran, the King of Cameliard, 164.  
 Life and Thought have gone away, 16.  
 Live thy Life, 464. |  
 Low-flowing breezes are roaming the broad valley dimm'd in the gloaming, 3.
- MANY a hearth upon our dark globe sighs after many a vanish'd face, 437.  
 Many, many welcomes, 463.  
 Mellow moon of heaven, 419.  
 Midnight—in no midsummer tune, 424.  
 Milk for my sweet-arts, Bess! fur it mun be the time about now, 407.  
 Mine be the strength of spirit, full and free, 26.  
 Minnie and Winnie, 108.  
 My heart is wasted with my woe, 18.  
 My hope and heart is with thee—thou wilt be, 26.  
 My Lords, we heard you speak: you told us all, 92.  
 My Rosalind, my Rosalind, 23.  
 Mystery of mysteries, 21.
- NAAY, noll mander o' use to be callin' 'im Roil, Roil, Roil, 434.  
 Nightingales warbled without, 106.  
 Not here! the white North has thy bones; and thou, 385.  
 Not this way, if you set your name, 419.  
 Now is done thy long day's work, 17.
- O BRIDESMAID, ere the happy knot was tied, 29.  
 O God! my God! have mercy now, 3.  
 Old Fitz, who from your suburb grange, 386.  
 Old poets foster'd under friendlier skies, 428.  
 O love, what hours were thine and mine, 104.  
 O loyal to the royal in thyself, 353.  
 O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies, 114.  
 Once in a golden hour, 107.  
 Once more the Heavenly Power, 423.  
 O Patriot Statesman, be thou wise to know, 425.  
 O parblind race of miserable men, 215.  
 O sweet pale Margaret, 22.  
 O thou so fair in summers gone, 425.  
 Our birches yellowing and from each, 418.  
 O well for him whose will is strong! 106.  
 O you chorus of indolent reviewers, 115.  
 O young Mariner, 456.  
 O you that were eyes and light to the King till he past away, 385.
- PELLAM the King, who held and lost with Lot, 233.
- QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court, and sat, 331.
- REVERED, beloved—O you that hold, 1.  
 Roman Virgil, thou that singest, 420.  
 Rose, on this terrace fifty years ago, 463.  
 Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sir-mione row! 424.
- SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the sea, 94.  
 Sir Walter Vivian all a summer's day, 29.  
 Slow sail'd the weary mariners and saw, 16.  
 So Hector spake; the Trojans roar'd applause, 115.  
 So saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away, 385.  
 'Spring-flowers'! While you still celay to take, 452.  
 Strong Son of God, immortal Love, 110.  
 'Summer is coming, summer is coming,' 463.  
 Sunset and evening star, 464.
- THAT story which the bold Sir Bedivere, 344.  
 The brave Geraint, a knight of Arthur's court, 200.  
 The charge of the gallant three hundred, the Heavy Brigade! 418.  
 The form, the form alone is eloquent! 28.  
 The groundflame of the crocus breaks the mould, 454.  
 The last tall son of Lot and Bellicent, 174.  
 The lights and shadows fly! 116.  
 The Lord let the house of a brute to the soul of a man, 461.  
 The plain was grassy, wild and bare, 17.  
 The poet in a golden clime was born, 147.  
 These lame hexameters the strong-wing'd music of Homer! 114.  
 These to His Memory—since he held them dear, 163.  
 The Son of him with whom we strove for power, 95.  
 The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—, 111.  
 The voice and the Peak, 111.  
 The winds, as at their hour of birth, 6.  
 They rse to where their sovran cagle sails, 382.  
 Those that of late had fledted far and fast, 382.  
 Thou art not steep'd in golden languors, 9.  
 Thou third great Canning, stand among our best, 424.  
 Thou who stealest fire, 12.  
 Thy dark eyes open'd not, 24.  
 Thy prayer was 'Light—more Light—while Time shall last!' 425.  
 Thy tuwhits are lull'd, I wot, 10.  
 Two children in two neighbor villages, 20.  
 Two Suns of Love make day of human life, 426.

- ULYSSES, much-experienced man, 451.  
 Uplift a thousand voices full and sweet, 93.
- VEX not thou the poet's mind, 15.  
 Victor in Drama, Victor in Romance, 382.
- WAN Sculptor, weepst thou to take the  
 cast, 28.  
 Warrior of God, man's friend, and tyrant's  
 foe, 425.  
 Warrior of God, whose strong right arm  
 debased, 27.  
 Welcome, welcome, with one voice! 428.  
 We move, the wheel must always move,  
 462.  
 What be those crown'd forms high over the  
 sacred fountain? 461.  
 What sight so lured him thro' the fields he  
 knew, 462.  
 What time the mighty moon was gathering  
 light, 18.  
 Wheer 'asta bein saw long and meil liggin'  
 'ere aloko? 99.
- When cats run home and light is come, 0.  
 When the breeze of a joyful dawn blew  
 free, 10.  
 When will the stream be aweary of flow-  
 ing, 2.  
 Where Claribel low-lieth, 2.  
 While about the shore of Moona those Ne-  
 ronian legionaries, 112.  
 While man and woman still are incom-  
 plete, 463.  
 'Whither, O whither, love, shall we go,'  
 107.  
 Who would be, 20.  
 Who would be, 20.  
 Why wail you, pretty plover? and what is  
 it that you fear? 448.  
 With a half-glance upon the sky, 14.  
 With blackest moss the flower-plots, 7.
- You make our faults too gross, and thence  
 maintain, 463.  
 You, you, if you shall fail to understand,  
 427.







VOLUME II.



## CONTENTS OF VOLUME II.

	PAGE		PAGE
<b>THE LADY OF SHALOTT, AND OTHER POEMS :</b>		<b>The Sleeping Palace . . . . .</b>	
The Lady of Shalott . . . . .	1	The Sleeping Beauty . . . . .	85
Mariana in the South . . . . .	3	The Arrival . . . . .	86
The Two Voices . . . . .	4	The Revival . . . . .	87
The Miller's Daughter . . . . .	11	The Departure . . . . .	88
Fatima . . . . .	14	Moral . . . . .	88
Enone . . . . .	14	L'Envoi . . . . .	88
The Sisters . . . . .	19	Epilogue . . . . .	89
To — . . . . .	19	Amphion . . . . .	89
The Palace of Art . . . . .	20	St. Agnes' Eve . . . . .	90
Lady Clara Vere de Vere . . . . .	25	Sir Galahad . . . . .	91
The May Queen . . . . .	26	Edward Gray . . . . .	92
New Year's Eve . . . . .	27	Will Waterproof's Lyrical Mono-	
Conclusion . . . . .	28	logue . . . . .	92
The Lotus-Eaters . . . . .	29	Lady Clare . . . . .	95
Choric Song . . . . .	30	The Captain . . . . .	97
A Dream of Fair Women . . . . .	33	The Lord of Burleigh . . . . .	97
The Blackbird . . . . .	38	The Voyage . . . . .	98
The Death of the Old Year . . . . .	38	Sir Launcelot and Queen Guine-	
To J. S. . . . .	39	vere . . . . .	100
On a Mourner . . . . .	40	A Farewell . . . . .	100
'You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease'	41	The Beggar Maid . . . . .	101
'Of old sat Freedom on the		The Eagle . . . . .	101
heights' . . . . .	41	'Move eastward, happy earth, and	
'Love thou thy land' . . . . .	41	leave' . . . . .	101
England and America in 1782 . . . . .	43	'Come not, when I am dead,' . . . . .	101
The Goose . . . . .	43	The Letters . . . . .	101
<b>ENGLISH IDYLLS AND OTHER POEMS :</b>		The Vision of Sin . . . . .	102
The Epic . . . . .	44	To —, after reading a Life and	
Morte d'Arthur . . . . .	45	Letters . . . . .	105
The Gardener's Daughter; or the		To E. L., on his Travels in Greece . . . . .	106
Pictures . . . . .	50	'Break, break, break' . . . . .	106
Dora . . . . .	55	The Poet's Song . . . . .	106
Audley Court . . . . .	58	<b>ENOCH ARDEN, AND OTHER POEMS :</b>	
Walking to the Mill . . . . .	60	Enoch Arden . . . . .	107
Edwin Morris; or, the Lake . . . . .	62	The Brook . . . . .	123
St. Simeon Stylites . . . . .	65	Aylmer's Field . . . . .	127
The Talking Oak . . . . .	69	Sea Dreams . . . . .	143
Love and Duty . . . . .	72	Lucretius . . . . .	148
The Golden Year . . . . .	74	<b>MAUD: A MONODRAMA . . . . .</b>	
Ulysses . . . . .	75	153	
Tithonus . . . . .	77	<b>BALLADS AND OTHER POEMS :</b>	
Locksley Hall . . . . .	78	The First Quarrel . . . . .	176
Godiva . . . . .	84	Rizpah . . . . .	178
The Day-Dream . . . . .	85	The Northern Cobbler . . . . .	181
Prologue . . . . .	85	The Revenge: A Ballad of the Fleet . . . . .	184

	PAGE		PAGE
The Sisters	186	QUEEN MARY . . . . .	213
The Village Wife; or, the Entail . . .	192	HAROLD . . . . .	292
In the Children's Hospital	195	BECKET . . . . .	335
Dedicatory Poem to the Princess Alice	197	THE CUP . . . . .	394
The Defense of Lucknow . . . . .	197	THE FALCON . . . . .	411
Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham	200	THE PROMISE OF MAY . . . . .	422
Columbus . . . . .	203		
The Voyage of Maeldune . . . . .	208		
De Profundis . . . . .	211		
The Two Greetings . . . . .	212		
The Human Cry . . . . .	212		



"THE MIRROR CRACK'D FROM SIDE TO SIDE."—Page 2.



# THE LADY OF SHALOTT

AND OTHER POEMS.

## THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

### PART I.

ON either side the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye,  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
And thro' the field the road runs by  
    To many-tower'd Camelot;  
And up and down the people go,  
Gazing where the lilies blow  
Round an island there below,  
    The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
Little breezes dusk and shiver  
Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
By the island in the river  
    Flowing down to Camelot.  
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers,  
And the silent isle imbowers  
    The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,  
Slide the heavy barges trail'd  
By slow horses; and unhail'd  
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd  
    Skimming down to Camelot:  
But who hath seen her wave her hand?  
Or at the casement seen her stand?  
Or is she known in all the land,  
    The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early  
In among the bearded barley,  
Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
From the river winding clearly,  
    Down to tower'd Camelot:  
And by the moon the reaper weary,  
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
Listening, whispers 'Tis the fairy  
    Lady of Shalott.'

### PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day  
A magic web with colors gay.  
She has heard a whisper say,  
A curse is on her if she stay  
    To look down to Camelot.  
She knows not what the curse may be,  
And so she weaveth steadily,  
And little other care hath she,  
    The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear  
That hangs before her all the year,  
Shadows of the world appear.  
There she sees the highway near  
    Winding down to Camelot:  
There the river eddy whirls,  
And there the surly village-churls,  
And the red cloaks of market girls,  
    Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
An abbot on an ambling pad,  
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
    Goes by to tower'd Camelot;  
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue  
The knights come riding two and two:  
She hath no loyal knight and true,  
    The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights  
To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
For often thro' the silent nights  
A funeral, with plumes and lights  
    And music, went to Camelot:  
Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed;  
'I am half sick of shadows,' said  
    The Lady of Shalott.

## PART III.

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,  
 He rode between the barley-sheaves,  
 The sun came dazling thro' the leaves,  
 And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
 Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
 A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd  
 To a lady in his shield,  
 That sparkled on the yellow field,  
 Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,  
 Like to some branch of stars we see  
 Hung in the golden Galaxy.  
 The bridle bells rang merrily  
 As he rode down to Camelot:  
 And from his blazon'd baldric slung  
 A mighty silver bugle hung,  
 And as he rode his armor rung,  
 Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather  
 Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-  
 leather,  
 The helmet and the helmet-feather  
 Burn'd like one burning flame together,  
 As he rode down to Camelot.  
 As often thro' the purple night,  
 Below the starry clusters bright,  
 Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
 Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight  
 glow'd;  
 On burnish'd hooves his war-horse  
 trode;  
 From underneath his helmet flow'd  
 His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
 As he rode down to Camelot.  
 From the bank and from the river  
 He flash'd into the crystal mirror,  
 'Tirra lirra,' by the river  
 Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
 She made three paces thro' the room,  
 She saw the water-lily bloom,  
 She saw the helmet and the plume,  
 She look'd down to Camelot.  
 Out flew the web and floated wide;  
 The mirror crack'd from side to side;  
 'The curse is come upon me,' cried  
 The Lady of Shalott.

## PART IV.

IN the stormy east-wind straining,  
 The pale yellow woods were waning,  
 The broad stream in his banks com-  
 plaining,  
 Heavily the low sky raining  
 (Over tower'd Camelot;  
 Down she came and found a boat  
 Beneath a willow left afloat,  
 And round about the prow she wrote  
*The Lady of Shalott.*

And down the river's dim expanse  
 Like some bold seer in a trance,  
 Seeing all his own mischance—  
 With a glassy countenance  
 Did she look to Camelot.  
 And at the closing of the day  
 She loosed the chain, and down she  
 lay:  
 The broad stream bore her far away,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
 That loosely flew to left and right—  
 The leaves upon her falling light—  
 Thro' the noises of the night  
 She floated down to Camelot:  
 And as the boat-head wound along  
 The willowy hills and fields among,  
 They heard her singing her last song,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
 Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
 And her eyes were darken'd wholly,  
 Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.  
 For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
 The first house by the water-side,  
 Singing in her song she died,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
 By garden-wall and gallery,  
 A gleaming shape she floated by,  
 Dead-pale between the houses high,  
 Silent into Camelot.  
 Out upon the wharfs they came,  
 Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
 And round the prow they read her  
 name,  
*The Lady of Shalott.*



Who is this? and what is here?  
 And in the lighted palace near  
 Died the sound of royal cheer;  
 And they cross'd themselves for fear,  
 All the knights at Camelot:  
 But Lancelot mused a little space;  
 He said, 'She has a lovely face;  
 God in his mercy lend her grace,  
 The Lady of Shalott.'

## MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

WITH one black shadow at its feet,  
 The house thro' all the level shines,  
 Close-latticed to the brooding heat,  
 And silent in its dusty vines:  
 A faint-blue ridge upon the right,  
 An empty river-bed before,  
 And shallows on a distant shore,  
 In glaring sand and inlets bright.

But 'Ave Mary,' made she moan,  
 And 'Ave Mary,' night and  
 morn,  
 And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all  
 alone,  
 To live forgotten, and love for-  
 lorn.'

She, as her carol sadder grew,  
 From brow and bosom slowly down  
 Thro' rosy taper fingers drew  
 Her streaming curls of deepest  
 brown  
 To left and right, and made appear  
 Still-lighted in a secret shrine,  
 Her melancholy eyes divine,  
 The home of woe without a tear.

And 'Ave Mary,' was her moan,  
 'Madonna, sad is night and  
 morn,'  
 And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all  
 alone,  
 To live forgotten, and love for-  
 lorn.'

Till all the crimson changed, and past  
 Into deep orange o'er the sea,  
 Low on her knees herself she cast,  
 Before Our Lady murmur'd she;  
 Complaining, 'Mother, give me grace  
 To help me of my weary load.'

And on the liquid mirror glow'd  
 The clear perfection of her face.  
 'Is this the form,' she made her  
 moan,  
 'That won his praises night and  
 morn?'  
 And 'Ah,' she said, 'but I wake  
 alone,  
 I sleep forgotten, I wake for-  
 lorn.'

Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would  
 bleat,  
 Nor any cloud would cross the vault,  
 But day increased from heat to heat,  
 On stony drought and steaming salt;  
 Till now at noon she slept again,  
 And seem'd knee-deep in mountain  
 grass,  
 And heard her native breezes pass,  
 And runlets babbling down the glen.  
 She breathed in sleep a lower  
 moan,  
 And murmuring, as at night  
 and morn,  
 She thought, 'My spirit is here  
 alone,  
 Walks forgotten, and is forlorn.'

Dreaming, she knew it was a dream:  
 She felt he was and was not there.  
 She woke: the babble of the stream  
 Fell, and, without, the steady glare,  
 Shrank one sick willow sere and  
 small.

The river-bed was dusty-white;  
 And all the furnace of the light  
 Struck up against the blinding wall.  
 She whisper'd, with a stifled moan  
 More inward than at night or  
 morn,  
 'Sweet Mother, let me not here  
 alone  
 Live forgotten and die forlorn.'

And, rising, from her bosom drew  
 Old letters, breathing of her worth,  
 For 'Love,' they said, 'must needs be  
 true,  
 To what is loveliest upon earth.'  
 An image seem'd to pass the door,  
 To look at her with slight, and say

'But now thy beauty flows away,  
So be alone for evermore.'  
'O cruel heart,' she changed her  
tone,  
'And cruel love, whose end is  
scorn,  
Is this the end to be left alone,  
To live forgotten, and die for-  
lorn?'

But sometimes in the falling day  
An image seem'd to pass the door,  
To look into her eyes and say,  
'But thou shalt be alone no more.'  
And flaming downward over all  
From heat to heat the day de-  
creased,  
And slowly rounded to the east  
The one black shadow from the wall.  
'The day to night,' she made her  
moan,  
'The day to night, the night to  
morn,  
And day and night I am left alone  
To live forgotten, and love for-  
lorn.

At eve a dry cicala sung,  
There came a sound as of the sea ;  
Backward the lattice-blind she flung,  
And lean'd upon the balcony.  
There all in spaces rosy-bright  
Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,  
And deepening thro' the silent  
spheres  
Heaven over Heaven rose the night.  
And weeping then she made her moan,  
'The night comes on that knows  
not morn,  
When I shall cease to be all alone,  
To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

#### THE TWO VOICES.

A STILL small voice spake unto me,  
'Thou art so full of misery,  
Were it not better not to be?'

Then to the still small voice I said ;  
'Let me not cast in endless shade  
What is so wonderfully made.'

To which the voice did urge reply ;  
'To-day I saw the dragon-fly  
Come from the wells where he did lie.

'An inner impulse rent the veil  
Of his old husk : from head to tail  
Came out clear plates of sapphire  
mail.

'He dried his wings : like gauze they  
grew ;  
Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew  
A living flash of light he flew.'

I said, 'When first the world began,  
Young Nature thro' five cycles ran,  
And in the sixth she moulded man.

'She gave him mind, the lordliest  
Proportion, and, above the rest,  
Dominion in the head and breast.'

Thereto the silent voice replied ;  
'Self-blinded are you by your pride :  
Look up thro' night : the world is wide.

'This truth within thy mind rehearse,  
That in a boundless universe  
Is boundless better, boundless worse.

'Think you this mould of hopes and  
fears  
Could find no statelier than his peers  
In yonder hundred million spheres?'

It spake, moreover, in my mind :  
'Tho' thou wert scatter'd to the wind,  
Yet is there plenty of the kind.'

Then did my response clearer fall :  
'No compound of this earthly ball  
Is like another, all in all.'

To which he answer'd scoffingly ;  
'Good soul I suppose I grant it thee,  
Who'll weep for thy deficiency?

'Or will one beam be less intense,  
When thy peculiar difference  
Is cancell'd in the world of sense?'

I would have said, 'Thou canst not  
know.'

But my full heart, that work'd below,  
Rain'd thro' my sight its overflow.

Again the voice spake unto me :  
'Thou art so steep'd in misery,  
Surely 'twere better not to be.

'Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,  
Nor any train of reason keep :  
Thou canst not think, but thou wilt weep.'

I said, 'The years with change ad-  
vance :

If I make dark my countenance,  
I shut my life from happier chance.

'Some turn this sickness yet might  
take,  
Ev'n yet.' But he: 'What drug can make  
A wither'd palsy cease to shake?'

I wept, 'Tho' I should die, I know  
That all about the thorn will blow  
In tufts of rosy-tinted snow ;

'And men, thro' novel spheres of  
thought  
Still moving after truth long sought,  
Will learn new things when I am not.'

'Yet,' said the secret voice, 'some  
time,  
Sooner or later, will gray prime  
Make thy grass hoar with early rime.

'Not less swift souls that yearn for  
light,  
Rapt after heaven's starry flight,  
Would sweep the tracts of day and  
night.

'Not less the bee would range her cells,  
The furzy prickly fire the dells,  
The foxglove cluster dappled bells.'

I said that 'all the years invent ;  
Each month is various to present  
The world with some development.

'Were this not well, to bide mine hour,  
Tho' watching from a ruin'd tower  
How grows the day of human power?'

'The highest-mounted mind,' he said,  
'Still sees the sacred morning spread  
The silent summit overhead.

'Will thirty seasons render plain  
Those lonely lights that still remain,  
Just breaking over land and main?'

'Or make that morn, from his cold  
crown  
And crystal silence creeping down,  
Flood with full daylight glebe and  
town?'

'Forerun thy peers, thy time, and let  
Thy feet, millenniums hence, be set  
In midst of knowledge, dream'd not  
yet.

'Thou hast not gain'd a real height,  
Nor art thou nearer to the light,  
Because the scale is infinite.

'Twere better not to breathe or speak,  
Than cry for strength, remaining weak,  
And seem to find, but still to seek.

'Moreover, but to seem to find  
Asks what thou lackest, thought  
resign'd,  
A healthy frame, a quiet mind.'

I said, 'When I am gone away,  
'He dared not tarry,' men will say,  
Doing dishonor to my clay.'

'This is more vile,' he made reply,  
'To breathe and loathe, to live and  
sigh,  
Than once from dread of pain to die.

'Sick art thou—a divided will  
Still heaping on the fear of ill  
The fear of men, a coward still.

'Do men love thee? Art thou so  
bound  
To men, that how thy name may sound  
Will vex thee lying underground?'

'The memory of the wither'd leaf  
In endless time is scarce more brief  
Than of the garner'd Autumna-sheaf.

'Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust;  
The right ear, that is fill'd with dust,  
Hears little of the false or just.'

'Hard task, to pluck resolve,' I cried,  
'From emptiness and the waste wide  
Of that abyss, or scornful pride!

'Nay—rather yet that I could raise  
One hope that warm'd me in the days  
While still I yearn'd for human praise.

'When, wide in soul and bold of  
tongue,  
Among the tents I paused and sung,  
The distant battle flash'd and rung.

'I sung the joyful Pæan clear,  
And, sitting, burnish'd without fear  
The brand, the buckler, and the  
spear—

'Waiting to strive a happy strife,  
To war with falsehood to the knife,  
And not to lose the good of life—

'Some hidden principle to move,  
To put together, part and prove,  
And mete the bounds of hate and  
love—

'As far as might be, to carve out  
Free space for every human doubt,  
That the whole mind might orb  
about—

'To search thro' all I felt or saw,  
The springs of life, the depths of awe,  
And reach the law within the law:

'At least, not rotting like a weed,  
But, having sown some generous seed,  
Fruitful of further thought and deed,

'To pass, when Life her light with-  
draws,  
Not void of righteous self-applause,  
Nor in a merely selfish cause—

'In some good cause, not in mine own,  
To perish, wept for, honor'd, known,  
And like a warrior overthrown;

'Whose eyes are dim with glorious  
tears,  
When, soil'd with noble dust, he hears  
His country's war-song thrill his ears:

'Then dying of a mortal stroke,  
What time the foeman's line is broke,  
And all the war is roll'd in smoke.'

'Yea!' said the voice, 'thy dream  
was good,  
While thou abodest in the bud.  
It was the stirring of the blood.

'If Nature put not forth her power  
About the opening of the flower,  
Who is it that could live an hour?

'Then comes the check, the change,  
the fall,  
Pain rises up, old pleasures pall.  
There is one remedy for all.

'Yet hadst thou, thro' enduring pain,  
Link'd month to month with such a  
chain  
Of knitted purport, all were vain.

'Thou hadst not between death and  
birth  
Dissolved the riddle of the earth.  
So were thy labor little-worth.

'That men with knowledge merely  
play'd,  
I told thee—hardly nigher made,  
Tho' scaling slow from grade to  
grade;

'Much less this dreamer, deaf and  
blind,  
Named man, may hope some truth to  
find,  
That bears relation to the mind.

'For every worm beneath the moon  
Draws different threads, and late and  
soon  
Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.

'Cry, faint not: either Truth is born  
Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,  
Or in the gateways of the morn.

'Cry, faint not, climb: the summits  
slope  
Beyond the furthest flights of hope,  
Wrapt in dense cloud from base to  
cope.

'Sometimes a little corner shines,  
As over rainy mist inclines  
A gleaming crag with belts of pines.

'I will go forward, sayest thou,  
I shall not fail to find her now.  
Look up, the fold is on her brow.

'If straight thy track, or if oblique,  
Thou know'st not. Shadows thou  
dost strike,  
Embracing cloud, Ixion-like;

'And owning but a little more  
Than beasts, abidest lame and poor,  
Calling thyself a little lower

'Than angels. Cease to wail and  
brawl!  
Why inch by inch to darkness crawl?  
There is one remedy for all.'

'O dull, one-sided voice,' said I,  
'Wilt thou make everything a lie,  
To flatter me that I may die?

'I know that age to age succeeds,  
Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,  
A dust of systems and of creeds.

'I cannot hide that some have striven,  
Achieving calm, to whom was given  
The joy that mixes man with Heaven:

'Who, rowing hard against the  
stream,  
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,  
And did not dream it was a dream;

'But heard, by secret transport led,  
Ev'n in the charnels of the dead,  
The murmur of the fountain-head—

'Which did accomplish their desire,  
Bore and forebore, and did not tire,  
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.

'He heeded not reviling tones,  
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,  
Tho' cursed and scorn'd, and bruised  
with stones:

'But looking upward, full of grace,  
He pray'd, and from a happy place  
God's glory smote him on the face.'

The sullen answer slid betwixt:  
'Not that the grounds of hope were  
fix'd,  
The elements were kindlier mix'd.'

I said, 'I toil beneath the curse,  
But, knowing not the universe,  
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

'And that, in seeking to undo  
One riddle, and to find the true,  
I knit a hundred others new:

'Or that this anguish fleeting hence,  
Unmanacled from bonds of sense,  
Be fix'd and froz'n to permanence:

'For I go, weak from suffering here:  
Naked I go, and void of cheer:  
What is it that I may not fear?'

'Consider well,' the voice replied,  
'His face, that two hours since hath  
died;  
Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride?

'Will he obey when one commands?  
Or answer should one press his  
hands?  
He answers not, nor understands.

'His palms are folded on his breast:  
There is no other thing express'd  
But long disquiet merged in rest.

'His lips are very mild and meek:  
Tho' one should smite him on the  
cheek,  
And on the mouth, he will not speak.

'His little daughter, whose sweet face  
He kiss'd, taking his last embrace,  
Becomes dishonor to her race—

'His sons grow up that bear his name,  
Some grow to honor, some to shame,—  
But he is chill to praise or blame.

'He will not hear the north-wind rave,  
Nor, moaning, household shelter crave  
From winter rains that beat his grave.

'High up the vapors fold and swim :  
About him broods the twilight dim :  
The place he knew forgetteth him.'

'If all be dark, vague voice,' I said,  
'These things are wrapt in doubt and dread,  
Nor canst thou show the dead are dead.

'The sap dries up : the plant declines.  
A deeper tale my heart divines.  
Know I not Death? the outward signs?

'I found him when my years were few ;  
A shadow on the graves I knew,  
And darkness in the village yew.

'From grave to grave the shadow crept :  
In her still place the morning wept :  
Touch'd by his feet the daisy slept.

'The simple senses crown'd his head :  
"Omega! thou art Lord," they said,  
"We find no motion in the dead."

'Why, if man rot in dreamless ease,  
Should that plain fact, as taught by these,  
Not make him sure that he shall cease?

'Who forged that other influence,  
That heat of inward evidence,  
By which he doubts against the sense?

'He owns the fatal gift of eyes,  
That read his spirit blindly wise,  
Not simple as a thing that dies.

'Here sits he shaping wings to fly :  
His heart forebodes a mystery :  
He names the name Eternity.

'That type of Perfect in his mind  
In Nature can he nowhere find.  
He sows himself on every wind.

'He seems to hear a Heavenly Friend,  
And thro' thick veils to apprehend  
A labor working to an end.

'The end and the beginning vex  
His reason : many things perplex,  
With motions, checks, and counter-checks.

'He knows a baseness in his blood  
At such strange war with something good,  
He may not do the thing he would.

'Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,  
Vast images in glimmering dawn,  
Half shown, are broken and withdrawn.

'Ah! sure within him and without,  
Could his dark wisdom find it out,  
There must be answer to his doubt,

'But thou canst answer not again.  
With thine own weapon art thou slain,  
Or thou wilt answer but in vain.

'The doubt would rest, I dare not solve.  
In the same circle we revolve.  
Assurance only breeds resolve.'

As when a billow, blown against,  
Falls back, the voice with which I fenced  
A little ceased, but recommenced.

'Where wert thou when thy father play'd  
In his free field, an' pastime made,  
A merry boy in sun and shade?

'A merry boy they call'd him then,  
He sat upon the knees of men  
In days that never come again.

' Before the little ducts began  
To feed thy bones with lime, and ran  
Their course, till thou wert also man :

' Who took a wife, who rear'd his  
race,  
Whose wrinkles gather'd on his face,  
Whose troubles number with his  
days :

' A life of nothings, nothing-worth,  
From that first nothing ere his birth  
To that last nothing under earth !'

' These words,' I said, ' are like the  
rest ;  
No certain clearness, but at best  
A vague suspicion of the breast :

' But if I grant, thou mightst defend  
The thesis which thy words intend—  
That to begin implies to end ;

' Yet how should I for certain hold,  
Because my memory is so cold,  
That I first was in human mould ?

' I cannot make this matter plain,  
But I would shoot, howe'er in vain,  
A random arrow from the brain.

' It may be that no life is found,  
Which only to one engine bound  
Falls off, but cycles always round.

' As old mythologies relate,  
Some draught of Lethe might await  
The slipping thro' from state to state.

' As here we find in trances, men  
Forget the dream that happens then,  
Until they fall in trance again.

' So might we, if our state were such  
As one before, remember much,  
For those two likes might meet and  
touch.

' But, if I lapsed from nobler place,  
Some legend of a fallen raece  
Alone might hint of my disgrace ;

' Some vague emotion of delight  
In gazing up an Alpine height,  
Some yearning toward the lamps of  
night ;

' Or if thro' lower lives I came—  
Tho' all experience past became  
Consolidate in mind and frame—

' I might forget my weaker lot ;  
For is not our first year forgot ?  
The haunts of memory echo not.

' And men, whose reason long was  
blind,  
From cells of madness unconfined,  
Of lose whole years of darker mind.

' Much more, if first I floated free,  
As naked essence, must I be  
Incompetent of memory :

' For memory dealing but with time,  
And he with matter, could she climb  
Beyond her own material prime ?

' Moreover, something is or seems,  
That touches me with mystic gleams,  
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—

' Of something felt, like something  
here ;  
Of something done, I know not  
where ;  
Such as no language may declare.'

The still voice laugh'd. ' I talk,' said  
he,

' Not with thy dreams. Suffice it  
thee  
Thy pain is a reality.'

' But thou,' said I, ' hast missed thy  
mark,  
Who sought'st to wreck my mortal  
ark,  
By making all the horizon dark.

' Why not set forth, if I should do  
This rashness, that which might  
ensure  
With this old soul in organs new ?

' Whatever crazy sorrow saith,  
No life that breathes with human  
breath  
Has ever truly long'd for death.

' 'Tis life, whereof our nerves are  
scant,  
Oh life, not death, for which we pant;  
More life, and fuller, that I want.'

I ceased, and sat as one forlorn.  
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn,  
' Behold, it is the Sabbath morn.'

And I arose, and I released  
The casement, and the light increased  
With freshness in the dawning east.

Like soften'd airs that blowing steal,  
When meres begin to uncongeal,  
The sweet church bells began to peal.

On to God's house the people prest:  
Passing the place where each must  
rest,  
Each enter'd like a welcome guest.

One walk'd between his wife and  
child,  
With measured footfall firm and mild,  
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood  
Lean'd on him, faithful, gentle, good,  
Wearing the rose of womanhood.

And in their double love secure,  
The little maiden walk'd demure,  
Pacing with downward eyelids pure.

These thrée made unity so sweet,  
My frozen heart began to beat,  
Remembering its ancient heat.

I blest them, and they wander'd on:  
I spoke, but answer came there none:  
The dull and bitter voice was gone.

A second voice was at mine ear,  
A little whisper silver-clear,  
A murmur, ' Be of better cheer.'

As from some blissful neighborhood,  
A notice faintly understood,  
' I see the end, and know the good.'

A little hint to solace woe,  
A hint, a whisper breathing low,  
' I may not speak of what I know.'

Like an Æolian harp that wakes  
No certain air, but overtakes  
Far thought with music that it  
makes :

Such seem'd the whisper at my side :  
' What is it thou knowest, sweet  
voice?' I cried.  
' A hidden hope,' the voice replied :

So heavenly-toned, that in that hour  
From out my sullen heart a power  
Broke, like the rainbow from the  
shower,

To feel, altho' no tongue can prove,  
That every cloud; that spreads above  
And veileth love, itself is love.

And forth into the fields I went,  
And Nature's living motion lent  
The pulse of hope to discontent.

I wonder'd at the bounteous hours,  
The slow result of winter showers:  
You scarce could see the grass for  
flowers.

I wonder'd, while I paced along :  
The woods were fill'd so full with  
song,  
There seem'd no room for sense of  
wrong ;

And all so variously wrought,  
I marvel'd how the mind was brought  
To anchor by one gloomy thought ;

And wherefore rather I made choice  
To commune with that barren voice,  
Than him that said, ' Rejoice !  
Rejoice !'



THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

I SEE the wealthy miller yet,  
His double chin, his portly size,  
And who that knew him could forget  
The busy wrinkles round his eyes?  
The slow wise smile that, round about  
His dusty forehead drily curl'd,  
Seem'd half-within and half-without,  
And full of dealings with the  
world?

In yonder chair I see him sit,  
Three fingers round the old silver  
cup—  
I see his gray eyes twinkle yet  
At his own jest—gray eyes lit up  
With summer lightnings of a soul  
So full of summer warmth, so glad,  
So healthy, sound, and clear and  
whole,  
His memory scarce can make me  
sad.

Yet fill my glass: give me one kiss:  
My own sweet Alice, we must die.  
There's somewhat in this world amiss  
Shall be unriddled by and by.  
There's somewhat flows to us in life,  
But more is taken quite away.  
Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,  
That we may die the self-same day.

Have I not found a happy earth?  
I least should breathe a thought of  
pain.  
Would God renew me from my birth  
I'd almost live my life again.  
So sweet it seems with thee to walk,  
And once again to woo thee mine—  
It seems in after-dinner talk  
Across the walnuts and the wine—

To be the long and listless boy  
Late-left an orphan of the squire,  
Where this old mansion mounted  
nigh  
Looks down upon the village spire:  
For even here, where I and you  
Have lived and loved alone so  
long,  
Each morn my sleep was broken thro'  
By some wild skylark's matin song.

And oft I heard the tender dove  
In firry woodlands making moan;  
But ere I saw your eyes, my love,  
I had no motion of my own.  
For scarce my life with fancy play'd  
Before I dream'd that pleasant  
dream—  
Still hither thither idly sway'd  
Like those long mosses in the  
stream.

Or from the bridge I lean'd to hear  
The milldam rushing down with  
noise,  
And see the minnows everywhere  
In crystal eddies glance and poise,  
The tall flag-flowers when they sprung  
Below the range of stepping-stones,  
Or those three chestnuts near, that  
hung  
In masses thick with milky cones.

But, Alice, what an hour was that,  
When after roving in the woods  
('Twas April then), I came and sat  
Below the chestnuts, when their  
buds  
Were glistening to the breezy blue;  
And on the slope, an absent fool,  
I cast me down, nor thought of you,  
But angled in the higher pool.

A love-song I had somewhere read,  
An echo from a measured strain,  
Beat time to nothing in my head  
From some odd corner of the  
brain.  
It haunted me, the morning long,  
With weary sameness in the rhymes,  
The phantom of a silent song,  
That went and came a thousand  
times.

Then leapt a trout. In lazy mood  
I watch'd the little circles die;  
They past into the level flood,  
And there a vision caught my eye;  
The reflex of a beauteous form,  
A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,  
As when a sunbeam wavers warm  
Within the dark and dimpled beck.

For you remember, you had set,  
That morning, on the casement-edge  
A long green box of mignonette,  
And you were leaning from the  
ledge:

And when I raised my eyes, above  
They met with two so full and  
bright—

Such eyes! I swear to you, my love,  
That these have never lost their  
light.

I loved, and love dispell'd the fear  
That I should die an early death:  
For love possess'd the atmosphere,  
And fill'd the breast with purer  
breath.

My mother thought, What ails the  
boy?

For I was alter'd, and began  
To move about the house with joy,  
And with the certain step of man.

I loved the brimming wave that swam  
Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,  
The sleepy pool above the dam,  
The pool beneath it never still,  
The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,  
The dark round of the dripping  
wheel,

The very air about the door  
Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the wold,  
When April nights began to blow,  
And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,  
I saw the village lights below;

I knew your taper far away,  
And full at heart of trembling hope,  
From off the wold I came, and lay  
Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

The deep brook groan'd beneath the  
mill;

And 'by that lamp,' I thought, 'she  
sits!'

The white chalk-quarry from the hill  
Gleam'd to the flying moon by fits.

'O that I were beside her now!

O will she answer if I call?

O would she give me vow for vow,  
Sweet Alice, if I told her all?

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin;  
And, in the pauses of the wind,  
Sometimes I heard you sing within;  
Sometimes your shadow cross'd the  
blind.

At last you rose and moved the light,  
And the long shadow of the chair  
Flitted across into the night,

And all the casement darken'd  
there.

But when at last I dared to speak,

The lanes, you know, were white  
with may,  
Your ripe lips moved not, but your  
cheek

Flush'd like the coming of the day;  
And so it was—half-sly, half-shy.

You would, and would not, little  
one!

Although I pleaded tenderly,  
And you and I were all alone.

And slowly was my mother brought

To yield consent to my desire:  
She wish'd me happy, but she thought  
I might have look'd a little higher;

And I was young—too young to wed:  
'Yet must I love her for your sake;  
Go fetch your Alice here,' she said:  
Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride:

But, Alice, you were ill at ease;  
This dress and that by turns you tried,  
Too fearful that you should not  
please.

I loved you better for your fears,  
I knew you could not look but well;  
And dews, that would have fall'n in  
tears,

I kiss'd away before they fell.

I watch'd the little flutterings,

The doubt my mother would not see;  
She spoke at large of many things,  
And at the last she spoke of me;

And turning look'd upon your face,  
As near this door you sat apart,  
And rose, and, with a silent grace  
Approaching, press'd you heart to  
heart.

Ah, well—but sing the foolish song  
I gave you, Alice, on the day  
When, arm in arm, we went along,  
A pensive pair, and you were gay  
With bridal flowers—that I may seem,  
As in the nights of old, to lie  
Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,  
While those full chestnuts whisper  
by.

It is the miller's daughter,  
And she is grown so dear, so dear,  
That I would be the jewel  
That trembles in her ear:  
For hid in ringlets day and night,  
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle  
About her dainty dainty waist,  
And her heart would beat against me,  
In sorrow and in rest:  
And I should know if it beat right,  
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace.  
And all day long to fall and rise  
Upon her balmy bosom,  
With her laughter or her sighs,  
And I would lie so light, so light,  
I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

A trifle, sweet! which true love  
spells—  
True love interprets—right alone.  
His light upon the letter dwells,  
For all the spirit is his own.  
So, if I waste words now, in truth  
You must blame Love. His early  
rage  
Had force to make me rhyme in  
youth,  
And makes me talk too much in  
age.

And now those vivid hours are gone,  
Like mine own life to me thou art,  
Where Past and Present, wound in  
one,  
Do make a garland for the heart:  
So sing that other song I made,  
Half-anger'd with my happy lot,  
The day, when in the chestnut shade  
I found the blue Forget-me-not.

Love that bath us in the net.  
Can be pass, and we forget?  
Many suns arise and set.  
Many a chance the years beget.  
Love the gift is Love the debt.  
Even so.

Love is hurt with jar and fret.  
Love is made a vague regret.  
Eyes with idle tears are wet.  
Idle habit links us yet.  
What is love? for we forget:  
Ab, no! no!

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True  
wife,  
Round my true heart thine arms en-  
twine  
My other dearer life in life,  
Look thro' my very soul with thine!  
Untouch'd with any shade of years,  
May those kind eyes forever dwell!  
They have not shed a many tears,  
Dear eyes, since first I knew them  
well.

Yet tears they shed: they had their  
part  
Of sorrow: for when time was ripe,  
The still affection of the heart  
Became an outward breathing type,  
That into stillness passed again,  
And left a want unknown before;  
Although the loss had brought us pain,  
That loss but made us love the  
more,

With farther lookings on. The kiss,  
The woven arms, seem but to be  
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,  
The comfort, I have found in thee:  
But that God bless thee, dear—who  
wrought  
Two spirits to one equal mind—  
With blessings beyond hope or  
thought,  
With blessings which no words can  
find.

Arise, and let us wander forth,  
To yon old mill across the wolds;  
For look, the sunset, south and north.  
Winds all the vale in rosy folds,

And fires your narrow casement glass,  
Touching the sullen pool below :  
On the chalk-hill the bearded grass  
Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

## FATIMA.

O LOVE, Love, Love! O withering  
might!  
O sun, that from thy noonday height  
Shudderest when I strain my sight,  
'Throbbing thro' all thy heat and light,  
Lo, falling from my constant mind,  
Lo, parch'd and wither'd, dead and  
blind,  
I whirl like leaves in roaring wind.

Last night I wasted hateful hours  
Below the city's eastern towers :  
I thirsted for the brooks, the showers :  
I roll'd among the tender flowers :  
I crush'd them on my breast, my  
mouth ;  
I look'd athwart the burning drouth  
Of that long desert to the south.

Last night, when some one spoke his  
name,  
From my swift blood that went and  
came  
A thousand little shafts of flame  
Were shiver'd in my narrow frame.  
O Love, O fire! once he drew  
With one long kiss my whole soul  
thro'  
My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

Before he mounts the hill, I know  
He cometh quickly : from below  
Sweet gales, as from deep gardens,  
blow  
Before him, striking on my brow.  
In my dry brain my spirit soon,  
Down-deepening from swoon to  
swoon,  
Faints like a dazzled morning moon.

The wind sounds like a silver wire,  
And from beyond the noon a fire  
Is pour'd upon the hills, and nigher  
The skies stoop down in their desire ;  
And, isled in sudden seas of light,

My heart, pierced thro' with fierce  
delight,  
Bursts into blossom in his sight.

My whole soul waiting silently,  
All naked in a sultry sky,  
Droops blinded with his shining eye :  
I *will* possess him or will die.  
I will grow round him in his place,  
Grow, live, die looking on his face,  
Die, dying clasped in his embrace.

## CENONE.

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier  
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.  
The swimming vapor slopes athwart  
the glen,  
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from  
pine to pine,  
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either  
hand  
The lawns and meadow-ledges mid-  
way down  
Hang rich in flowers, and far below  
them roars  
The long brook falling thro' the  
clov'n ravine  
In cataract after cataract to the sea.  
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus  
Stands up and takes the morning :  
but in front  
The gorges, opening wide apart, re-  
veal  
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,  
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon  
Mournful Cenone, wandering forlorn  
Of Paris, once her playmate on the  
hills.  
Her cheek had lost the rose, and  
round her neck  
Floated her hair or seem'd to float in  
rest.  
She, leaning on a fragment twined  
with vine,  
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-  
shade  
Sloped downward to her seat from the  
upper cliff.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd  
 Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 For now the noonday quiet holds the  
 hill :  
 The grasshopper is silent in the grass :  
 The lizard, with his shadow on the  
 stone,  
 Rests like a shadow, and the winds  
 are dead.  
 The purple flower droops : the golden  
 bee  
 Is lily-cradled : I alone awake.  
 My eyes are full of tears, my heart of  
 love,  
 My heart is breaking, and my eyes are  
 dim,  
 And I am all aweary of my life.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd  
 Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills,  
 O Caves  
 That house the cold crown'd snake !  
 O mountain brooks,  
 I am the daughter of a River-God,  
 Hear me, for I will speak, and build  
 up all  
 My sorrow with my song, as yonder  
 walls  
 Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,  
 A cloud that gather'd shape : for it  
 may be  
 That, while I speak of it, a little while  
 My heart may wander from its deeper  
 woe.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd  
 Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 I waited underneath the dawning  
 hills,  
 Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-  
 dark,  
 And dewy-dark aloft the mountain  
 pine :  
 Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,  
 Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,  
 white-hooved,  
 Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.

Far off the torrent call'd me from the  
 cleft :  
 Far up the solitary morning smote  
 The streaks of virgin snow. With  
 down-dropt eyes  
 I sat alone : white-breasted like a star  
 Fronting the dawn he moved ; a leap-  
 ard skin  
 Droop'd from his shoulder, but his  
 sunny hair  
 Cluster'd about his temples like a  
 God's :  
 And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-  
 bow brightens  
 When the wind blows the foam, and  
 all my heart  
 Went forth to embrace him coming  
 ere he came.

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 He smiled, and opening out his milk-  
 white palm  
 Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian  
 gold,  
 That smelt ambrosially, and while I  
 look'd  
 And listen'd, the full-flowing river of  
 speech  
 Came down upon my heart.

"My own *Cenone*,  
 Beautiful-brow'd *Cenone*, my own soul,  
 Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind  
 ingrav'n  
 'For the most fair,' would seem to  
 award it thine,  
 As lovelier than whatever *Oread*  
 haunt  
 The knolls of *Ida*, loveliest in all grace  
 Of movement, and the charm of  
 married brows."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 He prest the blossom of his lips to  
 mine,  
 And added "This was cast upon the  
 board,  
 When all the full-faced presence of  
 the Gods  
 Ranged in the halls of *Peleus* ; where-  
 upon  
 Rose feud, with question unto whom  
 'twere due :

But light-foot Iris brought it yester-  
 eve,  
 Delivering, that to me, by common  
 voice  
 Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,  
 Pallas and Aphroditè, claiming each  
 This meed of fairest. Thou, within  
 the cave  
 Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest  
 pine,  
 Mayst well behold them unbeheld,  
 unheard  
 Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of  
 Gods."

' Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 It was the deep midnoon: one silvery  
 cloud  
 Had lost his way between the piney  
 sides  
 Of this long glen. Then to the bower  
 they came,  
 Naked they came to that smooth-  
 swarded bower,  
 And at their feet the crocus brake like  
 fire,  
 Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,  
 Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,  
 And overhead the wandering ivy and  
 vine,  
 This way and that, in many a wild  
 festoon  
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled  
 boughs  
 With bunch and berry and flower thro'  
 and thro'.

' O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,  
 And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud,  
 and lean'd  
 Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant  
 dew.  
 Then first I heard the voice of her, to  
 whom  
 Coming thro' Heaven, like a light  
 that grows  
 Larger and clearer, with one mind the  
 Gods  
 Rise up for reverence. She to Paris  
 made  
 Proffer of royal power, ample rule  
 Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue

Wherewith to embellish state, "from  
 many a vale  
 And river-sunder'd champaign clothed  
 with corn,  
 Or labor'd mine undrainable of ore.  
 Honor," she said, "and homage, tax  
 and toll,  
 From many an inland town and haven  
 large,  
 Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing  
 citadel  
 In glassy bays among her tallest  
 towers."

' O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Still she spake on and still she spake  
 of power,  
 "Which in all action is the end of  
 all;  
 Power fitted to the season; wisdom-  
 bred  
 And throned of wisdom—from all  
 neighbor crowns  
 Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand  
 Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such  
 boon from me,  
 From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to  
 thee king-born,  
 A shepherd all thy life but yet king-  
 born,  
 Should come most welcome, seeing  
 men, in power  
 Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd  
 Rest in a happy place and quiet seats  
 Above the thunder, with undying bliss  
 In knowledge of their own suprem-  
 acy."

' Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly  
 fruit  
 Out at arm's-length, so much the  
 thought of power  
 Flatter'd his spirit; but Pallas where  
 she stood  
 Somewhat apart, her clear and bared  
 limbs  
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed  
 spear  
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning  
 cold,  
 The while, above, her full and earnest  
 eye

Over her snow-cold breast and angry  
check  
Kept watch, waiting decision, made  
reply.

“Self-reverence, self-knowledge,  
self-control,  
These three alone lead life to sovereign  
power.  
Yet not for power (power of herself  
Would come uncall'd for) but to live  
by law,  
Acting the law we live by without  
fear;  
And, because right is right, to follow  
right  
Were wisdom in the scorn of conse-  
quence.”

‘Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Again she said: “I woo thee not with  
gifts.  
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me  
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I  
am,  
So shalt thou find me fairest.  
Yet, indeed,  
If gazing on divinity disrobed  
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of  
fair,  
Unbias'd by self-profit, oh! rest thee  
sure  
That I shall love thee well and cleave  
to thee,  
So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,  
Shall strike within thy pulses, like a  
God's,  
To push thee forward thro' a life of  
shocks,  
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance  
grow  
Sinew'd with action, and the full-  
grown will,  
Circl'd thro' all experiences, pure law,  
Commensure perfect freedom.”

‘Here she ceas'd,  
And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, “O  
Paris,  
Give it to Pallas!” but he heard me  
not,  
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is  
me!

‘O mother Ida, many-fountain'd  
Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Idalian Aphroditè beautiful,  
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in  
Paphian wells,  
With rosy slender fingers backward  
drew.  
From her warm brows and bosom her  
deep hair  
Ambrosial, golden round her lucid  
throat  
And shoulder: from the violets her  
light foot  
Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded  
form  
Between the shadows of the vine-  
bunches  
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she  
moved.

‘Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die  
She with a subtle smile in her mild  
eyes,  
The herald of her triumph, drawing  
nigh  
Half-whisper'd in his ear, “I promise  
thee  
The fairest and most loving wife in  
Greece,”  
She spoke and laugh'd: I shut my  
sight for fear:  
But when I look'd, Paris had raised  
his arm,  
And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,  
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,  
And I was left alone within the  
bower;  
And from that time to this I am alone,  
And I shall be alone until I die.

‘Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not  
fair?  
My love hath told me so a thousand  
times.  
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,  
When I past by, a wild and wanton  
pard,  
Eyed like the evening star, with play-  
ful tail  
Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most  
loving is she?

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that  
 my arms  
 Were wound about thee, and my hot  
 lips prest  
 Close, close to thine in that quick-  
 falling dew  
 Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn  
 rains  
 Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

'O mother, hear me yet before I  
 die.  
 They came, they cut away my tallest  
 pines,  
 My tall dark pines, that plumed the  
 craggy ledge  
 High over the blue gorge, and all  
 between  
 The snowy peak and snow-white cata-  
 ract  
 Foster'd the callow eaglet—from  
 beneath  
 Whose thick mysterious boughs in  
 the dark morn  
 The panther's roar came muffled,  
 while I sat  
 Low in the valley. Never, never more  
 Shall lone CEnone see the morning  
 mist  
 Sweep thro' them; never see them  
 overlaid  
 With narrow moon-lit slips of silver  
 cloud,  
 Between the loud stream and the  
 trembling stars.

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
 I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd  
 folds,  
 Among the fragments tumbled from  
 the glens,  
 Or the dry thickets, I could meet  
 with her  
 The Abominable, that uninvited came  
 Into the fair Peleïan banquet-hall,  
 And cast the golden fruit upon the  
 board,  
 And bred this change; that I might  
 speak my mind,  
 And tell her to her face how much I  
 hate  
 Her presence, hated both of Gods  
 and men.

'O mother, hear me yet before I  
 die.  
 Hath he not sworn his love a thou-  
 sand times,  
 In this green valley, under this green  
 hill,  
 Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this  
 stone?  
 Seal'd it with kisses? water'd it with  
 tears?  
 O happy tears, and how unlike to  
 these!  
 O happy Heaven, how canst thou see  
 my face?  
 O happy earth, how canst thou bear  
 my weight?  
 O death, death, death, thou ever-float-  
 ing cloud,  
 There are enough unhappy on this  
 earth,  
 Pass by the happy souls, that love to  
 live:  
 I pray thee, pass before my light of  
 life,  
 And shadow all my soul, that I may  
 die.  
 Thou weighest heavy on the heart  
 within,  
 Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me  
 die.

'O mother, hear me yet before I  
 die.  
 I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts  
 Do shape themselves within me, more  
 and more,  
 Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear  
 Dead sounds at night come from the  
 inmost hills,  
 Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly  
 see  
 My far-off doubtful purpose, as a  
 mother  
 Conjectures of the features of her  
 child  
 Ere it is born: her child!—a shudder  
 comes  
 Across me: never child be born of  
 me,  
 Unblest, to vex me with his father's  
 eyes!

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.



Hear me, O earth. I will not die  
alone,  
Lest their shrill happy laughter come  
to me  
Walking the cold and starless road of  
Death  
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love  
With the Greek woman. I will rise  
and go  
Down into Troy, and ere the stars  
come forth  
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she  
says  
A fire dances before her, and a sound  
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.  
What this may be I know not, but I  
know  
That, wheresoe'er I am by night and  
day,  
All earth and air seem only burning  
fire.'

THE SISTERS.

WE were two daughters of one race :  
She was the fairest in the face :  
The wind is blowing in turret and  
tree.  
They were together, and she fell ;  
Therefore revenge became me well.  
O the Earl was fair to see !  
  
She died : she went to burning flame :  
She mix'd her ancient blood with  
shame.  
The wind is howling in turret and  
tree.  
Whole weeks and months, and early  
and late,  
To win his love I lay in wait :  
O the Earl was fair to see !  
  
I made a feast ; I bad him come ;  
I won his love, I brought him home.  
The wind is roaring in turret and  
tree.  
And after supper, on a bed,  
Upon my lap he laid his head  
O the Earl was fair to see !  
  
I kiss'd his eyelids into rest :  
His ruddy cheek upon my breast.

The wind is raging in turret and  
tree.  
I hated him with the hate of hell,  
But I loved his beauty passing well.  
O the Earl was fair to see !

I rose up in the silent night :  
I made my dagger sharp and bright.  
The wind is raving in turret and  
tree.  
As half-asleep his breath he drew,  
Three times I stabb'd him thro' and  
thro'.  
O the Earl was fair to see !

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,  
He look'd so grand when he was  
dead.  
The wind is blowing in turret and  
tree.  
I wrapt his body in the sheet,  
And laid him at his mother's feet.  
O the Earl was fair to see !

TO —.

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I SEND you here a sort of allegory,  
(For you will understand it) of a soul,  
A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,  
A spacious garden full of flowering  
weeds,  
A glorious Devil, large in heart and  
brain,  
That did love Beauty only, (Beauty  
seen  
In all varieties of mould and mind)  
And Knowledge for its beauty ; or if  
Good,  
Good only for its beauty, seeing not  
That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge,  
are three sisters  
That doat upon each other, friends to  
man,  
Living together under the same roof,  
And never can be sunder'd without  
tears.  
And he that shuts Love out, in turn  
shall be  
Shut out from Love, and on her  
threshold lie

Howling in outer darkness. Not for  
 this  
 Was common clay ta'en from the  
 common earth  
 Moulded by God, and temper'd with  
 the tears  
 Of angels to the perfect shape of  
 man.

#### THE PALACE OF ART.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-  
 house,  
 Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.  
 I said, 'O Soul, make merry and  
 carouse,  
 Dear soul, for all is well.'

A huge crag-platform, smooth as  
 burnish'd brass  
 I chose. The ranged ramparts  
 bright  
 From level meadow-bases of deep  
 grass  
 Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or  
 shelf  
 The rock rose clear, or winding  
 stair.  
 My soul would live alone unto herself  
 In her high palace there.

And 'while the world runs round and  
 round,' I said,  
 'Reign thou apart, a quiet king,  
 Still as, while Saturn whirls, his sted-  
 fast shade  
 Sleeps on his luminous ring.'  
 To which my soul made answer  
 readily:  
 'Trust me, in bliss I shall abide  
 In this great mansion, that is built for  
 me,  
 So royal-rich and wide.'

\* \* \* \* \*

Four courts I made, East, West and  
 South and North,  
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom

The golden gorge of dragons spouted  
 forth  
 A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there  
 ran a row  
 Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty  
 woods,  
 Echoing all night to that sonorous flow  
 Of spouted fountain-floods.

And round the roofs a gilded gallery  
 That lent broad verge to distant  
 lands,  
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where  
 the sky  
 Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in  
 one swell  
 Across the mountain stream'd  
 below  
 In misty folds, that floating as they  
 fell  
 Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue  
 seem'd  
 To hang on tiptoe, tossing up  
 A cloud of incense of all odor steam'd  
 From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, 'And who shall  
 gaze upon  
 My palace with unblinded eyes,  
 While this great bow will waver in the  
 sun,  
 And that sweet incense rise?'

For that sweet incense rose and never  
 fail'd,  
 And, while day sank or mounted  
 higher,  
 The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,  
 Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd  
 and traced,  
 Would seem slow-flaming crimson  
 fires  
 From shadow'd grots of arches inter-  
 laced,  
 And tipt with frost-like spires.

\* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \*

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,  
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,  
Thro' which the live-long day my soul  
did pass,  
Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the  
palace stood,  
All various, each a perfect whole  
From living Nature, fit for every mood  
And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green  
and blue,  
Showing a gaudy summer-morn,  
Where with puff'd cheek the belted  
hunter blew  
His wretched bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract  
of sand,  
And some one pacing there alone,  
Who paced for ever in a glimmering  
land,  
Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry  
waves.  
You seem'd to hear them climb and  
fall  
And roar rock-thwarted under bellow-  
ing caves,  
Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow  
By herds upon an endless plain,  
The ragged rims of thunder brooding  
low,  
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry  
toil.  
In front they bound the sheaves.  
Behind  
Were realms of upland, prodigal in  
oil,  
And hoary to the wind.

And one a foreground black with  
stones and slags,

Beyond, a line of heights, and  
higher  
All barr'd with long white cloud the  
scornful crags,  
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twi-  
light pour'd  
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
Softer than sleep—all things in order  
stored,  
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape  
fair,  
As fit for every mood of mind,  
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern,  
was there  
Not less than truth design'd.

\* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \*

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,  
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,  
Beneath branch-work of costly sar-  
donyx  
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,  
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair  
Wound with white roses, slept St.  
Cecily;  
An angel look'd at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise  
A group of Houris bow'd to see  
The dying Islamite, with hands and  
eyes  
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded  
son  
In some fair space of sloping greens  
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,  
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his  
ear,  
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw  
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Auso-  
nian king to hear  
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,  
And many a tract of palm and rice,  
The throne of Indian Cama slowly  
sail'd

A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew  
unclasp'd,

From off her shoulder backward  
borne :

From one hand droop'd a crocus : one  
hand grasp'd

The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flush'd Ganymede, his rosy  
thigh

Half-buried in the Eagle's down,  
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky  
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone : but every legend fair  
Which the supreme Caucasian mind  
Carved out of Nature for itself, was  
there,

Not less than life, design'd.

\* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \*

Then in the towers I placed great  
bells that swung,

Moved of themselves, with silver  
sound ;

And with choice paintings of wise men  
I hung

The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph  
strong,

Beside him Shakespeare bland and  
mild ;

And there the world-worn Dante  
grasp'd his song,

And somewhat grimly smiled

And there the Ionian father of the  
rest ;

A million wrinkles carved his skin ;  
A hundred winters snow'd upon his  
breast,

From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set  
Many an arch high up did lift,

And angels rising and descending met  
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd  
With cycles of the human tale  
Of this wide world, the times of every  
land

So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden  
slow,

Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads  
and stings ;

Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro  
The heads and crowns of kings ;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break  
or bind

All force in bonds that might endure,  
And here once more like some sick  
man declined,

And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod : and those  
great bells

Began to chime. She took her  
throne :

She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,  
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost Oriels' colored  
flame

Two godlike faces gazed below ;

Plato the wise, and large-brow'd  
Verulam,

The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their  
motion were

Full-welling fountain-heads of  
change,

Betwixt the slender shafts were  
blazon'd fair

In diverse raiment strange :

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber,  
emerald, blue,

Flush'd in her temples and her  
eyes,

And from her lips, as morn from  
Memnon, drew

Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong  
Her low preamble all alone,  
More than my soul to hear her echo'd  
song  
Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;

Singing and murmuring in her feast-  
ful mirth,  
Joying to feel herself alive,  
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible  
earth,  
Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself : ' All these  
are mine,  
And let the world have peace or  
wars,  
'Tis one to me.' She—when young  
night divine  
Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious  
toils—  
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,  
And pure quintessences of precious  
oils  
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven; and clapt her  
hands and cried,  
' I marvel if my still delight  
In this great house so royal-rich, and  
wide,  
Be flatter'd to the height.

' O all things fair to sate my various  
eyes !  
O shapes and hues that please me  
well !  
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,  
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

' O God-like isolation which art mine,  
I can but count thee perfect gain,  
What time I watch the darkening  
droves of swine  
That range on yonder plain.

' In filthy sloughs they roll a prutient  
skin,  
They graze and wallow, breed and  
sleep ;

And oft some brainless devil enters  
in,  
And drives them to the deep.'

Then of the moral instinct would she  
prate  
And of the rising from the dead,  
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd  
Fate ;  
And at the last she said :

' I take possession of man's mind and  
deed.  
I care not what the sects may  
brawl.  
I sit as God holding no form of creed,  
But contemplating all.'

\* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \*

Full oft the riddle of the painful  
earth  
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,  
Yet not the less held she her solemn  
mirth,  
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd : so  
three years  
She prosper'd : on the fourth she fell,  
Like Herod, when the shout was in  
his ears,  
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,  
God, before whom ever lie bare  
The abysmal deeps of Personality,  
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she  
turn'd her sight  
The airy hand confusion wrought,  
Wrote, ' Meue, mene,' and divided  
quite  
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her soli-  
tude  
Fell on her, from which mood was  
born  
Scorn of herself ; again, from out  
that mood  
Laughter at her self-scorn.

What! is not this my place of  
strength,' she said,  
'My spacious mansion built for me,  
Whereof the strong foundation-stones  
were laid  
Since my first memory?'

But in dark corners of her palace  
stood  
Uncertain shapes; and unawares  
On white-eyed phantasms weeping  
tears of blood,  
And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts  
of flame,  
And, with dim fretted foreheads all,  
On corpses three-months-old at noon  
she came,  
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without  
light  
Or power of movement, seem'd my  
soul,  
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite  
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars  
of sand,  
Left on the shore; that hears all  
night  
The plunging seas draw backward  
from the land  
Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance  
Join'd not, but stood, and standing  
saw  
The hollow orb of moving Circum-  
stance  
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had  
curl'd.  
'No voice,' she shriek'd in that  
lone hall,  
'No voice breaks thro' the stillness of  
this world:  
One deep, deep silence all!'

She, mouldering with the dull earth's  
mouldering sod,

Inwapt tenfold in slothful shame,  
Lay there exiled from eternal God,  
Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally,  
And nothing saw, for her despair,  
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,  
No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with  
fears,  
And ever worse with growing time,  
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,  
And all alone in crime:

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt  
round  
With blackness as a solid wall,  
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully  
sound  
Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walk-  
ing slow,  
In doubt and great perplexity,  
A little before moon-rise hears the  
low  
Moan of an unknown sea;

And knows not if it be thunder, or a  
sound  
Of rocks thrown down, or one deep  
cry  
Of great wild beasts; then thinketh,  
'I have found  
A new land, but I die.'

She howl'd aloud, 'I am on fire with-  
in.  
There comes no murmur of reply.  
What is it that will take away my sin,  
And save me lest I die?'

So when four years were wholly  
finished,  
She threw her royal robes away.  
'Make me a cottage in the vale,' she  
said,  
'Where I may mourn and pray.

Yet pull not down my palace towers,  
that are  
So lightly, beautifully built:

Perchance I may return with others  
there  
When I have purged my guilt?

LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

LADY Clara Vere de Vere,  
Of me you shall not win renown:  
You thought to break a country heart  
For pastime, ere you went to town.  
At me you smiled, but unbeguiled  
I saw the snare, and I retired:  
The daughter of a hundred Earls,  
You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
I know you proud to bear your name,  
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,  
Too proud to care from whence  
I came,  
Nor would I break for your sweet sake  
A heart that doats on truer charms.  
A simple maiden in her flower  
Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
Some meeker pupil you must find,  
For were you queen of all that is,  
I could not stoop to such a mind.  
You sought to prove how I could love,  
And my disdain is my reply.  
The lion on your old stone gates  
Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
You put strange memories in my  
head.  
Not thrice your branching limes have  
blown  
Since I beheld young Laurence dead.  
Oh your sweet eyes, your low replies:  
A great enchantress you may be;  
But there was that across his throat  
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
When thus he met his mother's view,  
She had the passions of her kind,

She spake some certain truths of  
you.  
Indeed I heard one bitter word  
That scarce is fit for you to hear;  
Her manners had not that repose  
Which stamps the caste of Vere de  
Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
There stands a spectre in your hall:  
The guilt of blood is at your door:  
You changed a wholesome heart to  
gall.  
You held your course without remorse,  
To make him trust his modest worth,  
And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,  
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,  
From yon blue heavens above us  
bent  
The gardener Adam and his wife  
Smile at the claims of long descent.  
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,  
'Tis only noble to be good.  
Kind hearts are more than coronets,  
And simple faith than Norman  
blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,  
You pine among your halls and  
towers:  
The languid light of your proud eyes  
Is wearied of the rolling hours.  
In glowing health, with boundless  
wealth,  
But sickening of a vague disease,  
You know so ill to deal with time,  
You needs must play such pranks  
as these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,  
If time be heavy on your hands,  
Are there no beggars at your gate,  
Nor any poor about your lands?  
Oh! teach the orphan-boy to read,  
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,  
Pray Heaven for a human heart,  
And let the foolish yeoman go.

## THE MAY QUEEN.

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear;  
 To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year;  
 Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest merriest day;  
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black black eye, they say, but none so bright as mine;  
 There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline:  
 But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,  
 So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,  
 If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break:  
 But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay,  
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

As I came up the valley whom think ye should I see,  
 But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree?  
 He thought of that sharp look, mother, I gave him yesterday,  
 But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white,  
 And I ran by him without speaking, like a flash of light.  
 They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not what they say,  
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but that can never be:  
 They say his heart is breaking, mother—what is that to me?  
 There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me any summer day,  
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,  
 And you'll be there, too, mother, to see me made the Queen;  
 For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill come from far away,  
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has wov'n its wavy bowers,  
 And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint sweet cuckoo-flowers;  
 And the wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray,  
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-grass,  
 And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as they pass;  
 There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the livelong day,  
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and green and still,  
 And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all the hill,  
 And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill merrily glance and play,  
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.



So you must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear,  
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year :  
To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the maddest merriest day,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

If you're waking call me early, call me early, mother dear,  
For I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year.  
It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,  
Then you may lay me low i' the mould and think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set : he set and left behind  
The good old year, the dear old time, and all my peace of mind ;  
And the New-year's coming up, mother, but I shall never see  
The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers : we had a merry day ;  
Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of May ;  
And we danced about the may-pole and in the hazel copse,  
Till Charles's Wain came out above the tall white chimney-tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills : the frost is on the pane :  
I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again :  
I wish the snow would melt and the sun come out on high :  
I long to see a flower so before the day I die.

The building rook 'll caw from the windy tall elm-tree,  
And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,  
And the swallow 'ill come back again with summer d'er the wave,  
But I shall lie alone, mother, within the mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon that grave of mine,  
In the early early morning the summer sun 'ill shine,  
Before the red cock crows from the farm upon the hill,  
When you are warm-asleep, mother, and all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light  
You'll never see me more in the long gray fields at night ;  
When from the dry dark wold the summer airs blow cool  
On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and the bulrush in the pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath the hawthorn shade,  
And you'll come sometimes and see me where I am lowly laid.  
I shall not forget you, mother, I shall hear you when you pass,  
With your feet above my head in the long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now ;  
You'll kiss me, my own mother, and forgive me ere I go ;  
Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your grief be wild,  
You should not fret for me, mother, you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting-place;  
 Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your face;  
 Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall harken what you say,  
 And be often, often with you when you think I'm far away

Goodnight, goodnight, when I have said goodnight forevermore,  
 And you see me carried out from the threshold of the door;  
 Don't let Effie come to see me till my grave be growing green:  
 She'll be a better child to you than ever I have been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the granary floor:  
 Let her take 'em: they are hers: I shall never garden more:  
 But tell her, when I'm gone, to train the rosebush that I set  
 About the parlor-window and the box of mignonette.

Goodnight, sweet mother: call me before the day is born.  
 All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn;  
 But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year,  
 So, if you're waking, call me, call me early, mother dear.

## CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yet alive I am;  
 And in the fields all round I hear the bleating of the lamb.  
 How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of the year!  
 To die-before the snowdrop came, and now the violet's here.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,  
 And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that cannot rise,  
 And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,  
 And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessed sun,  
 And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet His will be done!  
 But still I think it can't be long before I find release;  
 And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair!  
 And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me there!  
 O blessings on his kindly heart and on his silver head!  
 A thousand times I blest him, as he knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he show'd me all the sin.  
 Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late, there's One will let me in:  
 Nor would I now be well, mother, again if that could be,  
 For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch beat,  
 There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet:  
 But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,  
 And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign.



"IN YONDER CHAIR I SEE HIM SIT,"—Page 11



All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call;  
It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all;  
The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,  
And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear;  
I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here;  
With all my strength I pray'd for both, and so I felt resign'd  
And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd in my bed,  
And then did something speak to me—I know not what was said;  
For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my mind,  
And up the valley came again the music on the wind.

But you were sleeping; and I said, 'It's not for them: it's mine.'  
And if it come three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.  
And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,  
Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know  
The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go.  
And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day,  
But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am past away.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret;  
There's many a worthier than I, would make him happy yet.  
If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might have been his wife;  
But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

O look! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow;  
He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know.  
And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine—  
Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is done  
The voice, that now is speaking, may be beyond the sun—  
For ever and for ever with those just souls and true—  
And what is life, that we should moan? why make we such ado?

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed home—  
And there to wait a little while till you and Effie come—  
To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your breast—  
And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

THE LOTOS-EATERS.

'COURAGE!' he said, and pointed  
toward the land,  
'This mounting wave will roll us  
shoreward soon.'  
In the afternoon they came unto a land

In which it seemed always afternoon.  
All round the coast the languid air did  
swoon,  
Breathing like one that hath a weary  
dream.  
Full-faced above the valley stood the  
moon;

And like a downward smoke, the slender stream  
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

A land of streams ! some, like a downward smoke,  
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go ;

And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,

// Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.

They saw the gleaming river seaward flow

From the inner land : far off, three mountain-tops,

|| Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,  
Stood sunset-flush'd : and, dew'd with showery drops,

Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown

In the red West : thro' mountain clefts the dale

Was seen far inland, and the yellow down ~

Border'd with palm, and many a winding vale

And meadow, set with slender galin-gale ;

A land where all things always seem'd the same !

And round about the keel with faces pale,

Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,  
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotseaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,

Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave

To each, but whoso did receive of them,

And taste, to him the gushing of the wave

Far far away did seem to mourn and rave

On alien shores ; and if his fellow spake,

His voice was thin, as voices from the grave ;

And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,

And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,

Between the sun and moon upon the shore ;

// And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,

Of child, and wife, and slave ; but evermore

Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,

Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.

Then some one said, ' We will return no more ; '

And all at once they sang, ' Our island home

Is far beyond the wave ; we will no longer roam.'

### CHORIC SONG.

#### I.

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls

Than petals from blown roses on the grass,

Or night-dews on still waters between walls

Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass ;

|| Music that gentler on the spirit lies,  
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes ;

Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,

And thro' the moss the ivies creep,

And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,

And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

#### II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,

And utterly consumed with sharp  
distress,  
While all things else have rest from  
weariness?  
All things have rest: why should we  
toil alone,  
We only toil, who are the first of  
things,  
And make perpetual moan,  
Still from one sorrow to another  
thrown:  
Nor ever fold our wings,  
And cease from wanderings,  
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy  
balm;  
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,  
'There is no joy but calm!'  
Why should we only toil, the roof and  
crown of things?

## III.

Lo! in the middle of the wood,  
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the  
bud  
With winds upon the branch, and  
there  
Grows green and broad, and takes no  
care,  
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon  
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow  
Falls, and floats adown the air.  
Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,  
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-  
mellow,  
Drops in a silent autumn night.  
All its allotted length of days,  
The flower ripens in its place,  
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath  
no toil,  
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

## IV.

(Hateful is the dark-blue sky,  
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.  
Death is the end of life; ah, why  
Should life all labor be?)  
Let us alone. Time driveth onward  
fast,  
And in a little while our lips are dumb.  
Let us alone. What is it that will last?  
All things are taken from us, and  
become

Portions and parcels of the dreadful  
Past.  
Let us alone. What pleasure can we  
have  
To war with evil? Is there any peace  
In ever climbing up the climbing  
wave?  
All things have rest, and ripen toward  
the grave  
In silence; ripen, fall and cease:  
Give us long rest or death, dark death,  
or dreamful ease.

## V.

How sweet it were, hearing the down-  
ward stream,  
With half-shut eyes ever to seem  
Falling asleep in a half-dream!  
To dream and dream, like yonder  
amber light,  
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush  
on the height;  
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;  
Eating the Lotos day by day,  
To watch the crisping ripples on the  
beach,  
And tender curving lines of creamy  
spray;  
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly  
To the influence of mild-minded mel-  
ancholy;  
To muse and brood and live again in  
memory,  
With those old faces of our infancy  
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,  
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an  
urn of brass!

## VI.

Dear is the memory of our wedded  
lives,  
And dear the last embraces of our  
wives  
And their warm tears: but all hath  
suffer'd change:  
For surely now our household hearths  
are cold:  
Our sons inherit us: our looks are  
strange:  
And we should come like ghosts to  
trouble joy.  
Or else the island princes over-bold

Have eat our substance, and the  
 minstrel sings  
 Before them of the ten years' war in  
 Troy,  
 And our great deeds, as half-forgotten  
 things.  
 Is there confusion in the little isle?  
 Let what is broken so remain.  
 The Gods are hard to reconcile:  
 'Tis hard to settle order once again.  
 There *is* confusion worse than death,  
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,  
 Round labor unto aged breath,  
 Sore task to hearts worn out by many  
 wars  
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on  
 the pilot-stars.

## VII.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and  
 moly,  
 How sweet (while warm airs lull us,  
 blowing lowly)  
 With half-dropt eyelid still,  
 Beneath a heaven dark and holy,  
 To watch the long bright river draw-  
 ing slowly  
 His waters from the purple hill—  
 To hear the dew echoes calling  
 From cave to cave thro' the thick-  
 twined vine—  
 To watch the emerald-color'd water  
 falling  
 Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath  
 divine!  
 Only to hear and see the far-off spark-  
 ling brine,  
 Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out  
 beneath the pine.

## VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren  
 peak:  
 The Lotos blows by every winding  
 creek:  
 All day the wind breathes low with  
 mellow tone:  
 Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone  
 Round and round the spicy downs the  
 yellow Lotos-dust is blown.

We have had enough of action, and of  
 motion we,  
 Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,  
 when the surge was seething  
 free,  
 Where the wallowing monster spouted  
 his foam-fountains in the sea,  
 Let us swear an oath, and keep it with  
 an equal mind,  
 In the hollow Lotos-land to live and  
 lie reclined  
 On the hills like Gods together, care-  
 less of mankind.  
 For they lie beside their nectar, and  
 the bolts are hurl'd  
 Far below them in the valleys, and the  
 clouds are lightly curl'd  
 Round their golden houses, girdled  
 with the gleaming world:  
 Where they smile in secret, looking  
 over wasted lands,  
 Blight and famine, plague and earth-  
 quake, roaring deeps and fiery  
 sands,  
 Clanging fights, and flaming towns,  
 and sinking ships, and praying  
 hands.  
 But they smile, they find a music  
 centred in a doleful song  
 Steaming up, a lamentation and an  
 ancient tale of wrong,  
 Like a tale of little meaning tho' the  
 words are strong;  
 Chanted from an ill-used race of men  
 that cleave the soil,  
 Sow the seed, and reap the harvest  
 with enduring toil,  
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and  
 wine and oil;  
 Till they perish and they suffer—some,  
 'tis whisper'd—down in hell  
 Suffer endless anguish, others in  
 Elysian valleys dwell,  
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of  
 asphodel.  
 Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet  
 than toil, the shore  
 Than labor in the deep mid-ocean,  
 wind and wave and oar;  
 Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will  
 not wander more.



A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their  
shade,  
'*The Legend of Good Women,*' long  
ago

Sung by the morning star of song, who  
made  
His music heard below ;

Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose  
sweet breath  
Preluded those melodious bursts  
that fill

The spacious times of great Elizabeth  
With sounds that echo still.

And, for a while, the knowledge of  
his art  
Held me above the subject, as  
strong gales

Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho'  
my heart,  
Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears.  
In every land

I saw, wherever light illumineth,  
(beauty and anguish walking hand in  
hand

The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient  
song  
Peopled the hollow dark, like burn-  
ing stars,

And I heard sounds of insult, shame,  
and wrong,  
And trumpets blown for wars ;

And clattering flints batter'd with  
clanging hoofs ;

And I saw crowds in column'd sanc-  
tuaries ;

And forms that pass'd at windows and  
on roofs  
Of marble palaces ;

Corpses across the threshold : heroes  
tall

Dislodging pinnacle and parapet  
Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall ;  
Lances in ambush set ;

And high shrine-doors burst thro'  
with heated blasts  
That run before the fluttering  
tongues of fire ;  
White surf wind-scatter'd over sails  
and masts,  
And ever climbing higher ;

Squadrons and squares of men in bra-  
zen plates,  
Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers  
woes,  
Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron  
grates,  
And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as,  
when to land  
Bluster the winds and tides the self-  
same way,  
Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level  
sand,  
Torn from the fringe of spray.

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,  
Resolved on noble things, and  
strove to speak,  
As when a great thought strikes along  
the brain,  
And flushes all the check.

And once my arm was lifted to hew  
down  
A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,  
That bore a lady from a leaguer'd  
town ;  
And then, I know now not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-  
lapsing thought  
Stream'd onward, lost their edges,  
and did creep

Roll'd on each other, rounded,  
smooth'd, and brought  
Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wander'd  
far

In an old wood : fresh-wash'd in  
coolest dew  
The maiden splendors of the morn-  
ing star  
Shook in the stedfast blue,

Enormous elm-tree-boles did stoop  
and lean

Upon the dusky brushwood under-  
neath

Their broad curved branches, fledged  
with clearest green,  
New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her jour-  
ney done,

And with dead lips smiled at the  
twilight plain,

Half-fall'n across the threshold of the  
sun,  
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb  
dead air,

Not any song of bird or sound of  
rill;

Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre  
Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jas-  
mine turn'd

Their humid arms festooning tree  
to tree,

And at the root thro' lush green grasses  
burn'd

The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves,  
I knew

The tearful glimmer of the languid  
dawn

On those long, rank, dark wood-walks  
drench'd in dew,

Leaning from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the  
green,

Pour'd back into my empty soul and  
frame

The times when I remember to have  
been

Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear under-tone  
Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that un-  
blissful clime,

'Pass freely thro': the wood is all  
thine own,

Until the end of time.'

At length I saw a lady within call,  
Stiller than chisell'd marble, stand-  
ing there;

A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,  
And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with  
surprise

Froze my swift speech: she turning  
on my face

The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,  
Spoke slowly in her place.

'I had great beauty: ask thou not my  
name:

No one can be more wise than des-  
tiny.

Many drew swords and died.

Where'er I came

I brought calamity.'

'No marvel, sovereign lady: in fair  
field

Myself for such a face had boldly  
died,'

I answer'd free; and turning I  
appeal'd

To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks  
averse,

To her full height her stately stat-  
ure draws;

'My youth,' she said, 'was blasted  
with a curse:

This woman was the cause.

'I was cut off from hope in that sad  
place,

Which men call'd Aulis in those  
iron years:

My father held his hand upon his face;

I, blinded with my tears,

'Still strove to speak: my voice was  
thick with sighs

As in a dream. Dimly I could descry

The stern black-bearded kings with  
wolfish eyes,

Waiting to see me die.

'The high masts flicker'd as they lay  
afloat;

The crowds, the temples, waver'd,  
and the shore ;  
The bright death quiver'd at the vic-  
tim's throat ;  
Touch'd ; and I knew no more.'

Whereto the other with a downward  
brow :

' I would the white cold heavy-plung-  
ing foam,  
Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me  
deep below,  
Then when I left my home.'

Her slow full words sank thro' the si-  
lence drear,  
As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping  
sea :

Sudden I heard a voice that cried,  
' Come here,  
That I may look on thee.'

I turning saw, throned on a flowery  
rise,  
One sitting on a crimson scarf un-  
roll'd ;

A queen, with swarthy cheeks and  
bold black eyes,  
Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile,  
began :

' I govern'd men by change, and so  
I sway'd

All moods. 'Tis long since I have  
seen a man.

Once, like the moon, I made

' The ever-shifting currents of the  
blood  
According to my humor ebb and  
flow.

I have no men to govern in this  
wood :

That makes my only woe.

' Nay—yet it chafes me that I could  
not bend

One will ; nor tame and tutor with  
mine eye

That dull cold-blooded Cæsar.  
Prythee, friend,

Where is Mark Antony ?

' [The man, my lover, with whom I  
rode sublime  
On Fortune's neck : we sat as God  
by God :

The Nilus would have risen before his  
time  
And flooded at our nod.

' We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep,  
and lit  
Lamps which out-burn'd Canopus.  
O my life  
In Egypt ! O the dalliance and the wit,  
The flattery and the strife,

' And the wild kiss, when fresh from  
war's alarms,  
My Hercules, my Roman Antony,  
My mailed Bacchus leapt into my  
arms,  
Contented there to die !

' And there he died : and when I heard  
my name  
Sigh'd forth with life I would not  
brook my fear

Of the other : with a worm I balk'd  
his fame.

What else was left ? look here !'

(With that she tore her robe apart,  
and half

The polish'd argent of her breast to  
sight

Laid bare. Therto she pointed with  
a laugh,  
Showing the aspick's bite.)

' I died a Queen. The Roman soldier  
found  
Me lying dead, my crown about my  
brows,

A name for ever !—lying robed and  
crown'd,  
Worthy a Roman spouse.'

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest  
range

Struck by all passion, did fall down  
and glance

From tone to tone, and glided thro'  
all change

Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for  
delight;  
Because with sudden motion from  
the ground  
She raised her piercing orbs, and  
fill'd with light  
The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his  
keenest darts;  
As once they drew into two burn-  
ing rings  
All beams of Love, melting the mighty  
hearts  
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I  
heard  
A noise of some one coming thro'  
the lawn,  
And singing clearer than the crested  
bird  
That claps his wings at dawn.

'The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel  
From craggy hollows pouring, late  
and soon,  
Sound all night long, in falling thro'  
the dell,  
Far-heard beneath the moon.

'The balmy moon of blessed Israel  
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with  
beams divine:  
All night the splinter'd crags that wall  
the dell  
With spires of silver shine.

As one that museth where broad sun-  
shine laves  
The lawn by some cathedral, thro'  
the door  
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves  
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd  
and tied  
To where he stands,—so stood I,  
when that flow  
Of music left the lips of her that died  
To save her father's vow;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,

A maiden pure; as when she went  
along  
From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with wel-  
come light,  
With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth: 'Heaven heads  
the count of crimes  
With that wild oath.' She render'd  
answer high:  
'Not so, nor once alone; a thousand  
times  
I would be born and die.

'Single I grew, like some green plant,  
whose root  
Creeps to the garden water-pipes  
beneath,  
Feeding the flower; but ere my flower  
to fruit  
Changed, I was ripe for death.

'My God, my land, my father—these  
did move  
Me from my bliss of life, that Na-  
ture gave,  
Lower'd softly with a threefold cord  
of love  
Down to a silent grave.

'And I went mourning, "No fair He-  
brew boy  
Shall smile away my maiden blame  
among  
The Hebrew mothers"—emptied of  
all joy,  
Leaving the dance and song,

'Leaving the olive-gardens far below,  
Leaving the promise of my bridal  
bower,  
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that  
glow  
Beneath the battled tower.

'The light white cloud swam over us.  
Anon  
We heard the lion roaring from his  
den;  
We saw the large white stars rise one  
by one,  
Or, from the darken'd glen,

' Saw God divide the night with flying  
flame,  
And thunder on the everlasting  
hills.

I heard Him, for He spake, and grief  
became  
A solemn scorn of ills.

' When the next moon was roll'd into  
the sky,  
Strength came to me that equall'd  
my desire.

How beautiful a thing it was to die  
For God and for my sire!

' It comforts me in this one thought to  
dwell,  
That I subdued me to my father's  
will;

Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,  
Sweetens the spirit still.

' Moreover it is written that my race  
Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from  
Aroer

On Arnon unto Minneth.' Here her  
face  
Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

She lock'd her lips: she left me where  
I stood:

' Glory to God,' she sang, and past  
afar,

Thridding the sombre boskage of the  
wood,  
Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,

As one that from a casement leans  
his head,

When midnight bells cease ringing  
suddenly,  
And the old year is dead.

' Alas! alas!' a low voice, full of care,  
Murmur'd beside me: ' Turn and  
look on me:

I am that Rosamond, whom men call  
fair,

If what I was I be.

' Would I had been some maiden  
coarse and poor!

O me, that I should ever see the  
light!  
Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor  
Do hunt me, day and night.'

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope  
and trust:

To whom the Egyptian: ' O, you  
tamely died!  
You should have clung to Fulvia's  
waist, and thrust  
The dagger thro' her side.'

With that sharp sound the white  
dawn's creeping beams,  
Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the  
mystery  
Of foiled sleep. The captain of my  
dreams  
Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the  
dark,

Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her  
last trance

Her murder'd father's head, or Joan  
of Arc,  
A light of ancient France;

Or her who knew that Love can van-  
quish Death,

Who kneeling, with one arm about  
her king,

Drew forth the poison with her balmy  
breath,  
Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labors longer from the  
deep

Gold-mines of thought to lift the  
hidden ore

That glimpses, moving up, than I  
from sleep

To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With  
what dull pain

Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to  
strike

Into that wondrous track of dreams  
again!

But no two dreams are like.

As when a soul laments, which hath  
 been blest,  
 Desiring what is mingled with past  
 years,  
 In yearnings that can never be express  
 By signs or groans or tears;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with  
 choicest art,  
 Failing to give the bitter of the  
 sweet,  
 Wither beneath the palate, and the  
 heart  
 Faints, faded by its heat.

#### THE BLACKBIRD.

O BLACKBIRD! sing me something  
 well:  
 While all the neighbors shoot thee  
 round,  
 I keep smooth plats of fruitful  
 ground,  
 Where thou may'st warble, eat and  
 dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all  
 Are thine; the range of lawn and  
 park:  
 The unnetted black-hearts ripen  
 dark,  
 All thine, against the garden wall.

Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,  
 Thy sole delight is, sitting still,  
 With that gold dagger of thy bill  
 To fret the summer jenneting.

A golden bill! the silver tongue,  
 Cold February loved, is dry:  
 Plenty corrupts the melody  
 That made thee famous once, when  
 young:

And in the sultry garden-squares,  
 Now thy flute-notes are changed to  
 coarse,  
 I hear thee not at all, or hoarse  
 As when a hawk hawks his wares.

Take warning! he that will not sing  
 While you sun prospers in the blue,  
 Shall sing for want, ere leaves are  
 new,  
 Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

#### THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,  
 And the winter winds are wearily  
 sighing:  
 Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,  
 And tread softly and speak low,  
 For the old year lies a-dying.  
 Old year, you must not die;  
 You came to us so readily,  
 You lived with us so steadily,  
 Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still: he doth not move:  
 He will not see the dawn of day.  
 He hath no other life above.  
 He gave me a friend, and a true true-  
 love,  
 And the New-year will take 'em away.  
 Old year, you must not go;  
 So long as you have been with us,  
 Such joy as you have seen with  
 us,  
 Old year, you shall not go.

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim;  
 A jollier year we shall not see.  
 But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,  
 And tho' his foes speak ill of him,  
 He was a friend to me.  
 Old year, you shall not die;  
 We did so laugh and cry with  
 you,  
 I've half a mind to die with you,  
 Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,  
 But all his merry quips are o'er.  
 To see him die, across the waste  
 His son and heir doth ride post-haste,  
 But he'll be dead before.  
 Every one for his own.  
 The night is starry and cold, my  
 friend,

And the New-year blithe and bold,  
my friend,  
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes! over the snow  
I heard just now the crowing cock.  
The shadows flicker to and fro:  
The cricket chirps: the light burns  
low:

'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.  
Shake hands, before you die.  
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you:  
What is it we can do for you?  
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.  
Alack! our friend is gone.  
Close up his eyes: tie up his chin:  
Step from the corpse, and let him in  
That standeth there alone,  
And waiteth at the door.  
There's a new foot on the floor, my  
friend,  
And a new face at the door, my  
friend,  
A new face at the door.

TO J. S.

THE wind, that beats the mountain,  
blows  
More softly round the open wold,  
And gently comes the world to those  
That are cast in gentle mould.

And me this knowledge bolder made,  
Or else I had not dared to flow  
In these words toward you, and invade  
Even with a verse your holy woe.

'Tis strange that those we lean on  
most,  
Those in whose laps our limbs  
are nursed,  
Fall into shadow, soonest lost:  
Those we love first are taken first.

God gives us love. Something to love  
He lends us; but, when love is  
grown  
To ripeness, that on which it throve  
Falls off, and love is left alone.

This is the curse of time. Alas!  
In grief I am not all unlearn'd;  
Once thro' mine own doors Death did  
pass;  
One went, who never hath  
return'd.

He will not smile—not speak to me  
Once more. Two years his chair  
is seen  
Empty before us. That was he  
Without whose life I had not  
been.

Your loss is rarer; for this star  
Rose with you thro' a little arc  
Of heaven, nor having wander'd far  
Shot on the sudden into dark.

I knew your brother: his mute dust  
I honor and his, living worth:  
A man more pure and bold and just  
Was never born into the earth.

I have not look'd upon you nigh,  
Since that dear soul hath fall'n  
asleep.  
Great Nature is more wise than I:  
I will not tell you not to weep.

And tho' mine own eyes fill with dew,  
Drawn from the spirit thro' the  
brain,

I will not even preach to you,  
'Weep, weeping dulls the inward  
pain.'

Let Grief be her own mistress still.  
She loveth her own anguish deep  
More than much pleasure. Let her  
will  
Be done—to weep or not to weep.

I will not say, 'God's ordinance  
Of Death is blown in every wind;'  
For that is not a common chance  
That takes away a noble mind.

His memory long will live alone  
In all our hearts, as mournful light  
That broods above the fallen sun,  
And dwells in heaven half the  
night.

Vain solace! Memory standing near  
 Cast down her eyes, and in her  
 throat  
 Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear  
 Dropt on the letters as I wrote.

I wrote I know not what. In truth,  
 How *should* I soothe you anyway,  
 Who miss the brother of your youth?  
 Yet something I did wish to say:

For he too was a friend to me:  
 Both are my friends, and my true  
 breast  
 Bleedeth for both; yet it may be  
 That only silence suiteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would  
 make  
 Grief more. 'Twere better I  
 should cease  
 Although myself could almost take  
 The place of him that sleeps in  
 peace.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace:  
 Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,  
 While the stars burn, the moons in-  
 crease,  
 And the great ages onward roll.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.  
 Nothing comes to thee new or  
 strange.

Sleep full of rest from head to feet;  
 Lie still, dry dust, secure of  
 change.

## ON A MOURNER.

## I.

NATURE, so far as in her lies,  
 Imitates God, and turns her face  
 To every land beneath the skies,  
 Counts nothing that she meets with  
 base,  
 But lives and loves in every place

## II.

Fills out the homely quickset-screens,  
 And makes the purple lilac ripe,

Steps from her airy hill, and greets  
 The swamp, where humm'd the drop-  
 ping snipe,  
 With moss and braided marish-pipe;

## III.

And on thy heart a finger lays,  
 Saying, 'Beat quicker, for the time  
 Is pleasant, and the woods and ways  
 Are pleasant, and the beech and  
 lime  
 Put forth and feel a gladder clime.'

## IV.

And murmurs of a deeper voice,  
 Going before to some far shrine,  
 Teach that sick heart the stronger  
 choice,  
 Till all thy life one way incline  
 With one wide Will that closes  
 thine.

## V.

And when the zoning eve has died  
 Where yon dark valleys wind for-  
 lorn,  
 Come Hope and Memory, spouse and  
 bride,  
 From out the borders of the morn,  
 With that fair child betwixt them  
 born.

## VI.

And when no mortal motion jars  
 The blackness round the tombing  
 sod,  
 Thro' silence and the trembling stars  
 Comes Faith from tracts no feet  
 have trod,  
 And Virtue, like a household god

## VII.

Promising empire; such as those  
 Once heard at dead of night to greet  
 Troy's wandering prince, so that he  
 rose  
 With sacrifice, while all the fleet  
 Had rest by stony hills of Crete.



You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,  
Within this region I subsist,  
Whose spirits falter in the mist,  
And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till,  
That sober-suited Freedom chose,  
The land, where girt with friends  
or foes

A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,  
A land of just and old renown,  
Where Freedom slowly broadens  
down

From precedent to precedent:

Where faction seldom gathers head,  
But by degrees to fullness  
wrought,  
The strength of some diffusive  
thought  
Hath time and space to work and  
spread.

Should banded unions persecute  
Opinion, and induce a time  
When single thought is civil  
crime,  
And individual freedom mute;

Tho' Power should make from land to  
land  
The name of Britain trebly great—  
Tho' every channel of the State  
Should fill and choke with golden  
sand—

Yet waft me from the harbor-mouth,  
Wild wind! I seek a warmer sky,  
And I will see before I die  
The palms and temples of the South.

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,  
The thunders breaking at her feet:  
Above her shook the starry lights:  
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,  
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,

But fragments of her mighty voice  
Came rolling on the wind.

Then stept she down thro' town and  
field  
To mingle with the human race,  
And part by part to men reveal'd  
The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,  
From her isle-altar gazing down,  
Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,  
And, King-like, wears the crown:

Her open eyes desire the truth.  
The wisdom of a thousand years  
Is in them. May perpetual youth  
Keep dry their light from tears;

That her fair form may stand and  
shine,  
Make bright our days and light  
our dreams,  
Turning to scorn with lips divine  
The falsehood of extremes!

LOVE thou thy land, with love far-  
brought  
From out the storied Past, and  
used  
Within the Present, but transfused  
Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,  
Love, that endures not sordid ends,  
For English natures, freemen,  
friends,  
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,  
Nor feed with crude imaginings  
The herd, wild hearts and feeble  
wings  
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might  
To weakness, neither hide the ray  
From those, not blind, who wait for  
day,  
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds ;  
 But let her herald, Reverence, fly  
 Before her to whatever sky  
 Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the years :

Cut Prejudice against the grain :  
 But gentle words are always gain :  
 Regard the weakness of thy peers :

Nor toil for title, place, or touch  
 Of pension, neither count on praise :  
 It grows to guerdon after-days :  
 Nor deal in watch-words overmuch :

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;  
 Not master'd by some modern term ;  
 Not swift nor slow to change, but firm :  
 And in its season bring the law ;

That from Discussion's lip may fall  
 With Life, that, working strongly,  
 binds—  
 Set in all lights by many minds,  
 To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,  
 And moist and dry, devising long,  
 Thro' many agents making strong,  
 Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control  
 Our being, lest we rust in ease.  
 We all are changed by still degrees,  
 All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free  
 To ingroove itself with that which flies,  
 And work, a joint of state, that plies  
 Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act ;  
 For all the past of Time reveals  
 A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
 Wherever Thought hath wedded  
 Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife  
 A motion toiling in the gloom—  
 The Spirit of the years to come  
 Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits  
 Completion in a painful school ;  
 Phantoms of other forms of rule,  
 New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour,  
 But vague in vapor, hard to mark ;  
 And round them sea and air are dark  
 With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,  
 Is bodied forth the second whole.  
 Regard gradation, lest the soul  
 Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,  
 And heap their ashes on the head ;  
 To shame the boast so often made,  
 That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star  
 Drive men in manhood, as in youth,  
 To follow flying steps of Truth  
 Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,  
 Must ever shock, like armed foes,  
 And this be true, till Time shall close,  
 That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease  
 To hold his hope thro' shame and  
 guilt,  
 But with his hand against the hit,  
 Would pace the troubled land, like  
 Peace ;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,  
 Would serve his kind in deed and  
 word,  
 Certain, if knowledge bring the  
 sword,  
 That knowledge takes the sword  
 away—

Would love the gleams of good that  
broke  
From either side, nor veil his eyes :  
And if some dreadful need should  
rise  
Would strike, and firmly, and one  
stroke :

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,  
As we bear blossom of the dead ;  
Earn well the thrifty months, nor  
wed  
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA  
IN 1782.

O THOU, that sendest out the man  
To rule by land and sea,  
Strong mother of a Lion-line,  
Be proud of those strong sons of thine  
Who wrench'd their rights from  
thee !

What wonder, if in noble heat  
Those men thine arms withstood,  
Retaught the lesson thou hadst taught,  
And in thy spirit with thee fought—  
Who sprang from English blood !

But Thou rejoice with liberal joy,  
Lift up thy rocky face,  
And shatter, when the storms are  
black,  
In many a streaming torrent back,  
The seas that shock thy base !

Whatever harmonies of law  
The growing world assume,  
Thy work is thine—The single note  
From that deep chord which Hamp-  
den smote  
Will vibrate to the doom.

THE GOOSE.

I KNEW an old wife lean and poor,  
Her rags scarce held together ;  
There strode a stranger to the door,  
And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,  
He utter'd rhyme and reason,  
'Here, take the goose, and keep you  
warm,  
It is a stormy season.'

She caught the white goose by the leg,  
A goose—'twas no great matter.  
The goose let fall a golden egg  
With cackle and with clatter.

She dropt the goose, and caught the  
pelf,  
And ran to tell her neighbors ;  
And bless'd herself, and cursed her-  
self,  
And rested from her labors.

And feeding high, and living soft,  
Grew plump and able-bodied ;  
Until the grave churchwarden doff'd,  
The parson smirk'd and nodded.

So sitting, served by man and maid,  
She felt her heart grow prouder ;  
But ah ! the more the white goose  
laid  
It clack'd and cackled louder.

It clutter'd here, it chuckled there ;  
It stirr'd the old wife's mettle :  
She shifted in her elbow-chair,  
And hurl'd the pan and kettle.

'A quinsy choke thy cursed note !'  
Then wax'd her anger stronger.  
'Go, take the goose, and wring her  
throat,  
I will not bear it longer.'

Then yelp'd the cur, and yawl'd the  
cat ;  
Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.  
The goose flew this way and flew that,  
And fill'd the house with clamor.

As head and heels upon the floor  
They flounder'd all together,  
There strode a stranger to the door,  
And it was windy weather :

He took the goose upon his arm,  
 He utter'd words of scorning;  
 'So keep you cold, or keep you warm,  
 It is a stormy morning.'

The wild wind rang from park and  
 plain,  
 And round the attics rumbled,  
 Till all the tables danced again,  
 And half the chimneys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,  
 The blast was hard and harder.  
 Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,  
 And a whirlwind clear'd the larder:

And while on all sides breaking loose  
 Her household fled the danger,  
 Quoth she, 'The Devil take the  
 goose,  
 And God forget the stranger!'

## ENGLISH IDYLLS

### AND OTHER POEMS.

#### THE EPIC.

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas-  
 eve,—  
 The game of forfeits done—the girls  
 all kiss'd  
 Beneath the sacred bush and past  
 away—  
 The parson Holmes, the poet Everard  
 Hall,  
 The host, and I sat round the wassail-  
 bowl,  
 Then half-way ebb'd: and there we  
 held a talk,  
 How all the old honor had from  
 Christmas gone,  
 Or gone, or dwindled down to some  
 odd games  
 In some odd nooks like this; till I,  
 tired out  
 With cutting eights that day upon the  
 pond,  
 Where, three times slipping from the  
 outer edge,  
 I bump'd the ice into three several  
 stars,  
 Fell in a doze; and half-awake I  
 heard  
 The parson taking wide and wider  
 sweeps,  
 Now harping on the church-commis-  
 sioners,  
 Now hawking at Geology and schism;

Until I woke, and found him settled  
 down  
 Upon the general decay of faith  
 Right thro' the world, 'at home was  
 little left,  
 And none abroad: there was no  
 anchor, none,  
 To hold by.' Francis, laughing, clapt  
 his hand  
 On Everard's shoulder, with 'I hold  
 by him.'  
 'And I,' quoth Everard, 'by the was-  
 sail-bowl.'  
 'Why yes,' I said, 'we knew your  
 gift that way  
 At college: but another which you had,  
 I mean of verse (for so we held it  
 then),  
 What came of that?' 'You know,'  
 said Frank, 'he burnt  
 His epic, his King Arthur, some  
 twelve books'—  
 And then to me demanding why?  
 'Oh, sir,  
 He thought that nothing new was  
 said, or else  
 Something so said 'twas nothing—  
 that a truth  
 Looks freshest in the fashion of the  
 day:  
 God knows: he has a mint of  
 reasons: ask.  
 It pleased me well enough.' 'Nay,  
 nay,' said Hall,

'Why take the style of those heroic times?  
 For nature brings not back the Mastodon,  
 Nor we those times; and why should any man  
 Remodel models? these twelve books of mine  
 Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,  
 Mere chaff and druff, much better burnt.' 'But I,'  
 Said Francis, 'pick'd the cleventh from this hearth  
 And have it: keep a thing, its use will come.  
 I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes.'  
 He laugh'd, and I, tho' sleepy, like a horse  
 That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd my ears;  
 For I remember'd Everard's college fame  
 When we were Freshmen: then at my request  
 He brought it; and the poet little urged,  
 But with some prelude of disparagement,  
 Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,  
 Deep-chested music, and to this result.

## MORTE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd  
 Among the mountains by the winter sea;  
 Until King Arthur's table, man by man,  
 Had fallen in Lyonesse about their Lord,  
 King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,  
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,  
 Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,  
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,

A broken chancel with a broken cross,  
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land.  
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on one  
 Lay a great water, and the moon was full.  
 Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:  
 'The sequel of to-day unsolders all  
 The goodliest fellowship of famous knights  
 Whereof this world holds record.  
 Such a sleep  
 They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we  
 Shall never more, at any future time,  
 Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,  
 Walking about the gardens and the halls  
 Of Camelot, as in the days that were.  
 I perish by this people which I made,—  
 Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again  
 To rule once more—but let what will be, be,  
 I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm  
 That without help I cannot last ti'll morn.  
 Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,  
 Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how  
 In those old days, one summer noon,  
 an arm  
 Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,  
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,  
 Holding the sword—and how I row'd across  
 And took it, and have worn it, like a king:  
 And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
 In aftertime, this also shall be known:  
 But now delay not: take Excalibur,  
 And fling him far into the middle mere:  
 Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:

'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus, Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.

A little thing may harm a wounded man.

Yet I thy best will all perform at full, Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word.'

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept

And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,

Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,

Old knights, and over them the seawind sang

Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down

By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,

Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,

And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,

Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth

And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:

For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work

Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long

That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,

This way and that dividing the swift mind,

In act to throw: but at the last it seem'd

Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd There in the many-knotted waterflags,

That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.

So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:

'Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?

What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,

And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:

'Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,

Not rendering true answer, as be-seem'd

Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight: For surer sign had follow'd, either

hand,

Or voice, or else a motion of the mere. This is a shameful thing for men to

lie. Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go

again

As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing

I bid thee, watch, and lightly bring me word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time

Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,

How curiously and strangely chased, he smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud,

'And if indeed I cast the brand away,

Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,

Should thus be lost forever from the earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.

What good should follow this, if this were done?

What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king demand  
 An act unprofitable, against himself?  
 The King is sick, and knows not what he does.  
 What record, or what relic of my lord  
 Should be to aftertime, but empty breath  
 And rumors of a doubt? but were this kept,  
 Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,  
 Some one might show it at a joust of arms,  
 Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,  
 Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.  
 Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps  
 Upon the hidden bases of the hills." So might some old man speak in the aftertime  
 To all the people, winning reverence.  
 But now much honor and much fame were lost.'

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,  
 And hid Excalibur the second time,  
 And so strode back slow to the wounded King.  
 Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:  
 'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:  
 'I heard the water lapping on the crag,  
 And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:  
 'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue, Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!  
 Authority forgets a dying king,  
 Laid widow'd of the power in his eye  
 That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,  
 For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,

In whom should meet the offices of all,  
 Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;  
 Either from lust of gold, or like a girl  
 Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.  
 Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,  
 And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:  
 But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,  
 I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,  
 And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged  
 Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,  
 And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand  
 Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,  
 And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,  
 Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,  
 Seen where the moving isles of winter shock  
 By night, with noises of the northern sea.  
 So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:  
 But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm  
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,  
 And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him  
 Three times, and drew him under in the mere.  
 And lightly went the other to the King.  
 Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:  
 'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.  
 Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:  
 'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never  
 saw,  
 Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I  
 die,  
 Not tho' I live three lives of mortal  
 men,  
 So great a miracle as yonder hilt.  
 Then with both hands I flung him,  
 wheeling him;  
 But when I look'd again, behold an  
 arm,  
 (Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
 derful,  
 That caught him by the hilt, and bran-  
 dish'd him  
 Three times, and drew him under in  
 the mere.)

And answer made King Arthur,  
 breathing hard:  
 'My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I  
 were gone.  
 Make broad thy shoulders to receive  
 my weight,  
 And bear me to the margin; yet I fear  
 My wound hath taken cold, and I  
 shall die.'

So saying, from the pavement he  
 half rose,  
 Slowly, with pain, reclining on his  
 arm,  
 And looking wistfully with wide blue  
 eyes  
 As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere  
 Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,  
 And would have spoken, but he found  
 not words,  
 Then took with care, and kneeling on  
 one knee,  
 O'er both his shoulders drew the lan-  
 guid hands,  
 And rising bore him thro' the place of  
 tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur  
 panted hard,  
 Like one that feels a nightmare on his  
 bed  
 When all the house is mute. So  
 sigh'd the King,  
 Muttering and murmuring at his ear,  
 'Quick, quick!  
 I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'  
 But the other swiftly strode from  
 ridge to ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking,  
 as he walk'd,  
 Larger than human on the frozen hills.  
 He heard the deep behind him, and a  
 cry  
 Before. His own thought drove him,  
 like a goad.  
 Dry clash'd his harness in the icy  
 caves  
 And barren chasms, and all to left and  
 right  
 The bare black cliff clang'd round  
 him, as he bascd  
 His feet on juts of slippery crag that  
 rang  
 Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed  
 heels—  
 And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,  
 And the long glories of the winter  
 moon.

Then saw they how there hove a  
 dusky barge,  
 Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to  
 stern,  
 Beneath them; and descending they  
 were ware  
 That all the decks were dense with  
 stately forms  
 Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a  
 dream—by these  
 Three Queens with crowns of gold—  
 and from them rose  
 A cry that shiver'd to the tingling  
 stars,  
 And, as it were one voice an agony  
 Of lamentation, like a wind, that  
 shrills  
 All night in a waste land, where no  
 one comes,  
 Or hath come, since the making of the  
 world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me  
 in the barge,'  
 And to the barge they came. There  
 those three Queens  
 Put forth their hands, and took the  
 King, and wept.  
 But she, that rose the tallest of them  
 all  
 And fairest, laid his head upon her  
 lap,  
 And loosed the shatter'd casque, and  
 chafed his hands,



And call'd him by his name, complain-  
ing loud,  
And dropping bitter tears against his  
brow  
Striped with dark blood: for all his  
face was white  
And colorless, and like the wither'd  
moon  
Smote by the fresh beam of the spring-  
ing east;  
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd  
with drops  
Of onset; and the light and lustrous  
curls—  
That made his forehead like a rising  
sun  
High from the dais throne—were  
parch'd with dust;  
Or, clotted into points and hanging  
loose,  
Mix'd with the knightly growth that  
fringed his lips.  
So like a shatter'd column lay the  
King;  
Not like that Arthur who, with lance  
in rest,  
From spur to plume a star of tourna-  
ment,  
Shot thro' the lists at Canelot, and  
charged  
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.  
Then loudly cried the bold Sir  
Bedivere,  
' Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall  
I go?  
Where shall I hide my forehead and  
my eyes?  
For now I see the true old times are  
dead,  
When every morning brought a noble  
chance,  
And every chance brought out a noble  
knight.  
Such times have been not since the  
light that led  
The holy Elders with the gift of  
myrrh.  
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is  
dissolved  
Which was an image of the mighty  
world;  
And I, the last, go forth compani-  
onless,

And the days darken round me, and  
the years,  
Among new men, strange faces, other  
minds.'  
And slowly answered Arthur from  
the barge:  
' The old order changeth, yielding  
place to new,  
And God fulfils Himself in many  
ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt  
the world.  
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in  
me?  
I have lived my life, and that which I  
have done  
May He within Himself make pure!  
but thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face  
again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are  
wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Where-  
fore, let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and  
day.  
For what are men better than sheep or  
goats  
That nourish a blind life within the  
brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of  
prayer  
Both for themselves and those who  
call them friend?  
For so the whole round earth is every  
way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of  
God.  
But now farewell. I am going a long  
way  
With these thou seest—if indeed I  
go—  
(For all my mind is clouded with a  
doubt)  
To the island-valley of Avilion;  
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any  
snow,  
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it  
lies  
Deep-meadow'd, happy fair with  
orchard-lawns  
And bowery hollows crown'd with  
summer sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail  
 Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan  
 That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,  
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood  
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere  
 Revolving many memories, till the hull  
 Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,  
 And on the mere the wailing died away.

HERE ended Hall, and our last light, that long  
 Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness, flared and fell:  
 At which the Parson, sent to sleep with sound,  
 And waked with silence, grunted 'Good!' but we  
 Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he read—  
 Perhaps some modern touches here and there  
 Redeem'd it from the charge of nothingness—  
 Or else we loved the man, and prized his work;  
 I know not: but we sitting, as I said,  
 The cock crew loud; as at that time of year  
 The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn:  
 Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,  
 'There now—that's nothing!' drew a little back,  
 And drove his heel into the smoulder'd log,  
 That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue:  
 And so to bed; where yet in sleep I seem'd  
 To sail with Arthur under looming shores,

Point after point; till on to dawn, when dreams  
 Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,  
 To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,  
 There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore  
 King Arthur, like a modern gentleman  
 Of stately port; and all the people cried,  
 'Arthur is come again: he cannot die.'  
 Then those that stood upon the hills behind  
 Repeated—'Come again, and thrice as fair;'  
 And, further inland, voices echo'd—  
 'Come  
 With all good things, and war shall be no more.'  
 At this a hundred bells began to peal,  
 That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed  
 The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas-morn.

THE GARDENER'S  
 DAUGHTER;

OR, THE PICTURES.

THIS morning is the morning of the day,  
 When I and Eustace from the city went  
 To see the Gardener's Daughter; I and he,  
 Brothers in Art; a friendship so complete  
 Portion'd in halves between us, that we grew  
 The fable of the city where we dwelt.  
 My Eustace might have sat for Hercules;  
 So muscular he spread, so broad of breast.  
 He, by some law that holds in love, and draws  
 The greater to the lesser, long desired

A certain miracle of symmetry,  
A miniature of loveliness, all grace  
Summ'd up and closed in little;—Juliet, she

So light of foot, so light of spirit—oh, she

To me myself, for some three careless moons,

The summer pilot of an empty heart  
Unto the shores of nothing! Know you not

Such touches are but embassies of love,  
To tamper with the feelings, ere he found

Empire for life? but Eustace painted her,

And said to me, she sitting with us then,

'When will you paint like this?' and I replied,

(My words were half in earnest, half in jest,)

'Tis not your work, but Love's. Love, unperceived,

A more ideal Artist he than all,  
Came, drew your pencil from you, made those eyes

Darker than darkest pansies, and that hair

More black than ashbuds in the front of March.'

And Juliet answer'd laughing, 'Go and see

The Gardener's daughter: trust me, after that,  
You scarce can fail to match his master-piece.'

And up we rose, and on the spur we went.

Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite

Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.

News from the humming city comes to it

In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;

And, sitting muffled in dark leaves, you hear

The windy clanging of the minster clock;

Although between it and the garden lies

A league of grass, wash'd by a slow broad stream,

That, stirr'd with languid pulses of the oar,

Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,

Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge

Crown'd with the minster-towers.

The fields between  
Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-

udder'd kine,  
And all about the large lime feathers

low,  
The lime a summer home of murmur-

ous wings.  
In that still place she, hoarded in

herself,  
Grew, seldom seen; not less among us

lived  
Her fame from lip to lip. Who had

not heard  
Of Rose, the Gardener's daughter?

Where was he,  
So blunt in memory, so old at heart,

At such a distance from his youth in grief,

That, having seen, forgot? The common mouth,

So gross to express delight, in praise

of her  
Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,

And Beauty such a mistress of the world.

And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,

Would play with flying forms and images,

Yet this is also true, that, long before  
I look'd upon her, when I heard her

name  
My heart was like a prophet to my

heart,  
And told me I should love. A crowd

of hopes,  
That sought to sow themselves like

winged seeds,  
Born out of everything I heard and

saw,  
Flutter'd about my senses and my

soul;  
And vague desires, like fitful blasts of balm

To one that travels quickly, made the air  
 Of Life delicious, and all kinds of thought,  
 That verged upon them, sweeter than the dream  
 Dream'd by a happy man, when the dark East,  
 Unseen, is brightening to his bridal morn.  
 And sure this orbit of the memory folds  
 For ever in itself the day we went  
 To see her. All the land in flowery squares,  
 Beneath a broad and equal-blowing wind,  
 Smelt of the coming summer, as one large cloud  
 Drew downward: but all else of heaven was pure  
 Up to the Sun, and May from verge to verge,  
 And May with me from head to heel.  
 And now,  
 As tho' 'twere yesterday, as tho' it were  
 The hour just flown, that morn with all its sound,  
 (For those old Mays had thrice the life of these,)  
 Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot to graze,  
 And, where the hedge-row cuts the pathway, stood,  
 Leaning his horns into the neighbor field,  
 And lowing to his fellows. From the woods  
 Came voices of the well-contented doves.  
 The lark could scarce get out his notes for joy,  
 But shook his song together as he near'd  
 His happy home, the ground. To left and right,  
 The cuckoo told his name to all the hills;  
 The mellow ouzel fited in the elm;  
 The redcap whistled; and the nightingale  
 Sang loud, as tho' he were the bird of day.

And Eustace turn'd, and smiling said to me,  
 'Hear how the bushes echo! by my life,  
 These birds have joyful thoughts. Think you they sing  
 Like poets, from the vanity of song? Or have they any sense of why they sing?  
 And would they praise the heavens for what they have?'  
 And I made answer, 'Were there nothing else  
 For which to praise the heavens but only love,  
 That only love were cause enough for praise.'  
 Lightly he laugh'd, as one that read my thought,  
 And on we went; but ere an hour had pass'd,  
 We reach'd a meadow slanting to the North;  
 Down which a well-worn pathway courted us  
 To one green wicket in a privet hedge;  
 This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk  
 Thro' crowded lilac-ambush trimly pruned;  
 And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume, blew  
 Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.  
 The garden stretches southward. In the midst  
 A cedar spread his dark-green layers of shade.  
 The garden-glasses shone, and momentarily  
 The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver lights.  
 'Eustace,' I said, 'this wonder keeps the house.'  
 He nodded, but a moment afterwards  
 He cried, 'Look! look!' Before he ceased I turn'd,  
 And, ere a star can wink, beheld her there.  
 For up the porch there grew an Eastern rose,  
 That, flowering high, the last night's gale had caught,



"WITH DOWN-DROPT EYES I SAT ALONE."—Page 15.



And blown across the walk. One arm  
aloft—  
Gown'd in pure white, that fitted to  
the shape—  
Holding the bush, to fix it back, she  
stood,  
A single stream of all her soft brown  
hair  
Pour'd on one side: the shadow of  
the flowers  
Stole all the golden gloss, and, waver-  
ing  
Lovingly lower, trembled on her  
waist—  
Ah, happy shade—and still went wa-  
vering down,  
But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might  
have danced  
The greensward into greener circles,  
dipt,  
And mix'd with shadows of the com-  
mon ground!  
But the full day dwelt on her brows,  
and sunn'd  
Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe  
bloom,  
And doubled his own warmth against  
her lips,  
And on the bouiteous wave of such a  
breast  
As never pencil drew. Half light,  
half shade,  
She stood, a sight to make an old  
man young.  
So rapt, we near'd the house; but  
she, a Rose  
In roses, mingled with her fragrant  
toil,  
Nor heard us come, nor from her  
tendance turn'd  
Into the world without; till close at  
hand,  
And almost ere I knew mine own  
intent,  
This murmur broke the stillness of  
that air  
Which brooded round about her:  
'Ah, one rose,  
One rose, but one, by those fair  
fingers cull'd,  
Were worth a hundred kisses press'd  
on lips  
Less exquisite than thine.'

She look'd: but all  
Suffused with blushes—neither self-  
possess'd  
Nor startled, but betwixt this mood  
and that,  
Divided in a graceful quiet—paused,  
And dropt the branch she held, and  
turning, wound  
Her looser hair in braid, and stirr'd  
her lips  
For some sweet answer, tho' no  
answer came,  
Nor yet refused the rose, but granted it,  
And moved away, and left me, statue-  
like,  
In act to render thanks.

I, that whole day,  
Saw her no more, altho' I linger'd  
there  
Till every daisy slept, and Love's  
white star  
Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in  
the dusk.  
So home we went, and all the live-  
long way  
With solemn gibe did Eustace banter  
me.  
'Now,' said he, 'will you climb the  
top of Art.  
You cannot fail but work in hues to  
dim  
The Titianic Flora. Will you match  
My Juliet? you, not you,—the Master,  
Love,  
A more ideal Artist he than all.'  
So home I went, but could not  
sleep for joy,  
Reading her perfect features in the  
gloom,  
Kissing the rose she gave me o'er  
and o'er,  
And shaping faithful record of the  
glance  
That graced the giving—such a noise  
of life  
Swarm'd in the golden present, such  
a voice  
Call'd to me from the years to come,  
and such  
A length of bright horizon rimm'd  
the dark.  
And all that night I heard the watch-  
man peal

The sliding season: all that night I  
heard  
The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy  
hours.  
The drowsy hours, dispensers of all  
good,  
O'er the mute city stole with folded  
wings,  
Distilling odors on me as they went  
To greet their fairer sisters of the  
East.

Love at first sight, first-born, and  
heir to all,  
Made this night thus. Henceforward  
squall nor storm

Could keep me from that Eden where  
she dwelt.

Light pretexts drew me; sometimes  
a Dutch love

For tulips; then for roses, moss or  
musk,

To grace my city rooms; or fruits  
and cream

Served in the weeping elm; and more  
and more

A word could bring the color to my  
cheek;

A thought would fill my eyes with  
happy dew;

Love trebled life within me, and with  
each

The year increased.

The daughters of the year,  
One after one, thro' that still garden  
pass'd;

Each garlanded with her peculiar  
flower

Danced into light, and died into the  
shade;

And each in passing touch'd with  
some new grace

Or seem'd to touch her, so that day  
by day,

Like one that never can be wholly  
known,

Her beauty grew; till Autumn  
brought an hour

For Eustace, when I heard his deep  
'I will,'

Breathed, like the covenant of a God,  
to hold

From thence thro' all the worlds: but  
I rose up

Full of his bliss, and following her  
dark eyes

Felt earth as air beneath me, till I  
reach'd

The wicket-gate, and found her stand-  
ing there.

There sat we down upon a garden  
mound,

Two mutually enfolded; Love, the  
third,

Between us, in the circle of his arms  
Enwound us both; and over many a  
range

Of waning lime the gray cathedral  
towers,

Across a hazy glimmer of the west,  
Reveal'd their shining windows: from  
them clash'd

The bells; we listen'd; with the  
time we play'd,

We spoke of other things; we  
coursed about

The subject most at heart, more near  
and near,

Like doves about a dove-cote, wheel-  
ing round

The central wish, until we settled  
there.

Then, in that time and place, I  
spoke to her,

Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine  
own,

Yet for the pleasure that I took to  
hear,

Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,  
A woman's heart, the heart of her I  
loved;

And in that time and place she  
answer'd me,

And in the compass of three little  
words,

More musical than ever came in one,  
The silver fragments of a broken  
voice,

Made me most happy, faltering, 'I am  
thine.'

Shall I cease here? Is this enough  
to say

That my desire, like all strongest  
hopes,

By its own energy fulfill'd itself,  
Merged in completion? Would you  
learn at full



How passion rose thro' circumstan-  
tial grades  
Beyond all grades develop'd? and in-  
deed

I had not staid so long to tell you all,  
But while I mused came Memory  
with sad eyes,

Holding the folded annals of my  
youth;

And while I mused, Love with knit  
brows went by,

And with a flying finger swept my  
lips,

And spake, 'Be wise: not easily for-  
given

Are those, who setting wide the doors  
that bar

The secret bridal chambers of the  
heart,

Let in the day.' Here, then, my  
words have end.

Yet might I tell of meetings, of  
farewells—

Of that which came between, more  
sweet than each,

In whispers, like the whispers of the  
leaves

That tremble round a nightingale—in  
sighs

Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for  
utterance,

Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might  
I not tell

Of difference, reconciliation, pledges  
given,

And vows, where there was never  
need of vows,

And kisses, where the heart on one  
wild leap

Hung tranced from all pulsation, as  
above

The fleeces between their fairy  
fleeces pale

Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleet-  
ing stars;

Or while the balmy glooming, cres-  
cent-lit,

Spread the light haze along the river-  
shores,

And in the hollows; or as once we  
met

Unheedful, tho' beneath a whispering  
rain

Night slid down one long stream of  
sighing wind,  
And in her bosom bore the baby,  
Sleep.

But this whole hour your eyes have  
been intent

On that veil'd picture—veil'd, for  
what it holds

May not be dwelt on by the common  
day.

This prelude has prepared thee. Raise  
thy soul;

Make thine heart ready with thine  
eyes: the time

Is come to raise the veil.

Behold' her there,  
As I beheld her ere she knew my

heart,  
My first, last love; the idol of my

youth,  
The darling of my manhood, and,  
alas!

Now the most blessed memory of  
mine age.

## DORA.

WITH farmer Allan at the farm abode  
William and Dora. William was his

son,  
And she his niece. He often look'd

at them,  
And often thought, 'I'll make them

man and wife.'

Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,  
And yearn'd toward William; but

the youth, because  
He had been always with her in the

house.

Thought not of Dora.  
Then there came a day

When Allan call'd his son, and said,  
'My son:

I married late, but I would wish to  
see

My grandchild on my knees before I  
die:

And I have set my heart upon a  
match.

Now therefore look to Dora; she is  
well

To look to; thrifty too beyond her  
 age.  
 She is my brother's daughter: he and I  
 Had once hard words, and parted,  
 and he died  
 In foreign lands; but for his sake I  
 bred  
 His daughter Dora: take her for  
 your wife;  
 For I have wish'd this marriage, night  
 and day,  
 For many years.' But William an-  
 swer'd short:  
 'I cannot marry Dora: by my life,  
 I will not marry Dora.' Then the  
 old man  
 Was wroth, and doubled up his  
 hands, and said:  
 'You will not, boy! you dare to an-  
 swer thus!  
 But in my time a father's word was  
 law,  
 And so it shall be now for me. Look  
 to it:  
 Consider, William: take a month to  
 think,  
 And let me have an answer to my  
 wish;  
 Or, by the Lord that made me, you  
 shall pack,  
 And never more darken my doors  
 again.'  
 But William answer'd madly; bit his  
 lips,  
 And broke away. The more he  
 look'd at her  
 The less he liked her; and his ways  
 were harsh;  
 But Dora bore them meekly. Then  
 before  
 The month was out he left his father's  
 house,  
 And hired himself to work within the  
 fields;  
 And half in love, half spite, he woo'd  
 and wed  
 A laborer's daughter, Mary Morrison.  
 Then, when the bells were ringing,  
 Allan call'd  
 His niece and said: 'My girl, I love  
 you well;  
 But if you speak with him that was  
 my son,

Or change a word with her he calls  
 his wife,  
 My home is none of yours. My will  
 is law.'  
 And Dora promised, being meek.  
 She thought,  
 'It cannot be: my uncle's mind will  
 change.'  
 And days went on, and there was  
 born a boy  
 To William; then distresses came on  
 him;  
 And day by day he pass'd his father's  
 gate,  
 Heart-broken, and his father help'd  
 him not.  
 But Dora stored what little she  
 could save,  
 And sent it them by stealth, nor did  
 they know  
 Who sent it; till at last a fever seized  
 On William, and in harvest time he  
 died.  
 Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat  
 And look'd with tears upon her boy,  
 and thought  
 Hard things of Dora. Dora came  
 and said:  
 'I have obey'd my uncle until now,  
 And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro'  
 me  
 This evil came on William at the first.  
 But, Mary, for the sake of him that's  
 gone,  
 And for your sake, the woman that  
 he chose,  
 And for this orphan, I am come to  
 you:  
 You know there has not been for  
 these five years  
 So full a harvest: let me take the  
 boy,  
 And I will set him in my uncle's eye  
 Among the wheat; that when his  
 heart is glad  
 Of the full harvest, he may see the  
 boy,  
 And bless him for the sake of him  
 that's gone.'  
 And Dora took the child, and went  
 her way  
 Across the wheat, and sat upon a  
 mound

That was unsown, where many poppies grew.

Far off the farmer came into the field

And spied her not; for none of all his men

Dare tell him Dora waited with the child;

And Dora would have risen and gone to him,

But her heart fail'd her; and the reapers reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

But when the morrow came, she rose and took

The child once more, and sat upon the mound;

And made a little wreath of all the flowers

That grew about, and tied it round his hat

To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye.

Then when the farmer pass'd into the field

He spied her, and he left his men at work,

And came and said: 'Where were you yesterday?

Whose child is that? What are you doing here?'

So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground,

And answer'd softly, 'This is William's child!'

'And did I not,' said Allan, 'did I not

Forbid you, Dora?' Dora said again:

'Do with me as you will, but take the child,

And bless him for the sake of him that's gone!'

And Allan said, 'I see it is a trick Got up betwixt you and the woman there.

I must be taught my duty, and by you! You knew my word was law, and yet you dared

To slight it. Well—for I will take the boy;

But go you hence, and never see me more.'

So saying, he took the boy that cried aloud

And struggled hard. The wreath of flowers fell

At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her hands,

And the boy's cry came to her from the field,

More and more distant. She bow'd down her head,

Remembering the day when first she came,

And all the things that had been. She bow'd down

And wept in secret; and the reapers reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

Then Dora went to Mary's house, and stood

Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy

Was not with Dora. She broke out in praise

To God, that help'd her in her widowhood.

And Dora said, 'My uncle took the boy;

But, Mary, let me live and work with you:

He says that he will never see me more.'

Then answer'd Mary, 'This shall never be,

That thou shouldst take my trouble on thyself;

And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,

For he will teach him hardness, and to slight

His mother; therefore thou and I will go,

And I will have my boy, and bring him home;

And I will beg of him to take thee back:

But if he will not take thee back again,

Then thou and I will live within one house,

And work for William's child, until he grows

Of age to help us.'

So the women kiss'd  
Each other, and set out, and reach'd  
the farm.  
The door was off the latch: they  
peep'd, and saw  
The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's  
knees,  
Who thrust him in the hollows of his  
arm,  
And clapt him on the hands and on  
the cheeks,  
Like one that loved him: and the lad  
stretch'd out  
And babbled for the golden seal, that  
hung  
From Allan's watch, and sparkled by  
the fire.  
Then they came in: but when the boy  
beheld  
His mother, he cried out to come to  
her:  
And Allan set him down, and Mary  
said:  
'O Father!—if you let me call you  
so—  
I never came a-begging for myself,  
Or William, or this child; but now I  
come  
For Dora: take her back; she loves  
you well.  
O Sir, when William died, he died at  
peace  
With all men; for I ask'd him, and he  
said,  
He could not ever rue his marrying  
me—  
I had been a patient wife: but, Sir, he  
said  
That he was wrong to cross his father  
thus:  
"God bless him!" he said, "and  
may he never know  
The troubles I have gone thro'!"  
Then he turn'd  
His face and pass'd—unhappy that I  
am!  
But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for  
you  
Will make him hard, and he will learn  
to slight  
His father's memory; and take Dora  
back,  
And let all this be as it was before.'

So Mary said, and Dora hid her face  
By Mary. There was silence in the  
room;  
And all at once the old man burst in  
sobs:—  
'I have been to blame—to blame.  
I have kill'd my son.  
I have kill'd him—but I loved him—  
my dear son.  
May God forgive me!—I have been to  
blame.  
Kiss me, my children.'  
Then they clung about  
The old man's neck, and kiss'd him  
many times.  
And all the man was broken with re-  
morse;  
And all his love came back a hundred-  
fold;  
And for three hours he sobb'd o'er  
William's child  
Thinking of William.  
So those four abode  
Within one house together; and as  
years  
Went forward, Mary took another  
mate;  
But Dora lived unmarried till her  
death.

## AUDLEY COURT.

'THE Bull, the Fleece are cram'd,  
and not a room  
For love or money. Let us picnic  
there  
At Audley Court.'  
I spoke, while Audley feast  
Humm'd like a hive all round the  
narrow quay,  
To Francis, with a basket on his arm,  
To Francis just alighted from the  
boat,  
And breathing of the sea. 'With all  
my heart,'  
Said Francis. Then we shouler'd  
thro' the swarm,  
And rounded by the stillness of the  
beach  
To where the bay runs up its latest  
horn.

We left the dying ebb that faintly  
lipp'd  
The flat red granite; so by many a  
sweep  
Of meadow smooth from aftermath we  
reach'd  
The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd  
thro' all  
The pillar'd dusk of sounding sycam-  
ores,  
And cross'd the garden to the gar-  
dener's lodge,  
With all its casements bedded, and its  
walls  
And chimneys muffled in the leafy  
vine.  
There, on a slope of orchard,  
Francis laid  
A damask napkin wrought with horse  
and hound,  
Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of  
home,  
And, half-cut-down, a pasty costly-  
made,  
Where quail and pigeon, lark and  
leveret lay,  
Like fossils of the rock, with golden  
volks  
Imbedded and injellied; last, with  
these,  
A flask of cider from his father's  
vats,  
Prime, which I knew; and so we sat  
and eat  
And talk'd old matters over; who was  
dead,  
Who married, who was like to be, and  
how  
The races went, and who would rent  
the hall:  
Then touch'd upon the game, how  
scarce it was  
This season; glancing thence, dis-  
cuss'd the farm,  
The four-field system, and the price of  
grain;  
And struck upon the corn-laws, where  
we split,  
And came again together on the king  
With heated faces; till he laugh'd  
aloud;  
And, while the blackbird on the  
pippin hung

To hear him, clapt his hand in mine  
and sang—  
'Oh! who would fight and march  
and countermarch;  
Be shot for sixpence in a battle-field,  
And shovell'd up into some bloody  
trench  
Where no one knows? but let me live  
my life.  
'Oh! who would cast and balance  
at a desk,  
Perch'd like a crow upon a three-legg'd  
stool,  
Till all his juice is dried, and all his  
joints  
Are full of chalk? but let me live my  
life.  
'Who'd serve the state? for if I  
carved my name  
Upon the cliffs that guard my native  
land,  
I might as well have traced it in the  
sands;  
The sea wastes all: but let me live my  
life.  
'Oh! who would love? I woo'd a  
woman once,  
But she was sharper than an eastern  
wind,  
And all my heart turn'd from her, as  
a thorn  
Turns from the sea; but let me live  
my life.'  
He sang his song, and I replied with  
mine:  
I found it in a volume, all of songs,  
Knock'd down to me, when old Sir  
Robert's pride,  
His books—the more the pity, so I  
said—  
Came to the hammer here in March—  
and this—  
I set the words, and added names I  
knew.  
'Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep, and  
dream of me:  
Sleep, Ellen, folded in thy sister's arm,  
And sleeping, haply dream her arm is  
mine.  
'Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's  
arm;  
Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,  
For thou art fairer than all else that is.

'Sleep, breathing health and peace  
upon her breast :

4 Sleep, breathing love and trust against  
her lip :

I go to-night : I come to-morrow morn.  
I go, but I return : I would I were  
The pilot of the darkness and the  
dream.

Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream  
of me.'

So sang we each to either, Francis  
Hale,

The farmer's son, who lived across  
the bay,

My friend ; and I, that having where-  
withal,

And in the fallow leisure of my life  
A rolling stone of here and every-  
where,

Did what I would ; but ere the night  
we rose

And saunter'd home beneath a moon,  
that, just

In crescent, dimly rain'd about the  
leaf

Twilights of airy silver, till we reach'd  
The limit of the hills ; and as we  
sank

From rock to rock upon the glooming  
quay,

The town was hush'd beneath us :  
lower down

The bay was oily calm ; the harbor-  
buoy,

Sole star of phosphorescence in the  
calm,

With one green sparkle ever and  
anon

Dipt by itself, and we were glad at  
heart.

#### WALKING TO THE MAIL.

*John.* I'm glad I walk'd. How  
fresh the meadows look  
Above the river, and, but a month  
ago,

The whole hill-side was redder than a  
fox.

Is yon plantation where this byway  
joins

The turnpike ?

*James.* Yes.

*John.* And when does this come  
by ?

*James.* The mail ? At one o'clock.

*John.* What is it now ?

*James.* A quarter to.

*John.* Whose house is that I see ?  
No, not the County Member's with  
the vane :

Up higher with the yew-tree by it,  
and half

A score of gables.

*James.* That ? Sir Edward Head's :  
But he's abroad : the place is to be  
sold.

*John.* Oh, his. He was not  
broken.

*James.* No, sir, he,  
Vex'd with a morbid devil in his  
blood

That veil'd the world with jaundice,  
hid his face

From all men, and commercing with  
himself,

He lost the sense that handles daily  
life—

That keeps us all in order more or  
less—

And sick of home went overseas for  
change.

*John.* And whither ?

*James.* Nay, who knows ? he's  
here and there.

But let him go ; his devil goes with  
him,

As well as with his tenant, Jocky  
Dawes.

*John.* What's that ?

*James.* You saw the man—on  
Monday, was it ?—

There by the humpback'd willow ;  
half stands up

And bristles ; half has fall'n and  
made a bridge ;

And there he caught the younker  
tickling trout—

Caught *in flagrant*—what's the  
Latin word ?—

*Delicto* : but his house, for so they  
say,

Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that  
shook

The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt  
at doors,  
And rummaged like a rat: no ser-  
vant stay'd:

The farmer vext packs up his beds  
and chairs,

And all his household stuff; and with  
his boy

Betwixt his knees, his wife upon the  
tilt,

Sets out, and meets a friend who  
hails him, 'What!

You're flitting!' 'Yes, we're flitting,'  
says the ghost

(For they had pack'd the thing  
among the beds,)

'Oh well,' says he, 'you flitting with  
us too—

Jack, turn the horses' heads and home  
again.'

*John.* He left his wife behind; for  
so I heard.

*James.* He left her, yes. I met  
my lady once:

A woman like a butt, and harsh as  
crabs.

*John.* Oh yet but I remember, ten  
years back—

'Tis now at least ten years—and then  
she was—

You could not light upon a sweeter  
thing:

A body slight and round, and like a  
pear

In growing, modest eyes, a haud, a  
foot

Lessening in perfect cadence, and a  
skin

As clean and white as privet when it  
flowers.

*James.* Ay, ay, the blossom fades,  
and they that loved

At first like dove and dove were cat  
and dog.

She was the daughter of a cottager,  
Out of her sphere. What betwixt

shame and pride,  
New things and old, himself and her,  
she sour'd

To what she is: a nature never  
kind!

Like men, like manners: like breeds  
like, they say:

Kind nature is the best: those man-  
ners next

That fit us like a nature second-  
hand;

Which are indeed the manners of the  
great.

*John.* But I had heard it was this  
bill that past,

And fear of change at home, that  
drove him hence.

*James.* That was the last drop in  
the cup of gall.

I once was near him, when his bailiff  
brought

A Chartist pike. You should have  
seen him wince

As from a venomous thing: he  
thought himself

A mark for all, and shudder'd, lest a  
cry

Should break his sleep by night, and  
his nice eyes

Should see the raw mechanic's bloody  
thumbs

Sweat on his blazon'd chairs; but, sir,  
you know

That these two parties still divide the  
world—

Of those that want, and those that  
have: and still

The same old sore breaks out from  
age to age

With much the same result. Now I  
myself,

A Tory to the quick, was as a boy  
Destructive, when I had not what I

would.

I was at school—a college in the  
South:

There lived a flayflint near; we stole  
his fruit,

His hens, his eggs; but there was law  
for us:

We paid in person. He had a sow,  
sir. She,

With meditative grunts of much con-  
tent,

Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun  
and mud.

By night we dragg'd her to the col-  
lege tower

From her warm bed, and up the cork-  
screw stair

With hand and rope we haled the  
groaning sow,  
And on the leads we kept her till she  
pigg'd.  
Large range of prospect had the  
mother sow,  
And but for daily loss of one she  
loved  
As one by one we took them—but for  
this—  
As never sow was higher in this  
world—  
Might have been happy : but what  
lot is pure ?  
We took them all, till she was left  
alone

Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine,  
And so return'd unfarrow'd to her sty.

*John.* They found you out ?

*James.* Not they.

*John.* Well—after all—

What know we of the secret of a  
man ?

His nerves were wrong. What ails  
us, who are sound,

That we should mimic this raw fool  
the world,

Which charts us all in its coarse  
blacks or whites,

As ruthless as a baby with a worm,  
As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows

To Pity—more from ignorance than  
will.

But put your best foot forward, or  
I fear

That we shall miss the mail : and  
here it comes

With five at top : as quaint a four-in-  
hand

As you shall see—three pyebalds and  
a roan.

#### EDWIN MORRIS;

#### OR, THE LAKE.

O ME, my pleasant rambles by the  
lake,  
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters  
of a year,  
My one Oasis in the dust and drouth

Of city life ! I was a sketcher then :  
See here, my doing : curves of moun-  
tain, bridge,

Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built  
When men knew how to build, upon  
a rock

With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock :  
And here, new-comers in an ancient  
hold,

New-comers from the Mersey, million-  
aires,

Here lived the Hills—a Tudor-chim-  
nied bulk

Of mellow brickwork on an isle of  
bowers.

O me, my pleasant rambles by the  
lake

With Edwin Morris and with Edward  
Bull

The curate ; he was fatter than his  
cure.

But Edwin Morris, he that knew  
the names,

Long learned names of agaric, moss  
and fern,

Who forged a thousand theories of  
the rocks,

Who taught me how to skate, to  
row, to swim,

Who read me rhymes elaborately  
good,

His own—I call'd him Crichton, for  
he seem'd

All-perfect, finish'd to the finger nail.

And once I ask'd him of his early  
life,

And his first passion ; and he an-  
swer'd me ;

And well his words became him : was  
he not

A full-cell'd honeycomb of eloquence  
Stored from all flowers ? Poet-like  
he spoke.

' My love for Nature is as old as I ;  
But thirty moons, one honeymoon to  
that,

And three rich sennights more, my  
love for her.

My love for Nature and my love for  
her,



Of different ages, like twin-sisters  
grew,  
Twin-sisters differently beautiful.  
To some full music rose and sank the  
sun,  
And some full music seem'd to move  
and change  
With all the varied changes of the  
dark,  
And either twilight and the day be-  
tween ;  
For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again  
Revolving toward fulfilment, made it  
sweet  
To walk, to sit, to sleep, to wake, to  
breathe.'

Or this or something like to this he  
spoke.  
Then said the fat-faced curate Ed-  
ward Bull,  
'I take it, God made the woman  
for the man,  
And for the good and increase of the  
world.  
A pretty face is well, and this is well,  
To have a dame indoors, that trims  
us up,  
And keeps us tight ; but these unreal  
ways  
Seem but the theme of writers, and  
indeed  
Worn threadbare. Man is made of  
solid stuff.  
I say, God made the woman for the  
man,  
And for the good and increase of the  
world.'

'Parson,' said I, 'you pitch the pipe  
too low :  
But I have sudden touches, and can  
run  
My faith beyond my practice into his :  
Tho' if, in dancing after Letty Hill,  
I do not hear the bells upon my cap,  
I scarce have other music : yet say on,  
What should one give to light on  
such a dream ?'  
I ask'd him half-sardonically.  
'Give ?  
Give all thou art,' he answer'd, and a  
light

Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy  
cheek ;  
'I would have hid her needle in my  
heart,  
To save her little finger from a scratch  
No deeper than the skin : my ears  
could hear  
Her lightest breath ; her least remark  
was worth  
The experience of the wise. I went  
and came ;  
Her voice fled always thro' the sum-  
mer land ;  
I spoke her name alone. Thrice-  
happy days !  
The flower of each, those moments  
when we met,  
The crown of all, we met to part no  
more.'

Were not his words delicious, I a  
beast  
To take them as I did ? but some-  
thing jarr'd ;  
Whether he spoke too largely ; that  
there seem'd  
A touch of something false, some  
self-conceit,  
Or over-smoothness : howsoe'er it  
was,  
He scarcely hit my humor, and I

'Friend Edwin, do not think your-  
self alone  
Of all men happy. Shall not Love to  
me,  
As in the Latin song I learnt at  
school,  
Sneeze out a full God-bless-you right  
and left ?  
But you can talk : yours is a kindly  
vein :  
I have, I think,—Heaven knows—  
as  
much within ;  
Have, or should have, but for a  
thought or two,  
That like a purple beech among the  
greens  
Looks out of place : 'tis from no  
want in her :  
It is my shyness, or my self-distrust,  
Or something of a wayward modern  
mind

Dissecting passion. Time will set me right.'

So spoke I knowing not the things that were.  
Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward Bull :  
' God made the woman for the use of man,  
And for the good and increase of the world.'  
And I and Edwin laughed ; and now we paused  
About the windings of the marge to hear  
The soft wind blowing over meadowy holms  
And alders, garden-isles ; and now we left  
The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran  
By ripply shallows of the lispng lake,  
Delighted with the freshness and the sound.

Bnt, when the bracken rusted on their crags,  
My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by him  
That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk,  
The rentroll Cupid of our rainy isles.  
'Tis true, we met ; one hour I had, no more :  
She sent a note, the seal an *Elle vous suit*,  
The close, 'Your Letty, only yours ;' and this  
Thrice underscored. The friendly mist of morn  
Clung to the lake. I boated over, ran  
My craft aground, and heard with beating heart  
The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelving keel ;  
And out I stept, and up I crept : she moved,  
Like Proserpine in Enna, gathering flowers :  
Then low and sweet I whistled thrice ; and she,  
She turn'd, we closed, we kiss'd, swore faith, I breathed

In some new planet : a silent cousin stole  
Upon us and departed : 'Leave,' she cried,  
'O leave me !' 'Never, dearest, never : here  
I brave the worst :' and while we stood like fools  
Embracing, all at once a score of pugs  
And poodles yell'd within, and out they came  
Trustees and Aunts and Uncles.  
'What, with him !  
Go' (shrill'd the cotton-spinning chorus) ; 'him !'  
I choked. Again they shriek'd the burthen—' Him !'  
Again with hands of wild rejection  
'Go !—  
Girl, get you in !' She went—and in one month  
They wedded her to sixty thousand pounds,  
To lands in Kent and messuages in York,  
And slight Sir Robert with his watery smile  
And educated whisker. But for me,  
They set an ancient creditor to work :  
It seems I broke a close with force and arms :  
There came a mystic token from the king  
To greet the sheriff, needless courtesy !  
I read, and fled by night, and flying turn'd :  
Her taper glimmer'd in the lake below :  
I turn'd once more, close-button'd to the storm ;  
So left the place, left Edwin, nor have seen  
Him since, nor heard of her, nor cared to hear.

Nor cared to hear ? perhaps : yet long ago  
I have pardon'd little Letty ; not indeed,  
It may be, for her own dear sake but this,

She seems a part of those tresh days  
to me ;  
For in the dust and drouth of Lon-  
don life  
She moves among my visions of the  
lake,  
While the prime swallow dips his  
wing, or then  
While the gold-lily blows, and over-  
head  
The light cloud smoulders on the  
summer crag.

## ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

ALTHO' I be the basest of mankind,  
From scalp to sole one slough and  
crust of sin,  
Unfit for earth, unfit for heaven, scarce  
meet  
For troops of devils, mad with blas-  
phemy,  
I will not cease to grasp the hope I  
hold  
Of saintdom, and to clamor, mourn  
and sob,  
Pattering the gates of heaven with  
storms of prayer,  
Have mercy, Lord, and take away my  
sin.

Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty  
God,  
This not be all in vain, that thrice ten  
years,  
Thrice multiplied by superhuman  
pangs,  
In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and  
cold,  
In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous  
throes and cramps,  
A sign betwixt the meadow and the  
cloud,  
Patient on this tall pillar I have borne  
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and  
sleet, and snow ;  
And I had hoped that ere this period  
closed  
Thou wouldst have caught me up into  
thy rest,  
Denying not these weather-beaten  
limbs

The meed of saints, the white robe  
and the palm.

O take the meaning, Lord : I do not  
breathe,  
Not whisper, any murmur of com-  
plaint.  
Pain heap'd ten-hundred-fold to this,  
were still  
Less burthen, by ten-hundred-fold, to  
bear,  
Than were those lead-like tons of sin,  
that crush'd  
My spirit flat before thee.

O Lord, Lord,  
Thou knowest I bore this better at  
the first,  
For I was strong and hale of body  
then ;  
And tho' my teeth, which now are  
dropt away,  
Would chatter with the cold, and all  
my beard  
Was tagg'd with icy fringes in the  
moon,  
I drown'd the whoopings of the owl  
with sound  
Of pious hymns and psalms, and some-  
times saw  
An angel stand and watch me, as I  
sang.  
Now am I feeble grown ; my end  
draws nigh ;  
I hope my end draws nigh : half deaf  
I am,  
So that I scarce can hear the people  
hum  
About the column's base, and almost  
blind,  
And scarce can recognize the fields I  
know ;  
And both my thighs are rotted with  
the dew ;  
Yet cease I not to clamor and to cry,  
While my stiff spine can hold my  
weary head,  
Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from  
the stone,  
Have mercy, mercy : take away my  
sin.  
O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my  
soul,  
Who may be saved ? who is it may be  
saved ?

Who may be made a saint, if I fail here?  
 Show me the man hath suffer'd more than I.  
 For did not all thy martyrs die one death?  
 For either they were stoned, or crucified,  
 Or burn'd in fire, or boil'd in oil, or sawn  
 In twain beneath the ribs; but I die here  
 To-day, and whole years long, a life of death.  
 Bear witness, if I could have found a way  
 (And heedfully I sifted all my thought)  
 More slowly-painful to subdue this home  
 Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and hate,  
 I had not stinted practice, O my God.  
 For not alone this pillar-punishment,  
 Not this alone I bore: but while I lived  
 In the white convent down the valley there,  
 For many weeks about my loins I wore  
 The rope that haled the buckets from the well,  
 Twisted as tight as I could knot the noose;  
 And spake not of it to a single soul,  
 Until the ulcer, eating thro' my skin,  
 Betray'd my secret penance, so that all  
 My brethren marvell'd greatly. More than this  
 I bore, whereof, O God, thou knowest all.  
 Three winters, that my soul might grow to thee,  
 I lived up there on yonder mountain side.  
 My right leg chain'd into the crag, I lay  
 Pent in a roofless close of ragged stones;  
 Inswathed sometimes in wandering mist, and twice  
 Black'd with thy branding thunder, and sometimes

Sucking the damps for drink, and eating not,  
 Except the spare chance-gift of those that came  
 To touch my body and be heal'd, and alive:  
 And they say then that I work'd miracles,  
 Whereof my fame is loud amongst mankind.  
 Cured lameness, palsies, cancers. Thou, O God,  
 Knowest alone whether this was or no. Have mercy, mercy! cover all my sin.  
 Then, that I might be more alone with thee,  
 Three years I lived upon a pillar, high  
 Six cubits, and three years on one of twelve;  
 And twice three years I crouch'd on one that rose  
 Twenty by measure; last of all, I grew  
 Twice ten long weary weary years to this,  
 That numbers forty cubits from the soil.  
 I think that I have borne as much as this—  
 Or else I dream—and for so long a time,  
 If I may measure time by yon slow light,  
 And this high dial, which my sorrow crowns—  
 So much—even so.  
 And yet I know not well,  
 For that the evil ones come here, and say,  
 'Fall down, O Simeon: thou hast suffer'd long  
 For ages and for ages!' then they prate  
 Of penances I cannot have gone thro',  
 Perplexing me with lies; and oft I fall,  
 Maybe for months, in such blind lethargies  
 That Heaven, and Earth, and Time are choked.  
 But yet  
 Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all the saints

Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men  
on earth

House in the shade of comfortable  
roofs,

Sit with their wives by fires, eat whole-  
some food,

And wear warm clothes, and even  
beasts have stalls,

I, 'tween the spring and downfall of  
the light,

Bow down one thousand and two  
hundred times,

To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the  
saints;

Or in the night, after a little sleep,  
I wake : the chill stars sparkle ; I am  
wet

With drenching dews, or stiff with  
crackling frost.

I wear an undress'd goatskin on my  
back ;

A grazing iron collar grinds my  
neck ;

And in my weak, lean arms I lift the  
cross,

And strive and wrestle with thee till I  
die :

O mercy, mercy ! wash away my sin.

O Lord, thou knowest what a man I  
am ;

A sinful man, conceived and born in  
sin :

'Tis their own doing ; this is none of  
mine ;

Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for  
this,

That here come those that worship  
me ? Ha ! ha !

They think that I am somewhat.  
What am I ?

The silly people take me for a saint,  
And bring me offerings of fruit and  
flowers :

And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness  
here)

Have all in all endured as much, and  
more

Than many just and holy men, whose  
names

Are register'd and calendar'd for  
saints.

Good people, you do ill to kneel to  
me.

What is it I can have done to merit  
this ?

I am a sinner viler than you all.

It may be I have wrought some  
miracles,

And cured some halt and maim'd ; but  
what of that ?

It may be, no one, even among the  
saints,

May match his pains with mine ; but  
what of that ?

Yet do not rise ; for you may look on  
me,

And in your looking you may kneel to  
God.

Speak ! is there any of you halt or  
maim'd ?

I think you know I have some power  
with Heaven

From my long penance : let him speak  
his wish.

Yes, I can heal him. Power goes  
forth from me.

They say that they are heal'd. Ah,  
hark ! they shout

'St. Simeon Stylites.' Why, if so,  
God reaps a harvest in me. O my

soul,

God reaps a harvest in thee. If this  
be,

Can I work miracles and not be saved ?  
This is not told of any. They were  
saints.

It cannot be but that I shall be saved ;  
Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout,

'Behold a saint !'

And lower voices saint me from above.  
Courage, St. Simeon ! This dull

chrysalis

Cracks into shining wings, and hope  
ere death

Spreads more and more and more, that  
God hath now

Sponged and made blank of crimeful  
record all

My mortal archives.

O my sons, my sons,  
I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname  
Stylites, among men ; I, Simeon,

The watcher on the column till the  
end ;

I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine  
bakes ;

I, whose bald brows in silent hours  
 become  
 Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now  
 From my high nest of penance here  
 proclaim  
 That Pontius and Iscariot by my side  
 Show'd like fair seraphs. On the  
 coals I lay,  
 A vessel full of sin: all hell beneath  
 Made me boil over. Devils pluck'd  
 my sleeve,  
 Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at me.  
 I smote them with the cross; they  
 swarm'd again.  
 In bed like monstrous apes they  
 crush'd my chest:  
 They flapp'd my light out as I read: I  
 saw  
 Their faces grow between me and my  
 book;  
 With colt-like whinny and with hog-  
 gish whine  
 They burst my prayer. Yet this way  
 was left,  
 And by this way I 'scaped them.  
 Mortify  
 Your flesh, like me, with scourges  
 and with thorns;  
 Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it may  
 be, fast  
 Whole Lents, and pray. I hardly,  
 with slow steps,  
 With slow, faint steps, and much  
 exceeding pain,  
 Have scrambled past those pits of fire,  
 that still  
 Sing in mine ears. But yield not me  
 the praise:  
 God only thro' his bounty hath thought  
 fit,  
 Among the powers and princes of  
 this world,  
 To make me an example to mankind,  
 Which few can reach to. Yet I do  
 not say  
 But that a time may come—yea, even  
 now,  
 Now, now, his footsteps smite the  
 threshold stairs  
 Of life—I say, that time is at the  
 doors  
 When you may worship me without re-  
 proach:

For I will leave my relics in your land,  
 And you may carve a shrine about my  
 dust,  
 And burn a fragrant lamp before my  
 bones,  
 When I am gather'd to the glorious  
 saints.

While I spake then, a sting of  
 shrewdest pain  
 Ran shrivelling thro' me, and a cloud-  
 like change,  
 In passing, with a grosser film made  
 thick

These heavy, horny eyes. The end!  
 the end!

Surely the end! What's here? a  
 shape, a shade,  
 A flash of light. Is that the angel  
 there

That holds a crown? Come, blessed  
 brother, come.

I know thy glittering face. I waited  
 long;

My brows are ready. What! deny it  
 now?

Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh. So I  
 clutch it. Christ!

'Tis gone: 'tis here again; the crown!  
 the crown!

So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me,  
 And from it melt the dews of Paradise,  
 Sweet! sweet! spikenard, and balm,  
 and frankincense.

Ah! let me not be fool'd, sweet saints:  
 I trust

That I am whole, and clean, and meet  
 for Heaven.

Speak, if there be a priest, a man of  
 God,

Among you there, and let him pres-  
 ently

Approach, and lean a ladder on the  
 shaft,

And climbing up into my airy home,  
 Deliver me the blessed sacrament;

For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,  
 I prophesy that I shall die to-night,

A quarter before twelve.

But thou, O Lord,  
 Aid all this foolish people; let them  
 take

Example, pattern: lead them to thy  
 light.

THE TALKING OAK.

ONCE more the gate behind me falls;  
Once more before my face  
I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,  
That stand within the chace.

Beyond the lodge the city lies,  
Beneath its drift of smoke;  
And ah! with what delighted eyes  
I turn to yonder oak.

For when my passion first began,  
Ere that, which in me burn'd,  
The love, that makes me thrice a  
man,  
Could hope itself return'd;

To yonder oak within the field  
I spoke without restraint,  
And with a larger faith appeal'd  
Than Papist unto Saint

For oft I talk'd with him apart,  
And told him of my choice,  
Until he plagiarized a heart,  
And answer'd with a voice.

Tho' what he whisper'd under Heaven  
None else could understand;  
I found him garrulously given,  
A babbler in the land.

But since I heard him make reply  
Is many a weary hour;  
'Twere well to question him, and try  
If yet he keeps the power.

Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,  
Broad Oak of Summer-chace,  
Whose topmost branches can discern  
The roofs of Summer-place!

Say thou, whereon I carved her name,  
If ever maid or spouse,  
As fair as my Olivia, came  
To rest beneath thy boughs.—

'O Walter, I have shelter'd here  
Whatever maiden grace  
The good old Summers, year by year  
Made ripe in Summer-chace:

'Old Summers, when the monk was  
fat,  
And, issuing shorn and sleek,  
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat  
The girls upon the cheek,

'Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,  
And number'd bead, and shrift,  
Bluff Harry brok into the spence  
And turn'd the cowls adrift:

'And I have seen some score of those  
Fresh faces, that would thrive  
When his man-minded offset rose  
To chase the deer at five;

'And all that from the town would  
stroll,  
Till that wild wind made work  
In which the gloomy brewer's soul  
Went by me, like a stork:

'The slight she-slips of loyal blood,  
And others, passing praise,  
Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud  
For puritanic stays:

'And I have shadow'd many a group  
Of beauties, that were born  
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,  
Or while the patch was worn;

'And, leg and arm with love-knots  
gay,  
About me leap'd and laugh'd  
The modish Cupid of the day,  
And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.

'I swear (and else may insects prick  
Each leaf into a gall)  
This girl, for whom your heart is sick,  
Is three times worth them all;

'For those and theirs, by Nature's law,  
Have faded long ago;  
But in these latter springs I saw  
Your own Olivia blow,

'From when she gamboll'd on the  
greens  
A baby-germ, to when  
The maiden blossoms of her teens  
Could number five from ten.

'I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,  
(And hear me with thine ears,)   
That, tho' I circle in the grain  
Five hundred rings of years—

'Yet, since I first could cast a shade,  
Did never creature pass  
So slightly, musically made,  
So light upon the grass:

'For as to fairies, that will flit  
To make the greensward fresh,  
I hold them exquisitely knit,  
But far too spare of flesh.'

Oh, hide thy knotted knees in fern,  
And overlook the chace;  
And from thy topmost branch discern  
The roofs of Summer-place.

But thou, whereon I carved her name,  
That oft hast heard my vows,  
Declare when last Olivia came  
To sport beneath thy boughs.

'O yesterday, you know, the fair  
Was holden at the town;  
Her father left his good arm-chair,  
And rode his hunter down.

'And with him Albert came on his.  
I look'd at him with joy:  
As cowslip unto oxlip is,  
So seems she to the boy.

'An hour had past—and, sitting  
straight  
Within the low-wheel'd chaise,  
Her mother trundled to the gate  
Behind the dappled grays.

'But as for her, she stay'd at home,  
And on the roof she went,  
And down the way you used to come,  
She look'd with discontent.

'She left the novel half-uncut  
Upon the rosewood shelf;  
She left the new piano shut:  
She could not please herself.

'Then ran she, gamesome as the colt,  
And livelier than a lark

She sent her voice thro' all the holt  
Before her, and the park.

'A light wind chased her on the wing,  
And in the chase grew wild,  
As close as might be would he cling  
About the darling child:

'But light as any wind that blows  
So fleetly did she stir,  
The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and  
rose,  
And turn'd to look at her.

'And here she came, and round me  
play'd,  
And sang to me the whole  
Of those three stanzas that you made  
About my "giant bole;"

'And in a fit of frolic mirth  
She strove to span my waist:  
Alas, I was so broad of girth,  
I could not be embraced.

'I wish'd myself the fair young beech  
That here beside me stands,  
That round me, clasping each in each,  
She might have lock'd her hands.

'Yet seem'd the pressure thrice as  
sweet  
As woodbine's fragile hold,  
Or when I feel about my feet  
The berried briony fold.'

O muffle round thy knees with fern,  
And shadow Summer-chace!  
Long may thy topmost branch discern  
The roofs of Summer-place!

But tell me, did she read the name  
I carved with many vows  
When last with throbbing heart I  
came  
To rest beneath thy boughs?

'O yes, she wander'd round and round  
These knotted knees of mine,  
And found, and kiss'd the name she  
found,  
And sweetly murmur'd thine.



' A teardrop trembled from its source,  
And down my surface crept.  
My sense of touch is something coarse,  
But I believe she wept.

' Then flush'd her cheek with rosy  
light,  
She glanced across the plain ;  
But not a creature was in sight :  
She kiss'd me once again.

' Her kisses were so close and kind,  
That, trust me on my word,  
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,  
But yet my sap was sturr'd :

' And even into my inmost ring  
A pleasure I discern'd,  
Like those blind motions of the  
Spring,  
That show the year is turn'd.

' Thrice-happy he that may caress  
The ringlet's waving balm—  
The cushions of whose touch may press  
The maiden's tender palm.

' I, rooted here among the groves  
But languidly adjust  
My vapid vegetable loves  
With anthers and with dust :

' For ah ! my friend, the days were  
brief  
Whereof the poets talk,  
When that, which breathes within the  
leaf,  
Colud slip its bark and walk.

' But could I, as in times foregone,  
From spray, and branch, and stem,  
Have suck'd and gather'd into one  
The life that spreads in them,

' She had not found me so remiss ;  
But lightly issuing thro',  
I would have paid her kiss for kiss,  
With usury thereto.'

O flourish high, with leafy towers,  
And overlook the lea,  
Pursue thy loves among the bowers  
But leave thou mine to me.

O flourish, hidden deep in fern,  
Old oak, I love thee well ;  
A thousand thanks for what I learn  
And what remains to tell.

' 'Tis little more : the day was warm ;  
At last, tired out with play,  
She sank her head upon her arm  
And at my feet she lay.

' Her eyelids dropp'd their silken  
caves.  
I breathed upon her eyes  
Thro' all the summer of my leaves  
A welcome mix'd with sighs.

' I took the swarming sound of  
life—  
The music from the town—  
The murmurs of the drum and fife  
And lull'd them in my own.

' Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,  
To light her shaded eye ;  
A second flutter'd round her lip  
Like a golden butterfly ;

' A third would glimmer on her  
neck  
To make the necklace shine ;  
Another slid, a sunny fleck,  
From head to ancle fine,

' Then close and dark my arms I  
spread,  
And shadow'd all her rest—  
Dropt dews upon her golden head,  
An acorn in her breast.

' But in a pet she started up,  
And pluck'd it out, and drew  
My little oakling from the cup,  
And flung him in the dew.

' And yet it was a graceful gift—  
I felt a pang within  
As when I see the woodman lift  
His axe to slay my kin.

' I shook him down because he was  
The finest on the tree.  
He lies beside thee on the grass.  
O kiss him once for me.

O kiss him twice and thrice for me,  
That have no lips to kiss,  
For never yet was oak on lea  
Shall grow so fair as this.

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,  
Look further thro' the chace,  
Spread upward till thy boughs discern  
The front of Summer-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blest,  
That but a moment lay  
Where fairer fruit of Love may rest  
Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,  
The warmth it thence shall win  
To riper life may magnetize  
The baby-oak within.

But thou, while kingdoms overset,  
Or lapse from hand to hand,  
Thy leaf shall never fail, nor yet  
Thine acorn in the land.

May never saw dismember thee,  
Nor wielded axe disjoint,  
That art the fairest-spoken tree  
From here to Lizard-point.

O rock upon thy towery-top  
All throats that gurgle sweet!  
All starry culmination drop  
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet!

All grass of silky feather grow—  
And while he sinks or swells  
The full south-breeze around thee  
blow  
The sound of minster bells.

The fat earth feed thy branchy root,  
That under deeply strikes!  
The northern morning o'er thee shoot,  
High up, in silver spikes!

Nor ever lightning char thy grain,  
But, rolling as in sleep,  
Low thunders bring the mellow rain,  
That makes thee broad and deep!

And hear me swear a solemn oath,  
That only by thy side

Will I to Olive plight my troth,  
And gain her for my bride.

And when my marriage morn may fall,  
She, Dryad-like, shall wear  
Alternate leaf and acorn-ball  
In wreath about her hair.

And I will work in prose and rhyme,  
And praise thee more in both  
Than bard has honor'd beech or lime,  
Or that Thessalian growth,

In which the swarthy ringdove sat,  
And mystic sentence spoke;  
And more than England honors that,  
Thy famous brother-oak.

Wherein the younger Charles abode  
Till all the paths were dim,  
And far below the Roundhead rode,  
And humn'd a surly hymn.

#### LOVE AND DUTY.

Of love that never found his earthly  
close,  
What sequel? Streaming eyes and  
breaking hearts?  
Or all the same as if he had not been?  
Not so. Shall Error in the round  
of time  
Still father Truth? O shall the  
braggart shout  
For some blind glimpse of freedom  
work itself  
Thro' madness, hated by the wise, to  
law  
System and empire? Sin itself be  
found  
The cloudy porch oft opening on the  
Sun?  
And only he, this wonder, dead,  
become  
Mere highway dust? or year by year  
alone  
Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,  
Nightmare of youth, the spectre of  
himself?  
If this were thus, if this, indeed,  
were all,

Better the narrow brain, the stony heart,  
 The staring eye glazed o'er with sap-  
 less days,  
 The long mechanic paces to and fro,  
 The set gray life, and apathetic end.  
 But am I not the nobler thro' thy love?  
 O three times less unworthy! likewise thou  
 Art more thro' Love, and greater than thy years,  
 The Sun will run his orbit, and the Moon  
 Her circle. Wait, and Love himself will bring  
 The drooping flower of knowledge changed to fruit  
 Of wisdom. Wait: my faith is large in Time,  
 And that which shapes it to some perfect end.  
 Will some one say, Then why not ill for good?  
 Why took ye not your pastime? To that man  
 My work shall answer, since I knew the right  
 And did it; for a man is not as God,  
 But then most Godlike being most a man.  
 —So let me think 'tis well for thee and me—  
 Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine  
 Whose foresight preaches peace, my heart so slow  
 To feel it! For how hard it seem'd to me,  
 When eyes, love-languid thro' half tears would dwell  
 One earnest, earnest moment upon mine,  
 Then not to dare to see! when thy low voice,  
 Faltering, would break its syllables, to keep  
 My own full-tuned,—hold passion in a leash,  
 And not leap forth and fall about thy neck.  
 And on thy bosom (deep desired relief!)

Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that weigh'd  
 Upon my brain, my senses and my soul!  
 For Love himself took part against himself  
 To warn us off, and Duty loved of Love—  
 O this world's curse,—beloved but hated—came  
 Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace and mine,  
 And crying, 'Who is this? behold thy bride,'  
 She push'd me from thee.  
 If the sense is hard  
 To alien ears, I did not speak to these—  
 No, not to thee, but to thyself in me:  
 Hard is my doom and thine: thou knowest it all.  
 Could Love part thus? was it not well to speak,  
 To have spoken once? It could not but be well.  
 The slow sweet hours that bring us all things good,  
 The slow sad hours that bring us all things ill,  
 And all good things from evil, brought the night  
 In which we sat together and alone,  
 And to the want, that hollow'd all the heart,  
 Gave utterance by the yearning of an eye,  
 That burn'd upon its object thro' such tears  
 As flow but once a life.  
 The trance gave way  
 To those caresses, when a hundred times  
 In that last kiss, which never was the last,  
 Farewell, like endless welcome, lived and died.  
 Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and the words  
 That make a man feel strong in speaking truth;  
 Till now the dark was worn, and over-head

The lights of sunset and of sunrise  
mix'd

In that brief night; the summer night,  
that paused

Among her stars to hear us; stars  
that hung

Love-charm'd to listen: all the wheels  
of Time

Spun round in station, but the end  
had come.

O then like those, who clench their  
nerves to rush

Upon their dissolution, we two rose,  
There—closing like an individual

life—

In one blind cry of passion and of pain,  
Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,

Caught up the whole of love and  
utter'd it,

And bade adieu for ever.

Live—yet live—  
Shall sharpest pathos blight us,

knowing all  
Life needs for life is possible to will—

Live happy; tend thy flowers; be  
tended by

My blessing! Should my Shadow  
cross thy thoughts

Too sadly for their peace, remand it  
thou

For calmer hours to Memory's dark-  
est hold,

If not to be forgotten—not at once—  
Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy

dreams,  
O might it come like one that looks

content,  
With quiet eyes unfaithful to the

truth,  
And point thee forward to a distant

light,  
Or seem to lift a burthen from thy

heart  
And leave thee freer, till thou wake

refresh'd  
Then when the first low matin-chirp

hath grown  
Full quire, and morning driv'n her

plow of pearl  
Far furrowing into light the mounded

rack,  
Beyond the fair green field and east-  
ern sea.

### THE GOLDEN YEAR.

WELL, you shall have that song which  
Leonard wrote:

It was last summer on a tour in  
Wales:

Old James was with me: we that day  
had been

Up Snowdon; and I wish'd for Leon-  
ard there,

And found him in Llanberis: then we  
crost

Between the lakes, and clamber'd half  
way up

The counter side; and that same song  
of his

He told me; for I banter'd him, and  
swore

They said he lived shut up within  
himself,

A tongue-tied Poet in the feverous  
days,

That, setting the *how much* before the  
*how*,

Cry, like the daughters of the horse-  
leech, 'Give,

Cram us with all,' but count not me  
the herd!

To which 'They call me what they  
will,' he said:

'But I was born too late: the fair  
new forms,

That float about the threshold of an  
age,

Like truths of Science waiting to be  
caught—

Catch me who can, and make the  
catcher crown'd—

Are taken by the forelock. Let it be.  
But if you care indeed to listen, hear

These measured words, my work of  
yesternorn.

'We sleep and wake and sleep, but  
all things move;

The Sun flies forward to his brother  
Sun;

The dark Earth follows wheel'd in  
her ellipse;

And human things returning on them-  
selves

Move onward, leading up the golden  
year.

' Ah, tho' the times, when some  
new thought can bud,  
Are but as poets' seasons when they  
flower,

Yet oceans daily gaining on the land,  
Have ebb and flow conditioning their  
march,  
And slow and sure comes up the  
golden year.

' When wealth no more shall rest  
in mounded heaps,  
But smit with freer light shall slowly  
melt

In many streams to fatten lower lands,  
And light shall spread, and man be  
liker man

Thro' all the season of the golden  
year.

' Shall eagles not be eagles? wrens  
be wrens?

If all the world were falcons, what of  
that?

The wonder of the eagle were the less,  
But he not less the eagle. Happy  
days

Roll onward, leading up the golden  
year.

' Fly, happy happy sails, and bear  
the Press;

Fly happy with the mission of the  
Cross;

Knit land to land, and blowing haven-  
ward

With silks, and fruits, and spices,  
clear of toil,

Enrich the markets of the golden year.

' But we grow old. Ah! when shall  
all men's good  
Be each man's rule, and universal  
Peace

Lie like a shaft of light across the  
land,

And like a lane of beams athwart the  
sea,

Thro' all the circle of the golden  
year?'

Thus far he flow'd, and ended;  
whereupon

' Ah, folly!' in mimic cadence an-  
swer'd James—

' Ah, folly! for it lies so far away,  
Not in our time, nor in our children's  
time,

' Tis like the second world to us that  
live;

' Twere all as one to fix our hopes on  
Heaven

As on this vision of the golden year.'

With that he struck his staff against  
the rocks

And broke it,—James,—you know  
him,—old, but full

Of force and cholera, and firm upon his  
feet,

And like an oaken stock in winter  
woods,

O'erflourish'd with the hoary clem-  
atis:

Then added, all in heat:

' What stuff is this!  
Old writers push'd the happy season  
back,—

The more fools they,—we forward:  
dreamers both:

You most, that in an age, when every  
hour

Must sweat her sixty minutes to the  
death,

Live on, God love us, as if the seeds-  
man, rapt

Upon the teeming harvest, should not  
plunge

His hand into the bag: but well I  
know

That unto him who works, and feels  
he works,

This same grand year is ever at the  
doors.'

He spoke; and, high above, I heard  
them blast

The steep slate-quarry, and the great  
echo flap

And buffet round the hills, from bluff  
to bluff.

#### ULYSSES.

It little profits that an idle king.  
By this still hearth, among these bar-  
ren crags,

Match'd with an aged wife, I mete  
and dole

Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and  
know not me.

I cannot rest from travel: I will drink  
Life to the lees: all times I have en-  
joy'd

Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both  
with those

That loved me, and alone; on shore,  
and when

Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades

Vext the dim sea: I am become a  
name;

For always roaming with a hungry  
heart

Much have I seen and known; cities  
of men

And manners, climates, councils, gov-  
ernments,

Myself not least, but honor'd of them  
all;

And drunk delight of battle with my  
peers,

Far on the ringing plains of windy  
Troy.

I am a part of all that I have met;  
Yet all experience is an arch where-  
thro'

Gleams that untravell'd world, whose  
margin fades

For ever and for ever when I move.

How dull it is to pause, to make an  
end,

To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in  
use!

As though to breathe were life. Life  
piled on life

Were all too little, and of one to me  
Little remains: but every hour is saved

From that eternal silence, something  
more,

A bringer of new things; and vile it  
were

For some three suns to store and  
hoard myself,

And this gray spirit yearning in desire  
To follow knowledge like a sinking

star,

Beyond the utmost bound of human  
thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,

To whom I leave the sceptre and the  
isle—

Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil

This labor, by slow prudence to make  
mild

A rugged people, and thro' soft de-  
grees

Subdue them to the useful and the  
good.

Most blameless is he, centred in the  
sphere

Of common duties, decent not to fail  
In offices of tenderness, and pay

Meet adoration to my household gods,  
When I am gone. He works his

work, I mine.

There lies the port; the vessel  
puffs her sail:

There gloom the dark broad seas.  
My mariners,

Souls that have toil'd, and wrought,  
and thought with me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took  
The thunder and the sunshine, and op-  
posed

Free hearts, free foreheads—you and  
I are old;

Old age hath yet his honor and his  
toil;

Death closes all: but something ere  
the end,

Some work of noble note, may yet be  
done,

Not unbecoming men that strove with  
Gods.

The lights begin to twinkle from the  
rocks:

The long day wanes: the slow moon  
climbs: the deep

Moans round with many voices.  
Come, my friends,

'Tis not too late to seek a newer  
world.

Push off, and sitting well in order  
smite

The sounding furrows; for my pur-  
pose holds

To sail beyond the sunset, and the  
baths

Of all the western stars, until I die.  
It may be that the gulfs will wash us  
down:

It may be we shall touch the Happy  
Isles,

And see the great Achilles, whom we  
knew.



- All in the mad March-morning I  
heard the angels call;  
It was when the moon was setting, and  
the dark was over all







Tho' much is taken, much abides; and  
 tho'  
 We are not now that strength which  
 in old days  
 Moved earth and heaven; that which  
 we are, we are;  
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
 Made weak by time and fate, but  
 strong in will  
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to  
 yield.

## TITHONUS.

THE woods decay, the woods decay  
 and fall,  
 The vapors weep their burthen to the  
 ground,  
 Man comes and tills the field and lies  
 beneath,  
 And after many a summer dies the  
 swan.  
 Me only cruel immortality  
 Consumes: I wither slowly in thine  
 arms,  
 Here at the quiet limit of the world,  
 A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a  
 dream  
 The ever-silent spaces of the East,  
 Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls  
 of morn.

Alas! for this gray shadow, once a  
 man—  
 So glorious in his beauty and thy  
 choice,  
 Who madest him thy chosen, that he  
 seem'd  
 To his great heart none other than a  
 God!  
 I ask'd thee, 'Give me immortality.'  
 Then didst thou grant mine asking  
 with a smile,  
 Like wealthy men who care not how  
 they give.  
 But thy strong Hours indignant  
 work'd their wills,  
 And beat me down and marr'd and  
 wasted me,  
 And tho' they could not end me, left  
 me maim'd

To dwell in presence of immortal  
 youth,  
 Immortal age beside immortal youth,  
 And all I was, in ashes. Can thy  
 love,  
 Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even  
 now,  
 Close over us, the silver star, thy  
 guide,  
 Shines in those tremulous eyes that  
 fill with tears  
 To hear me? Let me go: take back  
 thy gift:  
 Why should a man desire in any  
 way  
 To vary from the kindly race of  
 men,  
 Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance  
 Where all should pause, as is most  
 meet for all?

A soft air fans the cloud apart;  
 there comes  
 A glimpse of that dark world where I  
 was born.  
 Once more the old mysterious glim-  
 mer steals  
 From thy pure brows, and from thy  
 shoulders pure,  
 And bosom beating with a heart  
 renew'd.  
 Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the  
 gloom,  
 Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close  
 to mine,  
 Ere yet they blind the stars, and the  
 wild team  
 Which love thee, yearning for thy  
 yoke, arise,  
 And shake the darkness from their  
 loosen'd manes,  
 And beat the twilight into flakes of  
 fire.

Lo! ever thus thou growest beauti-  
 ful  
 In silence, then before thine answer  
 given  
 Departest, and thy tears are on my  
 cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with  
 thy tears,

And make me tremble lest a saying  
 learnt,  
 In days far-off, on that dark earth, be  
 true?  
 'The Gods themselves cannot recall  
 their gifts.'

Ay me! ay me! with what another  
 heart  
 In days far-off, and with what other  
 eyes  
 I used to watch—if I be he that  
 watch'd—  
 The lucid outline forming round thee;  
 saw  
 The dim curls kindle into sunny  
 rings;  
 Changed with thy mystic change, and  
 felt my blood  
 Glow with the glow that slowly crim-  
 son'd all  
 Thy presence and thy portals, while I  
 lay,  
 Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing  
 dewy-warm  
 With kisses balmier than half-opening  
 buds  
 Of April, and could hear the lips that  
 kiss'd  
 Whispering I knew not what of wild  
 and sweet,

Like that strange song I heard Apollo  
 sing,  
 While Ilion like a mist rose into  
 towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine  
 East:  
 How can my nature longer mix with  
 thine?  
 Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me,  
 cold  
 Are all thy lights, and cold my wrin-  
 kled feet  
 Upon thy glimmering thresholds,  
 when the steam  
 Floats up from those dim fields about  
 the homes  
 Of happy men that have the power to  
 die,  
 And grassy barrows of the happier  
 dead.  
 Release me, and restore me to the  
 ground;  
 Thou seest all things, thou wilt see  
 my grave:  
 Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by  
 morn;  
 I earth in earth forget these empty  
 courts,  
 And thee returning on thy silver  
 heels.

#### LOCKSLEY HALL.

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn:  
 Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,  
 Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,  
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,  
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,  
 Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime  
 With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed ;  
When I clung to all the present for the promise that it, closed :

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see ;  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast ;  
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest ;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove ;  
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,  
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, ' My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,  
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee.'

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,  
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—  
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, ' I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong ;'  
Saying, ' Dost thou love me, cousin ?' weeping, ' I have loved thee long.'

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands ;  
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might ;  
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,  
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fulness of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,  
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my Amy, mine no more !  
O the dreary, dreary moorland ! O the barren, barren shore !

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,  
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue !

Is it well to wish thee happy ?—having known me—to decline  
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine !

Yet it shall be : thou shalt lower to his level day by day,  
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is : thou art mated with a clown,  
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,  
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy: think not they are glazed with wine.  
Go to him: it is thy duty: kiss him: take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought:  
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—  
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,  
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!  
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!  
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—  
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit?  
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come  
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?  
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she speak and move:  
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?  
No—she never loved me truly: love is love for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this is truth the poet sings,  
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,  
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,  
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,  
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the 'Never, never,' whisper'd by the phantom years,  
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.  
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry.  
'Tis a purer life than thine; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down: my latest rival brings thee rest.  
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.  
Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,  
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

'They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was not exempt—  
Truly, she herself had suffer'd—Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! wherefore should I care?  
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these?  
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow,  
I have but an angry fancy: what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,  
When the ranks are roll'd in vapor, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honor feels,  
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page.  
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,  
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,  
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,  
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,  
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men:

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:  
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales ;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue ;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm ;

Till the war-drum throb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,  
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye ;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint :  
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point :

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher,  
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,  
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat forever like a boy's ?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,  
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,  
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,  
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn :

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string ?  
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness ! woman's pleasure, woman's pain—  
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,  
Arc as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat  
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat ;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd ;—  
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,  
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,  
Breathths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,  
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag ;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—  
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,  
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing space ;  
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,  
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,  
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I *know* my words are wild,  
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,  
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime ?  
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,  
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon !

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,  
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day :  
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun :  
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.  
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !  
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening over heath and holt,  
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ;  
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

## GODIVA.

*I waited for the train at Coventry ;  
I hung with grooms and porters on the  
bridge,  
To watch the three tall spires ; and  
there I shaped  
The city's ancient legend into this :—*  
Not only we, the latest seed of  
Time,  
New men, that in the flying of a wheel  
Cry down the past, not only we, that  
prate  
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the  
people well,  
And loathed to see them overtax'd ;  
but she  
Did more, and underwent, and over-  
came,  
The woman of a thousand summers  
back,  
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who  
ruled  
In Coventry : for when he laid a tax  
Upon his town, and all the mothers  
brought  
Their children, clamoring, ' If we pay,  
we starve !'  
She sought her lord, and found him,  
where he strode  
About the hall, among his dogs, alone,  
His beard a foot before him, and his  
hair  
A yard behind. She told him of their  
tears,  
And pray'd him, ' If they pay this tax,  
they starve.'  
Whereat he stared, replying, half-  
amazed,  
' You would not let your little finger  
ache  
For such as *these* ?'—' But I would  
die,' said she.  
He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and  
by Paul :  
Then fillip'd at the diamond in her ear ;  
' Oh ay, ay, ay, you talk !'—' Alas !'  
she said,  
' But prove me what it is I would not  
do.'  
And from a heart as rough as Esau's  
hand,

He answer'd, ' Ride you naked thro'  
the town,  
And I repeal it ;' and nodding, as in  
scorn,  
He parted, with great strides among  
his dogs.  
So left alone, the passions of her  
mind,  
As winds from all the compass shift  
and blow,  
Made war upon each other for an hour,  
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,  
And bade him cry, with sound of  
trumpet, all  
The hard condition ; but that she  
would loose  
The people : therefore, as they loved  
her well,  
From then till noon no foot should  
pace the street,  
No eye look down, she passing ; but  
that all  
Should keep within, door shut, and  
window barr'd.  
Then fled she to her inmost bower,  
and there  
Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her  
belt,  
The grim Earl's gift ; but ever at a  
breath  
She linger'd, looking like a summer  
moon  
Half-dipt in cloud : anon she shook  
her head,  
And shower'd the rippled ringlets to  
her knee ;  
Unclad herself in haste ; adown the  
stair  
Stole on ; and, like a creeping sun-  
beam, slid  
From pillar unto pillar, until she  
reach'd  
The gateway ; there she found her  
palfrey trapt  
In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.  
Then she rode forth, clothed on  
with chastity :  
The deep air listen'd round her as she  
rode,  
And all the low wind hardly breathed  
for fear.  
The little wide-mouth'd heads upon  
the spout



Had cunning eyes to see : the barking  
cur  
Made her cheek flame : her palfrey's  
foot-fall shot  
Light horrors thro' her pulses: the  
blind walls  
Were full of chinks and holes ; and  
overhead  
Fantastic gables, crowding, stared :  
but she  
Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she  
saw  
The white-flower'd elder-thicket from  
the field  
Gleam thro' the Gothic archway in the  
wall.  
Then she rode back, clothed on with  
chastity :  
And one low churl, compact of thank-  
less earth,  
The fatal byword of all years to come,  
Boring a little auger-hole in fear,  
Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had  
their will,  
Were shrivell'd into darkness in his  
head,  
And dropt before him. So the  
Powers, who wait  
On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense  
misused ;  
And she, that knew not, pass'd : and  
all at once,  
With twelve great shocks of sound,  
the shameless noon  
Was clash'd and hammer'd from a  
hundred towers,  
One after one : but even then she  
gain'd  
Her bower : whence, reissuing, robed  
and crown'd,  
To meet her lord, she took the tax  
away  
And built herself an everlasting name.

THE DAY-DREAM.

PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak :  
A pleasant hour has passed away  
While, dreaming on your damask  
cheek,

The dewy sister-eyelids lay.  
As by the lattice you reclined,  
I went thro' many wayward moods  
To see you dreaming—and, behind,  
A summer crisp with shining woods.  
And I too dream'd, until at last  
Across my fancy, brooding warm,  
The reflex of a legend past,  
And loosely settled into form.  
And would you have the thought I  
had,  
And see the vision that I saw,  
Then take the broidery-frame, and add  
A crimson to the quaint Macaw,  
And I will tell it. Turn your face,  
Nor look with that too-earnest eye—  
The rhymes are dazzled from their  
place  
And order'd words asunder fly.

THE SLEEPING PALACE.

I.

THE varying year with blade and  
sheaf  
Clothes and reclothes the happy  
plains,  
Here rests the sap within the leaf,  
Here stays the blood along the  
veins.  
Faint shadows, vapors lightly curl'd,  
Faint murmurs from the meadows  
come,  
Like hints and echoes of the world  
To spirits folded in the womb.

II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns  
On every slanting terrace-lawn.  
The fountain to his place returns  
Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.  
Here droops the banner on the tower,  
On the hall-hearths the festal fires,  
The peacock in his laurel bower,  
The parrot in his gilded wires.

III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their  
eggs :  
In these, in those the life is stay'd.

The mantles from the golden pegs  
Droop sleepily: no sound is made,  
Not even of a gnat that sings.  
More like a picture seemeth all  
Than those old portraits of old kings,  
That watch the sleepers from the  
wall.

## IV.

Here sits the Butler with a flask  
Between his knees, half-drain'd;  
and there  
The wrinkled steward at his task,  
The maid-of-honor blooming fair;  
The page has caught her hand in his:  
Her lips are sever'd as to speak:  
His own are pouted to a kiss:  
The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

## V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,  
The beams, that thro' the Oriel  
shine,  
Make prisms in every carven glass,  
And beaker brimm'd with noble  
wine.  
Each baron at the banquet sleeps,  
Grave faces gather'd in a ring.  
His state the king reposing keeps.  
He must have been a jovial king.

## VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and  
shows  
At distance like a little wood:  
Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,  
And grapes with bunches red as  
blood;  
All creeping plants, a wall of green  
Close-matted, bur and brake and  
briar,  
And glimpsing over these, just seen,  
High up, the topmost palace spire:

## VII.

When will the hundred summers die,  
And thought and time be born  
again,  
And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,  
Bring truth that sways the soul of  
men?

Here all things in their place re-  
main,  
As all were order'd, ages since.  
Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and  
Pain,  
And bring the fated fairy Prince.

## THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

## I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,  
She lying on her couch alone,  
Across the purple coverlet,  
The maiden's jet-black hair has  
grown,  
On either side her tranced form  
Forth streaming from a braid of  
pearl:  
The slumbrous light is rich and warm,  
And moves not on the rounded  
curl.

## II.

The silk star-broider'd coverlid  
Unto her limbs itself doth mould  
Languidly ever; and, amid  
Her full black ringlets downward  
roll'd,  
Glows forth each softly-shadow'd  
arm  
With bracelets of the diamond  
bright:  
Her constant beauty doth inform  
Stillness with love, and day with  
light.

## III.

She sleeps: her breathings are not  
heard  
In palace chambers far apart.  
The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd  
That lie upon her charmed heart.  
She sleeps: on either hand upswells  
The gold-fringed pillow lightly  
prest:  
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever  
dwells  
A perfect form in perfect rest.

THE ARRIVAL.

I.

ALL precious things, discover'd late,  
To those that seek them issue forth;  
For love in sequel works with fate,  
And draws the veil from hidden worth.  
He travels far from other skies—  
His mantle glitters on the rocks—  
A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,  
And lighter-footed than the fox.

II.

The bodies and the bones of those  
That strove in other days to pass,  
Are wither'd in the thorny close,  
Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.  
He gazes on the silent dead:  
'They perish'd in their daring deeds.'  
This proverb flashes thro' his head,  
'The many fail: the one succeeds.'

III.

He comes, scarce knowing what he seeks:  
He breaks the hedge: he enters there:  
The color flies into his cheeks:  
He trusts to light on something fair;  
For all his life the charm did talk  
About his path, and hover near  
With words of promise in his walk,  
And whisper'd voices at his ear.

IV.

More close and close his footsteps wind:  
The Magic Music in his heart  
Beats quick and quicker, till he find  
The quiet chamber far apart.  
His spirit flutters like a lark,  
He stoops—to kiss her—on his knee.  
'Love, if thy tresses be so dark,  
How dark those hidden eyes must be!'

THE REVIVAL.

I.

A TOUCH, a kiss! the charm was snapt.  
There rose a noise of striking clocks,  
And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,  
And barking dogs, and crowing cocks;  
A fuller light illumined all,  
A breeze thro' all the garden swept,  
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,  
And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

II.

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,  
The butler drank, the steward scrawl'd,  
The fire shot up, the martin flew,  
The parrot scream'd, the peacock squall'd,  
The maid and page renew'd their strife,  
The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and clackt,  
And all the long-pent stream of life  
Dash'd downward in a cataract.

III.

And last with these the king awoke,  
And in his chair himself uprear'd,  
And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and spoke,  
'By holy rood, a royal beard!  
How say you? we have slept, my lords.  
My beard has grown into my lap.'  
The barons swore, with many words,  
'Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

IV.

'Pardy,' return'd the king, 'but still  
My joints are somewhat stiff or so.  
My lord, and shall we pass the bill  
I mention'd half an hour ago?'  
The chancellor, sedate and vain,  
In courteous words return'd reply:  
But dallied with his golden chain,  
And, smiling, put the question by.

## THE DEPARTURE.

## I.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,  
 And round her waist she felt it  
 fold,  
 And far across the hills they went  
 In that new world which is the  
 old:  
 Across the hills, and far away  
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,  
 And deep into the dying day  
 The happy princess follow'd him.

## II.

'I'd sleep another hundred years,  
 O love, for such another kiss;'  
 'O wake for ever, love,' she hears,  
 'O love, 'twas such as this and  
 this.'  
 And o'er them many a sliding star,  
 And many a merry wind was borne,  
 And, stream'd thro' many a golden  
 bar,  
 The twilight melted into morn.

## III:

'O eyes long laid in happy sleep!'  
 'O happy sleep, that lightly fled!'  
 'O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep!'  
 'O love, thy kiss would wake the  
 dead!'  
 And o'er them many a flowing range  
 Of vapor buoy'd the crescent-bark,  
 And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,  
 The twilight died into the dark.

## IV.

'A hundred summers! can it be?  
 And whither goest thou, tell me  
 where?'  
 'O seek my father's court with me,  
 For there are greater wonders  
 there.'  
 And o'er the hills, and far away  
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,  
 Beyond the night, across the day,  
 Thro' all the world she follow'd  
 him.

## MORAL.

## I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,  
 And if you find no moral there,  
 Go, look in any glass and say,  
 What moral is in being fair.  
 Oh, to what uses shall we put  
 The wildweed-flower that simply  
 blows?  
 And is there any moral shut  
 Within the bosom of the rose?

## II.

But any man that walks the mead,  
 In bud or blade, or bloom, may  
 find,  
 According as his humors lead,  
 A meaning suited to his mind.  
 And liberal applications lie  
 In Art like Nature, dearest friend;  
 So 'twere to cramp its use, if I  
 Should hook it to some useful end.

## L'ENVOI.

## I.

YOU shake your head. A random  
 string  
 Your finer female sense offends.  
 Well—were it not a pleasant thing  
 To fall asleep with all one's friends;  
 To pass with all our social ties  
 To silence from the paths of men;  
 And every hundred years to rise  
 And learn the world, and sleep  
 again;  
 To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,  
 And wake on science grown to  
 more,  
 On secrets of the brain, the stars,  
 As wild as aught of fairy lore;  
 And all that else the years will show,  
 The Poet-forms of stronger hours,  
 The vast Republics that may grow,  
 The Federations and the Powers;  
 Titanic forces taking birth  
 In divers seasons, divers climes;  
 For we are Ancients of the earth,  
 And in the morning of the times.

## II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep  
Thro' sunny decads new and strange,  
Or gay quinqueniads would we  
    reap  
The flower and quintessence of  
change.

## III.

Ah, yet would I—and would I might !  
So much your eyes my fancy  
    take—  
Be still the first to leap to light  
That I might kiss those eyes awake !  
For, am I right, or am I wrong,  
To choose your own you did not  
    care ;  
You'd have *my* moral from the song,  
And I will take my pleasure there :  
And, am I right or am I wrong,  
My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',  
To search a meaning for the song,  
Perforce will still revert to you ;  
Nor finds a closer truth than this  
All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,  
And evermore a costly kiss  
The prelude to some brighter  
    world.

## IV.

For since the time when Adam first  
Embraced his Eve in happy hour,  
And every bird of Eden burst  
In carol, every bud to flower,  
What eyes, like thine, have waken'd  
    hopes,  
What lips, like thine, so sweetly  
    join'd ?  
Where on the double rosebud droops  
The fulness of the pensive mind ;  
Which all too dearly self-involved,  
Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to  
    me ;  
A sleep by kisses undissolved,  
That lets thee neither hear nor see :  
But break it. In the name of wife,  
And in the rights that name may  
    give,  
Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,  
And that for which I care to live.

## EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,  
And, if you find a meaning there,  
O whisper to your glass, and say,  
'What wonder, if he thinks me  
    fair ?'  
What wonder I was all unwise,  
To shape the song for your delight  
Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise  
That float thro' Heaven, and can-  
    not light ?  
Or old-world trains, upheld at court  
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue—  
But take it—earnest wed with sport,  
And either sacred unto you.

## AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,  
But it is wild and barren,  
A garden too with scarce a tree,  
And waster than a warren :  
Yet say the neighbors when they call,  
It is not bad but good land,  
And in it is the germ of all  
That grows within the woodland.

O had I lived when song was great  
In days of old Amphion,  
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,  
Nor cared for seed or scion !  
And had I lived when song was great,  
And legs of trees were limber,  
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,  
And fiddled in the timber !

'Tis said he had a tuneful tongue,  
Such happy intonation,  
Wherever he sat down and sung  
He left a small plantation ;  
Wherever in a lonely grove  
He set up his forlorn pipes,  
The gouty oak began to move,  
And flounder into hornpipes.

The mountain stirr'd its bushy crown,  
And, as tradition teaches,  
Young ashes pirouetted down  
Coquetting with young beeches ;

And briony-vine and ivy-wreath  
Ran forward to his rhyming,  
And from the valleys underneath  
Came little copses climbing.

The linden broke her ranks and rent  
The woodbine wreaths that bind  
her,  
And down the middle, buzz! she  
went

With all her bees behind her:  
The poplars, in long order due,  
With cypress promenaded,  
The shock-head willows two and two  
By rivers galloped.

Came wet-shod alder from the wave,  
Came yews, a dismal coterie;  
Each pluck'd his one foot from the  
grave,

Poussetting with a sloe-tree:  
Old elms came breaking from the vine,  
The vine stream'd out to follow,  
And, sweating rosin, plump'd the pine  
From many a cloudy hollow.

And wasn't it a sight to see,  
When, ere his song was ended,  
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,  
The country-side descended;  
And shepherds from the mountain-  
eaves

Look'd down, half-pleas'd, half-  
frighten'd,  
As dash'd about the drunken leaves  
The random sunshine lighten'd!

Oh, nature first was fresh to men,  
And wanton without measure;  
So youthful and so flexible then,  
You mov'd her at your pleasure.  
Twang out, my fiddle! shake the  
twigs!  
And make her dance attendance;  
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set sprigs,  
And scirrhous roots and tendons.

'Tis vain! in such a brassy age  
I could not move a thistle;  
The very sparrows in the hedge  
Scarce answer to my whistle;  
Or at the most, when three-parts-sick  
With strumming and with scraping,

A jackass heehaws from the rick,  
The passive oxen gaping.

But what is that I hear? a sound  
Like sleepy counsel pleading;  
O Lord!—'tis in my neighbor's  
ground,  
The modern Muses reading.  
They read Botanic Treatises,  
And Works on Gardening thro'  
there,  
And Methods of transplanting trees  
To look as if they grew there.

The wither'd Misses! how they prose  
O'er books of travell'd seamen,  
And show you slips of all that grows—  
From England to Van Diemen.  
They read in arbors clipt and cut,  
And alleys, faded places,  
By squares of tropic summer shut  
And warm'd in crystal cases.

But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,  
Are neither green nor sappy;  
Half-conscious of the garden-squirt,  
The spindlings look unhappy.  
Better to me the meanest weed  
That blows upon its mountain,  
The vilest herb that runs to seed  
Beside its native fountain.

And I must work thro' months of toil,  
And years of cultivation,  
Upon my proper patch of soil  
To grow my own plantation.  
I'll take the showers as they fall,  
I will not vex my bosom:  
Enough if at the end of all  
A little garden blossom.

#### ST. AGNES' EVE.

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows  
Are sparkling to the moon:  
My breath to heaven like vapor goes:  
May my soul follow soon!  
The shadows of the convent-towers  
Slant down the snowy sward,  
Still creeping with the creeping hours—  
That lead me to my Lord:

Make Thou my spirit pure and clear  
As are the frosty skies,  
Or this first snowdrop of the year  
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,  
To yonder shining ground;  
As this pale taper's earthly spark,  
To yonder argent round;  
So shows my soul before the Lamb,  
My spirit before Thee;  
So in mine earthly house I am,  
To that I hope to be.  
Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,  
Thro' all yon starlight keen,  
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,  
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors;  
The flashes come and go;  
All heaven bursts her starry floors,  
And strows her lights below,  
And deepens on and up! the gates  
Roll back, and far within  
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom  
waits,  
To make me pure of sin.  
The sabbaths of Eternity,  
One sabbath deep and wide—  
A light upon the shining sea—  
The Bridegroom with his bride!

## SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of men,  
My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
My strength is as the strength of ten,  
Because my heart is pure.  
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,  
The hard brands shiver on the steel,  
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,  
The horse and rider reel:  
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,  
And when the tide of combat stands,  
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,  
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend  
On whom their favors fall!  
For them I battle till the end,  
To save from shame and thrall:  
But all my heart is drawn above,  
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine:  
I never felt the kiss of love,  
Nor maiden's hand in mine.  
More bounteous aspects on me beam,  
Me mightier transports move and thrill;  
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer  
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,  
A light before me swims,  
Between dark stems the forest glows,  
I hear a noise of hymns:  
Then by some secret shrine I ride;  
I hear a voice but none are there;  
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,  
The tapers burning fair.  
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,  
The silver vessels sparkle clean,  
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,  
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres  
I find a magic bark;  
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:  
I float till all is dark.  
A gentle sound, an awful light!  
Three angels bear the holy Grail:  
With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
On sleeping wings they sail.  
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!  
My spirit beats her mortal bars,  
As down dark tides the glory slides,  
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne  
Thro' dreaming towns I go,  
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,  
The streets are dumb with snow.  
The tempest crackles on the leads,  
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;  
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,  
And gilds the driving hail.  
I leave the plain, I climb the height;

No branchy thicket shelter yields ;  
But blessed forms in whistling storms  
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given  
Such hope, I know not fear ;  
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven  
That often meet me here.  
I muse on joy that will not cease,  
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,  
Pure lilies of eternal peace,  
Whose odors haunt my dreams ;  
And, stricken by an angel's hand,  
This mortal armor that I wear,  
This weight and size, this heart and  
eyes,  
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,  
And thro' the mountain-walls  
A rolling organ-harmony  
Swells up, and shakes and falls.  
Then move the trees, the copses nod,  
Wings flutter, voices hover clear :  
' O just and faithful knight of God !  
Ride on ! the prize is near.'  
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;  
By bridge and ford, by park and  
pale,  
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,  
Until I find the holy Grail.

## EDWARD GRAY.

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder  
town  
Met me walking on yonder way,  
' And have you lost your heart ?' she  
said ;  
' And are you married yet, Edward  
Gray ?'

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :  
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :  
' Sweet Emma Moreland, love no  
more  
Can touch the heart of Edward  
Gray.

' Ellen Adair she loved me well,  
Against her father's and mother's  
will :

To-day I sat for an hour and wept.  
By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

' Shy she was, and I thought her cold ;  
Thought her proud, and fled over  
the sea ;  
Fill'd I was with folly and spite,  
When Ellen Adair was dying for  
me.

' Cruel, cruel the words I said !  
Cruelly came they back to-day :  
" You're too slight and fickle," I said,  
" To trouble the heart of Edward  
Gray."

' There I put my face in the grass—  
Whisper'd, " Listen to my despair :  
I repent me of all I did :  
Speak a little, Ellen Adair !"

' Then I took a pencil, and wrote  
On the mossy stone, as I lay,  
" Here lies the body of Ellen Adair ;  
And here the heart of Edward  
Gray !"

' Love may come, and love may go,  
And fly, like a bird, from tree to  
tree ;  
But I will love no more, no more,  
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

' Bitterly wept I over the stone :  
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :  
There lies the body of Ellen Adair !  
And there the heart of Edward  
Gray !'

WILL WATERPROOF'S  
LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUMP head-waiter at The Cock,  
To which I most resort,  
How goes the time ? 'Tis five  
o'clock.

Go fetch a pint of port :  
But let it not be such as that  
You set before chance-comers,



But such whose father-grape grew fat  
On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,  
But may she still be kind,  
And whisper lovely words, and use  
Her influence on the mind,  
To make me write my random  
rhymes,  
Ere they be half-forgotten ;  
Nor add and alter, many times,  
Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips  
Her laurel in the wine,  
And lays it thrice upon my lips,  
These favor'd lips of mine ;  
Until the charm have power to make  
New lifeblood warm the bosom,  
And barren commonplaces break  
In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board ;  
Her gradual fingers steal  
And touch upon the master-chord  
Of all I felt and feel.  
Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans  
And phantom hopes assemble ;  
And that child's heart within the  
man's  
Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns,  
By many pleasant ways,  
Against its fountain upward runs  
The current of my days :  
I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd ;  
The gas-light wavers dimmer ;  
And softly, thro' a vinous mist,  
My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,  
Unboding critic-pen,  
Or that eternal want of pence,  
Which vexes public men,  
Who hold their hands to all, and cry  
For that which all deny them—  
Who sweep the crossings, wet or dry,  
And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,  
Tho' fortune clip my wings,  
I will not cramp my heart, nor take

Half-views of men and things.  
Let Whig and Tory stir their blood ;  
There must be stormy weather ;  
But for some true result of good  
All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes ;  
If old things, there are new ;  
Ten thousand broken lights and  
shapes,  
Yet glimpses of the true.  
Let raffis be rife in prose and rhyme,  
We lack not rhymes and reasons,  
As on this whirligig of Time  
We circle with the seasons.

This earth is rich in man and maid ;  
With fair horizons bound :  
This whole wide earth of light and  
shade  
Comes out a perfect round.  
High over roaring Temple-bar,  
And set in Heaven's third story,  
I look at all things as they are,  
But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honor'd by the guest  
Half-mused, or reeling ripe,  
The pint, you brought me, was the best  
That ever came from pipe.  
But tho' the port surpasses praise,  
My nerves have dealt with stiffer.  
Is there some magic in the place ?  
Or do my peptics differ ?

For since I came to live and learn,  
No pint of white or red  
Had ever half the power to turn  
This wheel within my head,  
Which bears a season'd brain about,  
Unsubject to confusion,  
Tho' soak'd and saturate, out and out,  
Thro' every convolution.

For I am of a numernus house,  
With many kinsmen gay,  
Where long and largely we carouse  
As who shall say me nay :  
Each month, a birth-day coming on,  
We drink defying trouble,  
Or sometimes two would meet in one,  
And then we drank it double ;

Whether the vintage, yet unkept,  
Had relish fiery-new,  
Or elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,  
As old as Waterloo ;  
Or stow'd, when classic Canning died,  
In musty bins and chambers,  
Had cast upon its crusty side  
The gloom of ten Decembers.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is !  
She answer'd to my call,  
She changes with that mood or this,  
Is all-in-all to all :  
She lit the spark within my throat,  
To make my blood run quicker,  
Used all her fiery will, and smote  
Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about  
The waiter's hands, that reach  
To each his perfect pint of stout,  
His proper chop to each.  
He looks not like the common breed  
That with the napkin dally ;  
I think he came like Ganymede,  
From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg  
Than modern poultry drop,  
Stept forward on a firmer leg,  
And cramm'd a plumper crop ;  
Upon an ampler dunghill trod,  
Crow'd lustier late and early,  
Sipt wine from silver, praising God,  
And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,  
Till in a court he saw  
A something-pottle-bodied boy  
That knuckled at the taw :  
He stoop'd and clutch'd him, fair and  
good,  
Flew over roof and casement :  
His brothers of the weather stood  
Stock-still for sheer amazement.

But he, by farmstead, thorp and  
spire,  
And follow'd with acclaims,  
A sign to many a staring shire  
Came crowing over Thames.  
Right down by smoky Paul's they  
bore,

Till, where the street grows straiter,  
One fix'd for ever at the door,  
And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go ?  
How out of place she makes  
The violet of a legend blow  
Among the chops and steaks !  
'Tis but a steward of the can,  
One shade more plump than com-  
mon ;  
As just and mere a serving-man  
As any born of woman.

I ranged too high : what draws me  
down  
Into the common day ?  
Is it the weight of that half-crown,  
Which I shall have to pay ?  
For, something duller than at first,  
Nor wholly comfortable,  
I sit, my empty glass reversed,  
And thrumming on the table :

Half fearful that, with self at strife,  
I take myself to task ;  
Lest of the fulness of my life  
I leave an empty flask :  
For I had hope, by something rare  
To prove myself a poet :  
But, while I plan and plan, my  
hair  
Is gray before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,  
Till they be gather'd up ;  
The truth, that flies the flowing can,  
Will haunt the vacant cup :  
And others' follies teach us not,  
Nor much their wisdom teaches ;  
And most, of sterling worth, is what  
Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone !  
We know not what we know.  
But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone ;  
'Tis gone, and let it go.  
'Tis gone : a thousand such have  
slept  
Away from my embraces,  
And fall'n into the dusty crypt  
Of darken'd forms and faces.

Go, therefore, thou! thy betters went  
 Long since, and came no more;  
 With peals of genial clamor sent  
 From many a tavern-door,  
 With twisted quirks and happy hits.  
 From misty men of letters;  
 The tavern-hours of mighty wits—  
 Thine elders and thy betters.

Hours, when the Poet's words and  
 looks

Had yet their native glow:  
 Nor yet the fear of little books  
 Had made him talk for show;  
 But, all his vast heart sherris-warm'd,  
 He flash'd his random speeches,  
 Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd  
 His literary leeches.

So mix for ever with the past,  
 Like all good things on earth!  
 For should I prize thee, couldst thou  
 last,

At half thy real worth?  
 I hold it good, good things should  
 pass:

With time I will not quarrel:  
 It is but yonder empty glass  
 That makes me maudlin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,  
 To which I most resort,  
 I too must part. I hold thee dear  
 For this good pint of port.  
 For this, thou shalt from all things  
 suck

Marrow of mirth and laughter;  
 And wheresoe'er thou move, good  
 luck  
 Shall fing her old shoe after.

But thou wilt never move from hence,  
 The sphere thy fate allots:  
 Thy latter days increased with pence  
 Go down among the pots:  
 Thou battenest by the greasy gleam  
 In haunts of hungry sinners,  
 Old boxes, larded with the steam  
 Of thirty thousand dinners.

We fret, we fume, would shift our  
 skins,

Would quarrel with our lot;  
 Thy care is, under polish'd tins,  
 To serve the hot-and-hot;  
 To come and go, and come again,  
 Returning like the pewit,  
 And watch'd by silent gentlemen,  
 That trifle with the croet.

Live long, ere from thy topmost head  
 The thick-set hazel dies;  
 Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread  
 The corners of thine eyes:  
 Live long, nor feel in head or chest  
 Our changeful equinoxes,  
 Till mellow Death, like some late  
 guest,  
 Shall call thee from the boxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt  
 cease

To pace the gritted floor,  
 And, laying down an unctuous lease  
 Of life, shalt earn no more;  
 No carved cross-bones, the types of  
 Death,  
 Shall show thee past to Heaven:  
 But carved cross-pipes, and, under-  
 neath,  
 A pint-pot neatly graven.

## LADY CLARE.

It was the time when lilies blow,  
 And clouds are highest up in air,  
 Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe  
 To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn:  
 Lovers long-betroth'd were they:  
 They too will wed the morrow morn:  
 God's blessing on the day!

'He does not love me for my birth,  
 Nor for my lands so broad and fair;  
 He loves me for my own true worth,  
 And that is well,' said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,  
 Said, 'Who was this that went from  
 thee?'

'It was my consin,' said Lady Clare,  
 'To-morrow he weds with me.'

'O God be thank'd!' said Alice the nurse,

'That all comes round so just and fair:  
Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,  
And you are *not* the Lady Clare.'

'Are ye out of your mind, my nurse,  
my nurse?'

Said Lady Clare, 'that ye speak so wild?'

'As God's above,' said Alice the nurse,

'I speak the truth: you are my child.

'The old Earl's daughter died at my breast;

I speak the truth, as I live by bread!  
I buried her like my own sweet child,  
And put my child in her stead.'

'Falsely, falsely have ye done,  
O mother,' she said, 'if this be true.  
To keep the best man under the sun  
So many years from his due.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the nurse,

'But keep the secret for your life.  
And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,  
When you are man and wife.

'If I'm a beggar born,' she said,

'I will speak out, for I dare not lie.  
Pull off, pull off, the brooch of gold,  
And fling the diamond necklace by.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the nurse,

'But keep the secret all ye can.'  
She said, 'Not so: but I will know  
If there be any faith in man.'

'Nay now, what faith?' said Alice the nurse,

'The man will cleave unto his right.'  
'And he shall have it,' the lady replied,  
'Tho' I should die to-night.'

'Yet give one kiss to your mother dear!

Alas, my child, I sinn'd for thee.'

'O mother, mother, mother,' she said,  
'So strange it seems to me.

'Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,  
My mother dear, if this be so,  
And lay your hand upon my head,  
And bless me, mother, ere I go.'

She clad herself in a russet gown,  
She was no longer Lady Clare:  
She went by dale, and she went by  
down,

With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had brought

Leapt up from where she lay,  
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,  
And follow'd her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower:

'O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!

Why come you drest like a village maid,

That are the flower of the earth?'

'If I come drest like a village maid,  
I am but as my fortunes are:

I am a beggar born,' she said,  
'And not the Lady Clare.'

'Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,

'For I am yours in word and in deed.  
Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,

'Your riddle is hard to read.'

O and proudly stood she up!

Her heart within her did not fail:  
She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,  
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn:  
He turn'd and kiss'd her where she stood:

'If you are not the heiress born,  
And I,' said he, 'the next in blood—

'If you are not the heiress born,  
And I,' said he, 'the lawful heir,  
We two will wed to-morrow morn,  
And you shall still be Lady Clare.'

THE CAPTAIN.

A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.

HE that only rules by terror  
Doeth grievous wrong.  
Deep as Hell I count his error.  
Let him hear my song.  
Brave the Captain was: the seamen  
Made a gallant crew,  
Gallant sons of English freemen,  
Sailors bold and true.  
But they hated his oppression,  
Stern he was and rash;  
So for every light transgression  
Doom'd them to the lash.  
Day by day more harsh and cruel  
Seem'd the Captain's mood.  
Secret wrath like smother'd fuel  
Burnt in each man's blood.  
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,  
Hoped to make the name  
Of his vessel great in story,  
Wheresoe'er he came.  
So they past by capes and islands,  
Many a harbor-mouth,  
Sailing under palmy highlands  
Far within the South.  
On a day when they were going  
O'er the lone expanse,  
In the north, her canvas flowing,  
Rose a ship of France.  
Then the Captain's color heighten'd,  
Joyful came his speech:  
But a cloudy gladness lighten'd  
In the eyes of each.  
'Chase,' he said: the ship flew forward,  
And the wind did blow;  
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,  
Till she near'd the foe.  
Then they look'd at him they hated,  
Had what they desired:  
Mute with folded arms they waited—  
Not a gun was fired.  
But they heard the foeman's thunder  
Roaring out their doom:  
All the air was torn in sunder,  
Crashing went the boom,  
Spars were splinter'd, decks were  
shatter'd.  
Bullets fell like rain;

Over mast and deck were scatter'd  
Blood and brains of men.  
Spars were splinter'd; decks were  
broken:  
Every mother's son—  
Down they dropt—no word was  
spoken—  
Each beside his gun.  
On the decks as they were lying,  
Were their faces grim.  
In their blood, as they lay dying,  
Did they smile on him.  
Those, in whom he had reliance  
For his noble name,  
With one smile of still defiance  
Sold him unto shame.  
Shame and wrath his heart con-  
founded,  
Pale he turn'd and red,  
Till himself was deadly wounded  
Falling on the dead.  
Dismal error! fearful slaughter!  
Years have wander'd by,  
Side by side beneath the water  
Crew and Captain lie;  
There the sunlit ocean tosses  
O'er them mouldering,  
And the lonely seabird crosses  
With one waft of the wing.

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

IN her ear he whispers gaily,  
'If my heart by signs can tell,  
Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,  
And I think thou lov'st me well.'  
She replies, in accents fainter,  
'There is none I love like thee.'  
He is but a landscape-painter,  
And a village maiden she.  
He to lips, that fondly falter,  
Presses his without reproof:  
Leads her to the village altar,  
And they leave her father's roof.  
'I can make no marriage present:  
Little can I give my wife.  
Love will make our cottage pleasant,  
And I love thee more than life.'  
They by parks and lodges going  
See the lordly castles stand:  
Summer woods, about them blowing,

Made a murmur in the land.  
 From deep thought himself he rouses,  
 Says to her that loves him well,  
 ' Let us see these handsome houses  
 Where the wealthy nobles dwell.'  
 So she goes by him attended,  
 Hears him lovingly converse,  
 Sees whatever fair and splendid  
 Lay betwixt his home and hers ;  
 Parks with oak and chestnut shady,  
 Parks and order'd gardens great,  
 Ancient homes of lord and lady,  
 Built for pleasure and for state.  
 All he shows her makes him dearer :  
 Evermore she seems to gaze  
 On that cottage growing nearer,  
 Where they twain will spend their  
 days.  
 O but she will love him truly !  
 He shall have a cheerful home ;  
 She will order all things duly,  
 When beneath his roof they come.  
 Thus her heart rejoices greatly,  
 Till a gateway she discerns  
 With armorial bearings stately,  
 And beneath the gate she turns ;  
 Sees a mansion more majestic  
 Than all those she saw before :  
 Many a gallant gay domestic  
 Bows before him at the door.  
 And they speak in gentle murmur,  
 When they answer to his call,  
 While he treads with footstep firmer,  
 Leading on from hall to hall.  
 And, while now she wonders blindly,  
 Nor the meaning can divine,  
 Proudly turns he round and kindly,  
 ' All of this is mine and thine.'  
 Here he lives in state and bounty,  
 Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,  
 Not a lord in all the county  
 Is so great a lord as he.  
 All at once the color flushes  
 Her sweet face from brow to  
 chin :  
 As it were with shame she blushes,  
 And her spirit changed within.  
 Then her countenance all over  
 Pale again as death did prove :  
 But he clasp'd her like a lover,  
 And he cheer'd her soul with love.  
 So she strove against her weakness,  
 Tho' at times her spirit sank :

Shaped her heart with woman's meek-  
 ness  
 To all duties of her rank :  
 And a gentle consort made he,  
 And her gentle mind was such  
 That she grew a noble lady,  
 And the people loved her much.  
 But a trouble weigh'd upon her,  
 And perplex'd her, night and morn.  
 With the burthen of an honor  
 Unto which she was not born.  
 Faint she grew, and ever fainter,  
 And she murmur'd, ' Oh, that he  
 Were once more that landscape-  
 painter,  
 Which did win my heart from me !'  
 So she droop'd and droop'd before him,  
 Fading slowly from his side :  
 Three fair children first she bore him,  
 Then before her time she died.  
 Weeping, weeping late and early,  
 Walking up and pacing down,  
 Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,  
 Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.  
 And he came to look upon her,  
 And he look'd at her and said,  
 ' Bring the dress and put it on her,  
 That she wore when she was wed.'  
 Then her people, softly treading,  
 Bore to earth her body, drest  
 In the dress that she was wed in,  
 That her spirit might have rest.

## THE VOYAGE.

## I.

WE left behind the painted buoy  
 That tosses at the harbor-mouth ;  
 And madly danced our hearts with  
 joy,  
 As fast we fled to the South :  
 How fresh was every sight and sound  
 On open main or winding shore !  
 We knew the merry world was round,  
 And we might sail for evermore.

## II.

Warm broke the breeze against the  
 brow,  
 Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail :

The Lady's-head upon the prow  
Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd  
the gale.  
The broad seas swell'd to meet the  
keel,  
And swept behind; so quick the  
run,  
We felt the good ship shake and reel,  
We seem'd to sail into the Sun!

## III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,  
And burn the threshold of the  
night,  
Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,  
And sleep beneath his pillar'd  
light!  
How oft the purple-skirted robe  
Of twilight slowly downward drawn,  
As thro' the slumber of the globe  
Again we dash'd into the dawn!

## IV.

New stars all night above the brim  
Of waters lighten'd into view;  
They climb'd as quickly, for the rim  
Changed every moment as we flew.  
Far ran the naked moon across  
The houseless ocean's heaving  
field,  
Or flying shone, the silver boss  
Of her own halo's dusky shield;

## V.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,  
High towns on hills were dimly  
seen,  
We past long lines of Northern capes  
And dewy Northern meadows  
green.  
We came to warmer waves, and deep  
Across the boundless east we drove,  
Where those long swells of breaker  
sweep  
The nutmeg rocks and isles of  
clove.

## VI.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,  
Gloom'd the low coast and quiver-  
ing brine

With ashy rains, that spreading made  
Fantastic plume or sable pine;  
By sands and steaming flats, and  
floods  
Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,  
And hills and scarlet-mingled woods  
Glow'd for a moment as we past.

## VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,  
How swiftly stream'd ye by the  
bark!  
At times the whole sea burn'd, at times  
With wakes of fire we tore the  
dark;  
At times a carven craft would shoot  
From havens hid in fairy bowers,  
With naked limbs and flowers and  
fruit,  
But we nor paused for fruit nor  
flowers.

## VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled  
Down the waste waters day and  
night,  
And still we follow'd where she led,  
In hope to gain upon her flight.  
Her face was evermore unseen,  
And fixt upon the far sea-line;  
But each man murmur'd, 'O my  
Queen,  
I follow till I make thee mine.'

## IX.

And now we lost her, now she  
gleam'd  
Like Fancy made of golden air,  
Now nearer to the prow she seem'd  
Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge  
fair,  
Now high on waves that idly burst  
Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd  
the sea,  
And now, the bloodless point reversed,  
She bore the blade of Liberty.

## X.

And only one among us—him  
We pleased not—he was seldom  
pleas'd:

He saw not far: his eyes were, dim:  
 But ours he swore were all diseased.  
 'A ship of fools,' he shriek'd in spite,  
 'A ship of fools,' he sneer'd and wept.  
 And overboard one stormy night  
 He cast his body, and on we swept.

## XI.

And never sail of ours was furl'd,  
 Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn;  
 We lov'd the glories of the world,  
 But laws of nature were our scorn.  
 For blasts would rise and rave and cease,  
 But whence were those that drove the sail  
 Across the whirlwind's heart of peace,  
 And to and thro' the counter gale?

## XII.

Again to colder climes we came,  
 For still we follow'd where she led:  
 Now mate is blind and captain lame,  
 And half the crew are sick or dead,  
 But, blind or lame or sick or sound,  
 We follow that which flies before:  
 We know the merry world is round,  
 And we may sail forevermore.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN  
GUINEVERE.

## A FRAGMENT.

LIKE souls that balance joy and pain  
 With tears and smiles from heaven again  
 The maiden Spring upon the plain  
 Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.  
 In crystal vapor everywhere  
 Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,  
 And far, in forest-deeps unseen,  
 The topmost elm-tree gather'd green  
 From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song:  
 Sometimes the throstle whistled strong:

Sometimes the sparrowhawk, wheel'd  
 along,  
 Hush'd all the groves from fear of  
 wrong:

By grassy capes with fuller sound  
 In curves the yellowing river ran,  
 And drooping chestnut-buds began  
 To spread into the perfect fan,  
 Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,  
 Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere  
 Rode thro' the coverts of the deer,  
 With blissful treble ringing clear.

She seem'd a part of joyous  
 Spring:

A gown of grass-green silk she wore,  
 Buckled with golden clasps before;  
 A light-green tuft of plumes she bore  
 Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,  
 Now by some tinkling rivulet,  
 In mosses mixt with violet  
 Her cream-white mule his pastern  
 set:

And fleetly now she skimm'd the  
 plains

Than she whose elfin prancer springs  
 By night to eery warblings,  
 When all the glimmering moorland  
 rings  
 With jingling bridle-reins.

As fast she fled thro' sun and shade,  
 The happy winds upon her play'd,  
 Blowing the ringlet from the braid:  
 She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd

The rein with dainty finger-tips,  
 A man had given all other bliss,  
 And all his worldly worth for this,  
 To waste his whole heart in one  
 kiss

Upon her perfect lips.

## A FAREWELL.

FLOW down, cold rivulet, to the sea,  
 Thy tribute wave deliver:  
 No more by thee my steps shall be,  
 For ever and for ever.



Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,  
A rivulet then a river:  
No where by thee my steps shall  
be,  
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,  
And here thine aspen shiver;  
And here by thee will hum the bee,  
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,  
A thousand moons will quiver;  
But not by thee my steps shall be,  
For ever and for ever.

#### THE BEGGAR MAID.

HER arms across her breast she laid;  
She was more fair than words can  
say:

Bare-footed came the beggar maid  
Before the king Cophetua.  
In robe and crown the king stepped  
down,

To meet and greet her on her way;  
'It is no wonder,' said the lords,  
'She is more beautiful than day.'

As shines the moon in clouded skies,  
She in her poor attire was seen:  
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,  
One her dark hair and lovesome  
mien.

So sweet a face, such angel grace,  
In all that land had never been:  
Cophetua sware a royal oath:  
'This beggar maid shall be my  
queen!'

#### THE EAGLE.

##### FRAGMENT.

HE clasps the crag with crooked  
hands:  
Close to the sun in lonely lands,  
Ring'd with the azure world, he  
stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;  
He watches from his mountain walls,  
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

MOVE eastward, happy earth, and  
leave

Yon orange sunset waning slow:  
From fringes of the faded eve,  
O, happy planet, eastward go;  
Till over thy dark shoulder glow  
Thy silver sister-world, and rise  
To glass herself in dewy eyes  
That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly  
borne,

Dip forward under starry light,  
And move me to my marriage-morn,  
And round again to happy night.

COME not, when I am dead,  
To drop thy foolish tears upon my  
grave,

To trample round my fallen head,  
And vex the unhappy dust thou  
wouldst not save.

There let the wind sweep and the  
plover cry;  
But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime  
I care no longer, being all unblest:  
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of  
Time,

And I desire to rest.  
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me  
where I lie:  
Go by, go by.

#### THE LETTERS.

##### L.

STILL on the tower stood the vane,  
A black yew gloom'd the stagnant  
air,

I peer'd athwart the chancel pane  
And saw the altar cold and bare.  
A clog of lead was round my feet,  
A band of pain across my brow;

'Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall meet  
Before you hear my marriage vow.'

## II.

I turn'd and humm'd a bitter song  
That mock'd the wholesome human heart,  
And then we met in wrath and wrong,  
We met, but only meant to part.  
Full cold my greeting was and dry;  
She faintly smiled, she hardly moved;  
I saw with half-unconscious eye  
She wore the colors I approved.

## III.

She took the little ivory chest,  
With half a sigh she turn'd the key,  
Then raised her head with lips compressed,  
And gave my letters back to me.  
And gave the trinkets and the rings,  
My gifts, when gifts of mine could please;  
As looks a father on the things  
Of his dead son, I look'd on these.

## IV.

She told me all her friends had said;  
I raged against the public liar;  
She talk'd as if her love were dead,  
But in my words were seeds of fire.  
'No more of love; your sex is known:  
I never will be twice deceived.  
Henceforth I trust the man alone,  
The woman cannot be believed.

## V.

'Thro' slander, meanest spawn of Hell—  
And women's slander is the worst,  
And you, whom once I lov'd so well,  
Thro' you, my life will be accurst.'  
I spoke with heart, and heat and force,  
I shook her breast with vague alarms—  
Like torrents from a mountain source  
We rush'd into each other's arms.

## VI.

We parted: sweetly gleam'd the stars,  
And sweet the vapor-braided blue,  
Low breezes fann'd the belfry bars,  
As homeward by the church I drew.  
The very graves appear'd to smile,  
So fresh they rose in shadow'd swells;  
'Dark porch,' I said, 'and silent aisle,  
There comes a sound of marriage bells.'

## THE VISION OF SIN.

## I.

I HAD a vision when the night was late:  
A youth came riding toward a palace-gate.  
He rode a horse with wings, that would have flown,  
But that his heavy rider kept him down.  
And from the palace came a child of sin,  
And took him by the curls, and led him in,  
Where sat a company with heated eyes,  
Expecting when a fountain should arise:  
A sleepy light upon their brows and lips—  
As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,  
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and capes—  
Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid shapes,  
By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine,  
and piles of grapes.

## II.

Then methought I heard a mellow sound,  
Gathering up from all the lower ground;  
Narrowing in to where they sat assembled  
Low voluptuous music winding trembled,

Wov'n in circles: they that heard it  
sigh'd,  
Panted hand-in-hand with faces pale,  
Swung themselves, and in low tones  
replied ;  
Till the fountain spouted, showering  
wide  
Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail ;  
Then the music touch'd the gates and  
died ;  
Rose again from where it seem'd to  
fail,  
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing  
gale ;  
Till thronging in and in, to where they  
waited,  
As 'twere a hundred-throated night-  
ingale,  
The strong tempestuous treble  
throbb'd and palpitated ;  
Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,  
Caught the sparkles, and in circles,  
Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid  
mazes,  
Flung the torrent rainbow round :  
Then they started from their places,  
Moved with violence, changed in hue,  
Caught each other with wild grimaces,  
Half-invisible to the view,  
Wheeling with precipitate paces  
To the melody, till they flew,  
Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,  
Twisted hard in fierce embraces,  
Like to Furies, like to Graces,  
Dash'd together in blinding dew :  
Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,  
The nerve-dissolving melody  
Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

III.

And then I look'd up toward a moun-  
tain-tract,  
That girt the region with high cliff  
and lawn :  
I saw that every morning, far with-  
drawn  
Beyond the darkness and the cataract,  
God made Himself an awful rose of  
dawn,  
Unheeded: and detaching, fold by fold,  
From those still heights, and, slowly  
drawing near,

A vapor heavy, hueless, formless,  
cold,  
Came floating on for many a month  
and year,  
Unheeded: and I thought I would  
have spoken,  
And warn'd that madman ere it grew  
too late :  
But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine  
was broken,  
When that cold vapor touch'd the  
palace gate,  
And link'd again. I saw within my  
head  
A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean  
as death,  
Who slowly rode across a wither'd  
leath,  
And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said :

IV.

' Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !  
Here is custom come your way ;  
Take my brute, and lead him in,  
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

' Bitter barmaid, waning fast !  
See that sheets are on my bed ;  
What ! the flower of life is past :  
It is long before you wed.

' Slip-shod waiter, lank and sour,  
At the Dragon on the heath !  
Let us have a quiet hour,  
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

' I am old, but let me drink ;  
Bring me spices, bring me wine ;  
I remember, when I think,  
That my youth was half divine.

Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,  
When a blanket wraps the day,  
When the rotten woodland drips,  
And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

' Sit thee down, and have no shame,  
Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee :  
What care I for any name ?  
What for order or degree ?

' Let me screw thee up a peg :  
Let me loose thy tongue with wine :

Callest thou that thing a leg?  
Which is thinnest? thine or mine?

'Thou shalt not be saved by works:  
Thou hast been a sinner too:  
Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,  
Empty scarecrows, I and you!

'Fill the cup, and fill the can:  
Have a rouse before the morn:  
Every moment dies a man,  
Every moment one is born.

'We are men of ruin'd blood;  
Therefore comes it we are wise.  
Fish are we that love the mud,  
Rising to no fancy-flies.

'Name and fame! to fly sublime  
Thro' the courts, the camps, the  
schools,  
Is to be the ball of Time,  
Banded by the hands of fools.

'Friendship!—to be two in one—  
Let the canting liar pack!  
Well I know, when I am gone,  
How she mouths behind my back.

'Virtue!—to be good and just—  
Every heart, when sifted well,  
Is a clot of warmer dust,  
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

'O! we two as well can look  
Whited thought and cleanly life  
As the priest, above his book  
Leering at his neighbor's wife.

'Fill the cup, and fill the can:  
Have a rouse before the morn:  
Every moment dies a man,  
Every moment one is born.

'Drink, and let the parties rave:  
They are fill'd with idle spleen;  
Rising, falling, like a wave,  
For they know not what they mean.

'He that roars for liberty  
Faster binds a tyrant's power;  
And the tyrant's cruel glee  
Forces on the freer hour.

'Fill the can, and fill the cup:  
All the windy ways of men  
Are but dust that rises up,  
And is lightly laid again.

'Greet her with applause breath,  
Freedom, gaily doth she tread;  
In her right a civic wreath,  
In her left a human head.

'No, I love not what is new;  
She is of an ancient house:  
And I think we know the hue  
Of that cap upon her brows.

'Let her go! her thirst she slakes  
Where the bloody conduit runs,  
Then her sweetest meal she makes  
On the first-born of her sons.

'Drink to lofty hopes that cool—  
Visions of a perfect State:  
Drink we, last, the public fool,  
Frantic love and frantic hate.

'Chant me now some wicked stave,  
Till thy drooping courage rise,  
And the glow-worm of the grave  
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

'Fear not thou to loose thy tongue;  
Set thy hoary fancies free;  
What is loathsome to the young  
Savors well to thee and me.

'Change, reverting to the years,  
When thy nerves could under-  
stand  
What there is in loving tears,  
And the warmth of hand in hand.

'Tell me tales of thy first love—  
April hopes, the fools of chance;  
Till the graves begin to move,  
And the dead begin to dance.

'Fill the can, and fill the cup:  
All the windy ways of men  
Are but dust that rises up,  
And is lightly laid again.

'Trooping from their mouldy dens  
The chap-fallen circle spreads:

Welcome, fellow-citizens,  
Hollow hearts and empty heads!

' You are bones, and what of that?  
Every face, however full,  
Padded round with flesh and fat,  
Is but modell'd on a skull.

' Death is king, and Vivat Rex!  
Tread a measure on the stones,  
Madam—if I know your sex,  
From the fashion of your bones.

' No, I cannot praise the fire  
In your eye—nor yet your lip:  
All the more do I admire  
Joints of canning workmanship.

' Lo! God's likeness—the ground-  
plan—  
Neither modell'd, glazed, nor  
framed:  
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,  
Far too naked to be shamed!

' Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,  
While we keep a little breath!  
Drink to heavy Ignorance!  
Hob-and-nob with brother Death!

' Thou art mazed, the night is long,  
And the longer night is near:  
What! I am not all as wrong  
As a bitter jest is dear.

' Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,  
When the locks are crisp and  
curl'd;  
Unto me my mandlin gall  
And my mockeries of the world.

' Fill the cup, and fill the can:  
Mingle madness, mingle scorn!  
Dregs of life, and lees of man:  
Yet we will not die forlorn.'

v.

The voice grew faint: there came a  
further change:  
Once more uprose the mystic moun-  
tain-range:  
Below were men and horses pierced  
with worms,

And slowly quickening into lower  
forms;  
By shards and scurf of salt, and scum  
of dross,  
Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd  
with moss.  
Then some one spake: ' Behold! it  
was a crime  
Of sense avenged by sense that wore  
with time.'  
Another said: ' The crime of sense  
became  
The crime of malice, and is equal  
blame.'  
And one: ' He had not wholly  
quench'd his power;  
A little grain of conscience made him  
sour.'  
At last I heard a voice upon the  
slope  
Cry to the summit, ' Is there any  
hope?'  
To which an answer peal'd from that  
high land,  
But in a tongue no man could under-  
stand;  
And on the glimmering limit far with-  
drawn  
God made Himself an awful rose of  
dawn.

TO —,

AFTER READING A LIFE AND LET-  
TERS.

' Cursed be he that moves my bones.'  
*Shakespeare's Epitaph.*

You might have won the Poet's name,  
If such be worth the winning now,  
And gain'd a laurel for your brow  
Of sounder leaf than I can claim;

But you have made the wiser choice,  
A life that moves to gracious ends  
Thro' troops of unrecording friends,  
A deedful life, a silent voice:

And you have miss'd the irreverent  
doom

Of those that wear the Poet's  
crown:  
Hereafter, neither knave nor clown  
Shall hold their orgies at your tomb.

For now the Poet cannot die,  
Nor leave his music as of old,  
But round him ere he scarce be cold  
Begins the scandal and the cry:

'Proclaim the faults he would not  
show:  
Break lock and seal: betray the  
trust:  
Keep nothing sacred: 'tis but just  
The many-headed beast should know.'

Ah shameless! for he did but sing  
A song that pleased us from its  
worth;  
No public life was his on earth,  
No blazon'd statesman he, nor king.

He gave the people of his best:  
His worst he kept, his best he gave.  
My Shakespeare's curse on clown  
and knave  
Who will not let his ashes rest!

Who make it seem more sweet to be  
The little life of bank and brier,  
The bird that pipes his lone desire  
And dies unheard within his tree,

Than he that warbles long and loud  
And drops at Glory's temple-gates,  
For whom the carrion vulture waits  
To tear his heart before the crowd!

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN  
GREECE.

ILLYRIAN woodlands, echoing falls  
Of water, sheets of summer glass,  
The long divine Peneian pass,  
The vast Akrokeranian walls,

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,  
With such a pencil, such a pen,  
You shadow forth to distant men,  
I read and felt that I was there:

And trust me while I turn'd the page,  
And track'd you still on classic  
ground,  
I grew in gladness till I found  
My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd  
And glisten'd—here and there alone  
The broad-limb'd Gods at random  
thrown  
By fountain-urns;—and Naiads oar'd

A glimmering shoulder under gloom  
Of cavern pillars; on the swell  
The silver lily heaved and fell;  
And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him that on the mountain lea  
By dancing rivulets fed his flocks  
To him who sat upon the rocks,  
And fluted to the morning sea.

BREAK, break, break,  
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!  
And I would that my tongue could utter  
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,  
That he shouts with his sister at  
play!  
O well for the sailor lad,  
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill;  
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is  
still!

Break, break, break,  
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!  
But the tender grace of a day that is  
dead  
Will never come back to me.

THE POET'S SONG.

THE rain had fallen, the Poet arose,  
He pass'd by the town and out of  
the street,

A light wind blew from the gates of  
the sun,  
And waves of shadow went over  
the wheat,  
And he sat him down in a lonely  
place,  
And chanted a melody loud and  
sweet,  
That made the wild-swan pause in her  
cloud,  
And the lark drop down at his  
feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the  
fly,  
The snake slept under a spray,  
The wild hawk stood with the down  
on his beak,  
And stared, with his foot on the  
prey,  
And the nightingale thought, 'I have  
sung many songs,  
But never a one so gay,  
For he sings of what the world will be  
When the years have died away.'

## ENOCH ARDEN

### AND OTHER POEMS.

#### ENOCH ARDEN.

LONG lines of cliff breaking have left  
a chasm;  
And in the chasm are foam and yellow  
sands;  
Beyond, red roofs about a narrow  
wharf  
In cluster; then a moulder'd church;  
and higher  
A long street climbs to one tall-  
tower'd mill;  
And high in heaven behind it a gray  
down  
With Danish barrows; and a hazel-  
wood,  
By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes  
Green in a cuplike hollow of the  
down.

Here on this beach a hundred years  
ago,  
Three children of three houses, Annie  
Lee,  
The prettiest little damsel in the port,  
And Philip Ray the miller's only son,  
And Enoch Arden, a rough sailor's lad  
Made orphan by a winter shipwreck,  
play'd  
Among the waste and lumber of the  
shore,  
Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fish-  
ing-nets,

Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats up-  
drawn;  
And built their castles of dissolving  
sand  
To watch them overflow'd, or follow-  
ing up  
And flying the white breaker, daily  
left  
The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow cave ran in beneath the  
cliff:  
In this the children play'd at keeping  
house.  
Enoch was host one day, Philip the  
next,  
While Annie still was mistress; but  
at times  
Enoch would hold possession for a  
week:  
'This is my house and this my little  
wife.'  
'Mine too' said Philip 'turn and turn  
about:'  
When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch  
stronger-made  
Was master: then would Philip, his  
blue eyes  
All flooded with the helpless wrath of  
tears,  
Shriek out 'I hate you, Enoch,' and  
at this  
The little wife would weep for com-  
pany,

And pray them not to quarrel for her  
sake,  
And say she would be little wife to  
both.

But when the dawn of rosy child-  
hood past,  
And the new warmth of life's ascend-  
ing sun  
Was felt by either, either fixt his  
heart  
On that one girl; and Enoch spoke  
his love,  
But Philip loved in silence; and the  
girl  
Seem'd kinder unto Philip than to  
him;  
But she loved Enoch; tho' she knew  
it not,  
And would if ask'd deny it. Enoch  
set  
A purpose evermore before his eyes,  
To hoard all savings to the utter-  
most,  
To purchase his own boat, and make  
a home  
For Annie: and so prosper'd that at  
last  
A luckier or a bolder fisherman,  
A carefuller in peril, did not breathe  
For leagues along that breaker-beaten  
coast  
Than Enoch. Likewise had he  
served a year  
On board a merchantman, and made  
himself  
Full sailor; and he thrice had pluck'd  
a life  
From the dread sweep of the  
down-streaming seas:  
And all men look'd upon him favora-  
bly:  
And ere he touch'd his one-and-  
twentieth May  
He purchased his own boat, and  
made a home  
For Annie, neat and nestlike, halfway  
up  
The narrow street that clamber'd  
toward the mill.

Then, on a golden autumn eventide,  
The younger people making holiday,

With bag and sack and basket, great  
and small,  
Went nutting to the hazels. Philip  
stay'd  
(His father lying sick and needing  
him)  
An hour behind; but as he climb'd  
the hill,  
Just where the prone edge of the  
wood began  
To feather toward the hollow, saw the  
pair,  
Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-  
hand,  
His large gray eyes and weather-  
beaten face  
All-kindled by a still and sacred fire.  
That burn'd as on an altar. Philip  
look'd,  
And in their eyes and faces read his  
doom;  
Then, as their faces drew together,  
groan'd,  
And slipt aside, and like a wounded  
life  
Crept down into the hollows of the  
wood;  
There, while the rest were loud in  
merry-making,  
Had his dark hour unseen, and rose  
and past  
Bearing a lifelong hunger in his  
heart.

So these were wed, and merrily  
rang the bells,  
And merrily ran the years, seven  
happy years,  
Seven happy years of health and com-  
petence,  
And mutual love and honorable toil;  
With children; first a daughter. In  
him woke,  
With his first babe's first cry, the  
noble wish  
To save all earnings to the uttermost,  
And give his child a better bringing-  
up  
Than his had been, or hers; a wish  
renew'd,  
When two years after came a boy to  
be  
The rosy idol of her solitudes,





"ARE THERE NO BEGGARS AT YOUR GATE?"—Page 25.



While Enoch was abroad on wrathful  
seas,  
Or often journeying landward; for in  
truth  
Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's  
ocean-spoil  
In ocean-smelling osier, and his face,  
Rough-rudden'd with a thousand win-  
ter gales,  
Not only to the market-cross were  
known,  
But in the leafy lanes behind the down,  
Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,  
And peacock-yewtree of the lonely  
Hall,  
Whose Friday fare was Enoch's min-  
istering.

Then came a change, as all things  
human change.  
Ten miles to northward of the narrow  
port  
Open'd a larger haven: thither used  
Enoch at times to go by land or sea;  
And once when there, and clambering  
on a mast  
In harbor, by mischance he slipt and  
fell:  
A limb was broken when they lifted  
him;  
And while he lay recovering there,  
his wife  
Bore him another son, a sickly one:  
Another hand crept too across his  
trade  
Taking her bread and theirs: and on  
him fell,  
Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing  
man,  
Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and  
gloom.  
He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the  
night,  
To see his children leading evermore  
Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,  
And her, he loved, a beggar: then he  
pray'd  
'Save them from this, whatever comes  
to me.'  
And while he pray'd, the master of  
that ship  
Enoch had served in, hearing his mis-  
chance,

Came, for he knew the man and  
valued him,  
Reporting of his vessel China-bound,  
And wanting yet a boatswain.  
Would he go?  
There yet were many weeks before  
she sail'd,  
Sail'd from this port. Would Enoch  
have the place?  
And Enoch all at once assented to it,  
Rejoicing at that answer to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance  
appear'd  
No graver than as when some little  
cloud  
Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun,  
And isles a light in the offing: yet  
the wife—  
When he was gone—the children—  
what to do?  
Then Enoch lay long-pondering on  
his plans;  
To sell the boat—and yet he loved  
her well—  
How many a rough sea had he  
weather'd in her!  
He knew her, as a horseman knows  
his horse—  
And yet to sell her—then with what  
she brought  
Buy goods and stores—set Annie  
forth in trade  
With all that seamen needed or their  
wives—  
So might she keep the house while he  
was gone.  
Should he not trade himself out  
yonder? go  
This voyage more than once? yea  
twice or thrice—  
As oft as needed—last, returning rich,  
Become the master of a larger craft,  
With fuller profits lead an easier life,  
Have all his pretty young ones edu-  
cated,  
And pass his days in peace among his  
own.

Thus Enoch in his heart determined  
all:  
Then moving homeward came on  
Annie pale,

Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-born.

Forward she started with a happy cry,  
And laid the feeble infant in his arms;  
Whom Enoch took, and handled all  
his limbs,

Appraised his weight and fondled  
father-like,

But had no heart to break his purposes  
To Annie, till the morrow, when he  
spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden  
ring had girt  
Her finger, Annie fought against his  
will:

Yet not with brawling opposition she,  
But manifold entreaties, many a tear,  
Many a sad kiss by day by night re-  
new'd

(Sure that all evil would come out of  
it)

Besought him, supplicating, if he cared  
For her or his dear children, not to  
go.

He not for his own self caring but her,  
Her and her children, let her plead in  
vain;

So grieving held his will, and bore it  
thro'.

For Enoch parted with his old sea-  
friend,  
Bought Annie goods and stores, and  
set his hand

To fit their little streetward sitting-  
room

With shelf and corner for the goods  
and stores.

So all day long till Enoch's last at  
home,

Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer  
and axe,

Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd  
to hear

Her own death-scaffold raising, shrill'd  
and rang,

Till this was ended, and his careful  
hand,—

The space was narrow,—having or-  
der'd all

Almost as neat and close as Nature  
packs

Her blossom or her seedling, paused;  
and he,

Who needs would work for Annie to  
the last,

Ascending tired, heavily slept till  
morn.

And Enoch faced this morning of  
farewell

Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's  
fears,

Save, as his Annie's, were a laughter  
to him.

Vet Enoch as a brave God-fearing  
man

Bow'd himself down, and in that mys-  
tery

Where God-in-man is one with man-  
in-God,

Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and  
babes

Whatever came to him: and then he  
said

'Annie, this voyage by the grace of  
God

Will bring fair weather yet to all of us.  
Keep a clean hearth and a clear fire

for me,

For I'll be back, my girl, before you  
know it.'

Then lightly rocking baby's cradle  
'and he,

This pretty, puny, weakly little one,—  
Nay—for I love him all the better for

it—  
God bless him, he shall sit upon my  
knees

And I will tell him tales of foreign  
parts,

And make him merry, when I come  
home again.

Come, Annie, come, cheer up before  
I go.'

Him running on thus hopefully she  
heard,

And almost hoped herself; but when  
he turn'd

The current of his talk to graver  
things

In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing  
On providence and trust in Heaven,

she heard,

Heard and not heard him; as the vil-  
lage girl,  
Who sets her pitcher underneath the  
spring,  
Musing on him that used to fill it for  
her,  
Hears and not hears, and lets it over-  
flow.

At length she spoke 'O Enoch, you  
are wise;  
And yet for all your wisdom well know  
I  
That I shall look upon your face no  
more.'

'Well then,' said Enoch, 'I shall  
look on yours.  
Annie, the ship I sail in passes here  
(He named the day) get you a sea-  
man's glass,  
Spy out my face, and laugh at all your  
fears.'

But when the last of those last mo-  
ments came,  
'Annie, my girl, cheer up, be com-  
forted,  
Look to the babes, and till I come  
again  
Keep everything shipshape, for I must  
go.  
And fear no more for me; or if you  
fear  
Cast all your cares on God; that an-  
chor holds.  
Is He not yonder in those uttermost  
Parts of the morning? if I flee to  
these  
Can I go from Him? and the sea is  
His,  
The sea is His: He made it.'

Enoch rose,  
Cast his strong arms about his droop-  
ing wife,  
And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little  
ones;  
But for the third, the sickly one, who  
slept  
After a night of feverous wakefulness,  
When Annie would have raised him  
Enoch said

'Wake him not; let him sleep; how  
should the child  
Remember this?' and kiss'd him in  
his cot.  
But Annie from her baby's forehead  
clipt  
A tiny curl, and gave it: this he  
kept  
Thro' all his future; but now hastily  
caught  
His bundle, waved his hand, and went  
his way.

She when the day, that Enoch men-  
tion'd, came,  
Borrow'd a glass, but all in vain: per-  
haps  
She could not fix the glass to suit her  
eye;  
Perhaps her eye was dim, hand tremu-  
lous;  
She saw him not: and while he stood  
on deck  
Waving, the moment and the vessel  
past.

Ev'n to the last dip of the vanish-  
ing sail  
She watch'd it, and departed weeping  
for him;  
Then, tho' she mourn'd his absence as  
his grave,  
Set her sad will no less to chime with  
his,  
But throve not in her trade, not being  
bred  
To barter, nor compensating the  
want  
By shrewdness, neither capable of  
lies,  
Nor asking overmuch and taking less,  
And still foreboding 'what would  
Enoch say?'  
For more than once, in days of diffi-  
culty  
And pressure, had she sold her wares  
for less  
Than what she gave in buying what  
she sold:  
She fail'd and sadden'd knowing it;  
and thus,  
Expectant of that news which never  
came,

Gain'd for her own a scanty suste-  
 nance,  
 And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly-born  
 and grew  
 Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared for  
 it  
 With all a mother's care: neverthe-  
 less,  
 Whether her business often call'd her  
 from it,  
 Or thro' the want of what it needed  
 most,  
 Or means to pay the voice who best  
 could tell  
 What most it needed—howsoever it  
 was,  
 After a lingering,—ere she was  
 aware,—  
 Like the caged bird escaping sud-  
 denly,  
 The little innocent soul flitted away.

In that same week when Annie  
 buried it,  
 Philip's true heart, which hunger'd  
 for her peace  
 (Since Enoch left he had not look'd  
 upon her),  
 Smote him, as having kept aloof so  
 long.  
 'Surely,' said Philip, 'I may see her  
 now,  
 May be some little comfort;' there-  
 fore went,  
 Past thro' the solitary room in front,  
 Paused for a moment at an inner door,  
 Then struck it thrice, and, no one  
 opening,  
 Enter'd; but Annie, seated with her  
 grief,  
 Fresh from the burial of her little  
 one,  
 Cared not to look on any human face.  
 But turn'd her own toward the wall  
 and wept.  
 Then Philip standing up said falter-  
 ingly  
 'Annie, I came to ask a favor of you.'

He spoke; the passion in her  
 mou'd reply

'Favor from one so sad and so for-  
 lorn  
 As I am!' half abash'd him; yet un-  
 ask'd,  
 His bashfulness and tenderness at  
 war,  
 He set himself beside her, saying to  
 her:

'I came to speak to you of what he  
 wish'd,  
 Enoch, your husband: I have ever  
 said  
 You chose the best among us—a  
 strong man:  
 For where he fixt his heart he set his  
 hand  
 To do the thing he will'd, and bore it  
 thro'.  
 And wherefore did he go this weary  
 way,  
 And leave you lonely? not to see the  
 world—  
 For pleasure?—nay, but for the  
 wherewithal  
 To give his babes a better bringing-up  
 Than his had been, or yours: that was  
 his wish.  
 And if he come again, vext will he be  
 To find the precious morning hours  
 were lost.  
 And it would vex him even in his  
 grave,  
 If he could know his babes were run-  
 ning wild  
 Like colts about the waste. So, An-  
 nie, now—  
 Have we not known each other all  
 our lives?  
 I do beseech you by the love you bear  
 Him and his children not to say me  
 nay—  
 For, if you will, when Enoch comes  
 again  
 Why then he shall repay me—if you  
 will,  
 Annie—for I am rich and well-to-do.  
 Now let me put the boy and girl to  
 school:  
 This is the favor that I came to ask.'

Then Annie with her brows against  
 the wall

Answer'd ' I cannot look you in the  
face;  
I seem so foolish and so broken down.  
When you came in my sorrow broke  
me down;  
And now I think your kindness  
breaks me down;  
But Enoch lives; that is borne in on  
me:  
He will repay you: money can be re-  
paid;  
Not kindness such as yours.'

And Philip ask'd  
' Then you will let me, Annie?'

There she turn'd,  
She rose, and fixt her swimming eyes  
upon him,  
And dwelt a moment on his kindly  
face,  
Then calling down a blessing on his  
head  
Caught at his hand, and wrung it  
passionately,  
And past into the little garth beyond.  
So lifted up in spirit he moved away.

Then Philip put the boy and girl to  
school,  
And bought them needful books, and  
everyway,  
Like one who does his duty by his  
own,  
Made himself theirs; and tho' for An-  
nie's sake,  
Fearing the lazy gossip of the port,  
He oft denied his heart his dearest  
wish,  
And seldom crost her threshold, yet  
he sent  
Gifts by the children, garden-herbs  
and fruit,  
The late and early roses from his  
wall,  
Or conies from the down, and now  
and then,  
With some pretext of fineness in the  
meal  
' To save the offence of charitable,  
flour

From his tall mill that whistled on  
the waste.

But Philip did not fathom Annie's  
mind:  
Scarce could the woman when he  
came upon her,  
Out of full heart and boundless grati-  
tude  
Light on a broken word to thank him  
with.  
But Philip was her children's all-in-  
all;  
From distant corners of the street  
they ran  
To greet his hearty welcome heartily;  
Lords of his house and of his mill  
were they;  
Worried his passive ear with petty  
wrongs  
Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd  
with him  
And call'd him Father Philip. Philip  
gain'd  
As Enoch lost; for Enoch seem'd to  
them

Uncertain as a vision or a dream,  
Faint as a figure seen in early dawn  
Down at the far end of an ave-  
nue,  
Going we know not where: and so ten  
years,  
Since Enoch left his hearth and na-  
tive land,  
Fled forward and no news of Enoch  
came.

It chanced one evening Annie's  
children long'd  
To go with others, nutting to the  
wood,  
And Annie would go with them; then  
they begg'd  
For Father Philip (as they call'd him)  
too:  
Him, like the working bee in blossom-  
dust,  
Blanch'd with his mill, they found;  
and saying to him  
' Come with us Father Philip' he  
denied;  
But when the children pluck'd at him  
to go,

He laugh'd, and yielded readily to  
their wish,  
For was not Annie with them? and  
they went.

But after scaling half the weary  
down,  
Just where the prone edge of the wood  
began  
To feather toward the hollow, all her  
force  
Fail'd her; and sighing, 'Let me rest'  
she said:  
So Philip rested with her well-con-  
tent;  
While all the younger ones with jubi-  
lant cries  
Broke from their elders, and tumultu-  
ously  
Down thro' the whitening hazels made  
a plunge  
To the bottom, and dispersed, and  
bent or broke  
The lithe reluctant boughs to tear  
away  
Their tawny clusters, crying to each  
other  
And calling, here and there, about the  
wood.

But Philip sitting at her side forgot  
Her presence, and remember'd one  
dark hour  
Here in this wood, when like a  
wounded life  
He crept into the shadow: at last he  
said,  
Lifting his honest forehead, 'Listen,  
Annie,  
How merry they are down yonder in  
the wood.  
Tired, Annie?' for she did not speak  
a word.  
'Tired?' but her face had fall'n upon  
her hands;  
At which, as with a kind of anger in  
him,  
'The ship was lost,' he said, 'the ship  
was lost!  
No more of that! why should you kill  
yourself  
And make them orphans quite?'  
And Annie said

'I thought not of it: but—I know  
not why—  
Their voices make me feel so solitary.'

Then Philip coming somewhat  
closer spoke.  
'Annie, there is a thing upon my  
mind,  
And it has been upon my mind so  
long,  
That tho' I know not when it first  
came there,  
I know that it will out at last. O  
Annie,  
It is beyond all hope, against all  
chance,  
That he who left you ten long years  
ago  
Should still be living; well then—let  
me speak:  
I grieve to see you poor and wanting  
help:  
I cannot help you as I wish to do  
Unless—they say that women are so  
quick—  
Perhaps you know what I would have  
you know—  
I wish you for my wife. I fain would  
prove

A father to your children: I do think  
They love me as a father: I am sure  
That I love them as if they were mine  
own;  
And I believe, if you were fast my  
wife,  
That after all these sad uncertain  
years,  
We might be still as happy as God  
grants  
To any of his creatures. Think upon  
it:  
For I am well-to-do—no kin, no care,  
No burthen, save my care for you and  
yours:  
And we have known each other all  
our lives,  
And I have loved you longer than you  
know.'

Then answer'd Annie; tenderly she  
spoke:  
'You have been as God's good angel  
in our house.'



God bless you for it, God reward you  
for it,  
Philip, with something happier than  
myself.  
Can one love twice? can you be ever  
loved  
As Enoch was? what is it that you  
ask?'  
'I am content' he answer'd 'to be  
loved  
A little after Enoch.' 'O' she cried,  
Scared as it were, 'dear Philip, wait a  
while:  
If Enoch comes—but Enoch will not  
come—  
Yet wait a year, a year is not so  
long:  
Surely I shall be wiser in a year:  
O wait a little!' Philip sadly said  
'Annie, as I have waited all my life  
I well may wait a little.' 'Nay' she  
cried  
'I am bound: you have my promise—  
in a year  
Will you not bide your year as I bide  
mine?'  
And Philip answer'd 'I will bide my  
year.'

Here both were mute, till Philip  
glancing up  
Beheld the dead flame of the fallen  
day  
Pass from the Danish barrow over-  
head;  
Then fearing night and chill for  
Annie, rose  
And sent his voice beneath him thro'  
the wood.  
Up came the children laden with their  
spoil;  
Then all descended to the port, and  
there  
At Annie's door he paused and gave  
his hand,  
Saying gently 'Annie, when I spoke  
to you,  
That was your hour of weakness. I  
was wrong,  
I am always bound to you, but you  
are free.'  
Then Annie weeping answer'd 'I am  
bound.'

She spoke; and in one moment as  
it were,  
While yet she went about her house-  
hold ways,  
Ev'n as she dwelt upon his latest  
words,  
That he had loved her longer than  
she knew,  
That autumn into autumn flash'd  
again,  
And there he stood once more before  
her face,  
Claiming her promise. 'Is it a year?'  
she ask'd.  
'Yes, if the nuts' he said 'be ripe  
again:  
Come out and see.' But she—she  
put him off—  
So much to look to—such a change—  
a month—  
Give her a month—she knew that she  
was bound—  
A month—no more. Then Philip  
with his eyes  
Full of that lifelong hunger, and his  
voice  
Shaking a little like a drunkard's  
hand,  
'Take your own time, Annie, take  
your own time.'  
And Annie could have wept for pity  
of him;  
And yet she held him on delayingly  
With many a scarce-believable ex-  
cuse,  
Trying his truth and his long-suffer-  
ance,  
Till half-another year had slipt away.

By this the lazy gossips of the port,  
Abhorrent of a calculation crost,  
Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.  
Some thought that Philip did but  
trifle with her;  
Some that she but held off to draw  
him on;  
And others laugh'd at her and Philip  
too,  
As simple folk that knew not their  
own minds,  
And one, in whom all evil fancies  
clung  
Like serpent eggs together, laughingly

Would hint at worse in either. Her  
 own son  
 Was silent, tho' he often look'd his  
 wish ;  
 But evermore the daughter prest upon  
 her  
 To wed the man so dear to all of them  
 And lift the household out of pov-  
 erty ;  
 And Philip's rosy face contracting  
 grew  
 Careworn and wan ; and all these  
 things fell on her  
 Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced  
 That Annie could not sleep, but  
 earnestly  
 Pray'd for a sign 'my Enoch is he  
 gone ?'  
 Then compass'd round by the blind  
 wall of night  
 Brook'd not the expectant terror of  
 her heart,  
 Started from bed, and struck herself  
 a light,  
 Then desperately seized the holy  
 Book,  
 Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,  
 Suddenly put her finger on the text,  
 'Under the palm-tree.' That was  
 nothing to her :  
 No meaning there : she closed the  
 Book and slept :  
 When lo ! her Enoch sitting on a  
 height,  
 Under a palm-tree, over him the Sun :  
 'He is gone,' she thought, 'he is  
 happy, he is singing  
 Hosanna in the highest : yonder  
 shines  
 The Sun of Righteousness, and these  
 be palms  
 Whereof the happy people strowing  
 cried  
 "Hosanna in the highest!"' Here  
 she woke,  
 Resolved, sent for him and said wildly  
 to him  
 'There is no reason why we should  
 not wed.'  
 'Then for God's sake,' he answer'd,  
 'both our sakes,

So you will wed me, let it be at once.'

So these were wed and merrily rang  
 the bells,  
 Merrily rang the bells and they were  
 wed.  
 But never merrily beat Annie's heart.  
 A footstep seem'd to fall beside her  
 path,  
 She knew not whence ; a whisper on  
 her ear,  
 She knew not what ; nor loved she to  
 be left  
 Alone at home, nor ventured out alone.  
 What ail'd her then, that ere she en-  
 ter'd, often  
 Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the  
 latch,  
 Fearing to enter : Philip thought he  
 knew :  
 Such doubts and fears were common  
 to her state,  
 Being with child : but when her child  
 was born,  
 Then her new child was as herself  
 renew'd,  
 Then the new mother came about her  
 heart,  
 Then her good Philip was her all-in-  
 all,  
 And that mysterious instinct wholly  
 died.

And where was Enoch ? prosper-  
 ously sail'd  
 The ship 'Good Fortune,' tho' at set-  
 ting forth  
 The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward,  
 shook  
 And almost overwhelm'd her, yet un-  
 vex'd  
 She slipt across the summer of the  
 world,  
 Then after a long tumble about the  
 Cape  
 And frequent interchange of foul and  
 fair,  
 She passing thro' the summer world  
 again,  
 The breath of heaven came continu-  
 ally  
 And sent her sweetly by the golden  
 isles,

Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself,  
and bought  
Quaint monsters for the market of  
those times,  
A gilded dragon, also, for the babes.

Less lucky her home-voyage: at  
first indeed  
Thro' many a fair sea-circle, day by  
day,  
Scarce-rocking, her full-busted figure-  
head  
Stared o'er the ripple feathering from  
her bows:  
Then follow'd calms, and then winds  
variable,  
Then baffling, a long course of them;  
and last  
Storm, such as drove her under moon-  
less heavens  
Till hard upon the cry of 'breakers'  
came  
The crash of ruin, and the loss of  
all  
But Enoch and two others. Half the  
night,  
Buoy'd upon floating tackle and  
broken spars,  
These drifted, stranding on an isle at  
morn  
Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No want was there of human suste-  
nance,  
Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nour-  
ishing roots;  
Nor save for pity was it hard to take  
The helpless life so wild that it was  
tame.  
There in a seaward-gazing mountain-  
gorge  
They built, and thatch'd with leaves  
of palm, a hut,  
Half hut, half native cavern. So the  
three,  
Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,  
Dwelt with eternal summer, ill-con-  
tent.

For one, the younge-st, hardly more  
than boy,

Hurt in that night of sudden ruin and  
wreck,  
Lay lingering out a five-years' death-  
in-life.  
They could not leave him. After he  
was gone,  
The two remaining found a fallen  
stem;  
And Enoch's comrade, careless of  
himself,  
Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion,  
fell  
Sun-stricken, and that other lived  
alone.  
In those two deaths he read God's  
warning 'wait.'

The mountain wooded to the peak,  
the lawns  
And winding glades high up like ways  
to Heaven,  
The slender coco's drooping crown of  
plumes,  
The lightning flash of insect and of  
bird,  
The lustre of the long convolvulus  
That coil'd around the stately stems,  
and ran  
Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows  
And glories of the broad belt of the  
world,  
All these he saw; but what he fain  
had seen  
He could not see, the kindly human  
face,  
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but  
heard  
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-  
fowl,  
The league-long roller thundering on  
the reef,  
The moving whisper of huge trees  
that branch'd  
And blossom'd in the zenith, or the  
sweep  
Of some precipitous rivulet to the  
wave,  
As down the shore he ranged, or all  
day long  
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,  
A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a  
sail:  
No sail from day to day, but every day

The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts  
 Among the palms and ferns and precipices ;  
 The blaze upon the waters to the east ;  
 The blaze upon his island overhead ;  
 The blaze upon the waters to the west ;  
 Then the great stars that globed themselves in Heaven,  
 The hollow-bellowing ocean, and again  
 The scarlet shafts of sunrise—but no sail.

There often as he watch'd or seem'd to watch,  
 So still, the golden lizard on him paused,  
 A phantom made of many phantoms moved  
 Before him haunting him, or he himself  
 Moved haunting people, things and places, known  
 Far in a darker isle beyond the line ;  
 The babes, their babble, Annie, the small house,  
 The climbing street, the mill, the leafy lanes,  
 The peacock-yewtree and the lonely Hall,  
 The horse he drove, the boat he sold, the chill  
 November dawns and dewy-glooming downs,  
 The gentle shower, the smell of dying leaves,  
 And the low moan of leaden-color'd seas.

Once likewise, in the ringing of his ears,  
 Tho' faintly, merrily—far and far away—  
 He heard the pealing of his parish bells ;  
 Then, tho' he knew not wherefore, started up  
 Shuddering, and when the beautiful hateful isle  
 Return'd upon him, had not his poor heart

Spoken with That, which being everywhere  
 Lets none, who speaks with Him, seem all alone,  
 Surely the man had died of solitude.

Thus over Enoch's early-silvering head  
 The sunny and rainy seasons came and went  
 Year after year. His hopes to see his own,  
 And pace the sacred old familiar fields,  
 Not yet had perish'd, when his lonely doom  
 Came suddenly to an end. Another ship  
 (She wanted water) blown by baffling winds,  
 Like the Good Fortune, from her destined course,  
 Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where she lay :  
 For since the mate had seen at early dawn  
 Across a break on the mist-wreathen isle  
 The silent water slipping from the hills,  
 They sent a crew that landing burst away  
 In search of stream or fount, and fill'd the shores  
 With clamor. Downward from his mountain gorge  
 Stept the long-hair'd long-bearded solitary,  
 Brown, looking hardly human, strangely clad,  
 Muttering and mumbling, idiotlike it seem'd,  
 With inarticulate rage, and making signs  
 They knew not what : and yet he led  
 To where the rivulets of sweet water ran ;  
 And ever as he mingled with the crew,  
 And heard them talking, his long-bounden tongue  
 Was loosen'd, till he made them understand ;

Whom, when their casks were fill'd  
 they took aboard :  
 And there the tale he utter'd brokenly.  
 Scarce-credited at first but more and  
 more,  
 Amazed and melted all who listen'd to  
 it :  
 And clothes they gave him and free  
 passage home ;  
 But off he work'd among the rest and  
 shook  
 His isolation from him. None of  
 these  
 Came from his country, or could  
 answer him,  
 If question'd, aught of what he cared  
 to know.  
 And dull the voyage was with long  
 delays,  
 The vessel scarce sea-worthy ; but  
 evermore  
 His fancy fled before the lazy wind  
 Returning, till beneath a clouded  
 moon  
 He like a lover down thro' all his  
 blood  
 Drew in the dewy meadowy morning-  
 breath  
 Of England, blown across her ghostly  
 wall :  
 And that same morning officers and  
 men  
 Levied a kindly tax upon them-  
 selves,  
 Pitying the lonely man, and gave him  
 it :  
 Then moving up the coast they landed  
 him,  
 Ev'n in that harbor whence he sail'd  
 before.

There Enoch spoke no word to any  
 one,  
 But homeward—home—what home ?  
 had he a home ?  
 His home, he walk'd. Bright was  
 that afternoon,  
 Sunny but chill ; till drawn thro'  
 either chasm,  
 Where either haven open'd on the  
 deeps,  
 Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the  
 world in gray ;

Cut off the length of highway on  
 before,  
 And left but narrow breadth to left  
 and right  
 Of wither'd holt or tilth or pastur-  
 age.  
 On the nigh-naked tree the robin  
 piped  
 Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping  
 haze  
 The dead weight of the dead leaf bore  
 it down :  
 Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the  
 gloom ;  
 Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted  
 light  
 Flared on him, and he came upon the  
 place.

Then down the long street having  
 slowly stolen,  
 His heart foreshadowing all calam-  
 ity,  
 His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd  
 the home  
 Where Annie lived and loved him, and  
 his babes  
 In those far-off seven happy years  
 were born ;  
 But finding neither light nor murmur  
 there  
 (A bill of sale gleam'd thro' the  
 drizzle) crept  
 Still downward thinking ' dead or dead  
 to me !'

Down to the pool and narrow wharf  
 he went,  
 Seeking a tavern which of old he  
 knew,  
 A front of timber-crost antiquity,  
 So propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,  
 He thought it must have gone ; but he  
 was gone  
 Who kept it ; and his widow Miriam  
 Lane,  
 With daily-dwindling profits held the  
 house ;  
 A haunt of brawling seamen once, but  
 now  
 Still, with yet a bed for wandering  
 men  
 There Enoch rested silent many days.

But Miriam Lane was good and garrulous,  
 Nor let him be, but often breaking in,  
 Told him, with other annals of the port,  
 Not knowing—Enoch was so brown,  
 so bow'd,  
 So broken—all the story of his house.  
 His baby's death, her growing poverty,  
 How Philip put her little ones to school,  
 And kept them in it, his long wooing her,  
 Her slow consent, and marriage, and the birth  
 Of Philip's child: and o'er his countenance  
 No shadow past, nor motion: any one,  
 Regarding, well had deem'd he felt the tale  
 Less than the teller: only when she closed  
 'Enoch, poor man, was cast away and lost'  
 He, shaking his gray head pathetically,  
 Repeated muttering 'cast away and lost';  
 Again in deeper inward whispers  
 'lost!'

But Enoch yearn'd to see her face again;  
 'If I might look on her sweet face again  
 And know that she is happy.' So the thought  
 Haunted and harass'd him, and drove him forth,  
 At evening when the dull November day  
 Was growing duller twilight, to the hill.  
 There he sat down gazing on all below;  
 There did a thousand memories roll upon him,  
 Unspeakable for sadness. By and by  
 The ruddy square of comfortable light,  
 Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's house,  
 Allured him, as the beacon-blaze allures

The bird of passage, till he madly strikes  
 Against it, and beats out his weary life.

For Philip's dwelling fronted on the street,  
 The latest house to landward; but behind,  
 With one small gate that open'd on the waste,  
 Flourish'd a little garden square and wall'd:  
 And in it throve an ancient evergreen,  
 A yewtree, and all round it ran a walk  
 Of shingle, and a walk divided it:  
 But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk and stole  
 Up by the wall, behind the yew; and thence  
 That which he better might have shunn'd, if griefs  
 Like his have worse or better, Enoch saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd board  
 Sparkled and shone; so genial was the hearth:  
 And on the right hand of the hearth he saw  
 Philip, the slighted suitor of old times,  
 Stout, rosy, with his babe across his knees;  
 And o'er her second father stoopt a girl,  
 A later but a loftier Annie Lee,  
 Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her lifted hand  
 Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring  
 To tempt the babe, who rear'd his creasy arms,  
 Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they laugh'd;  
 And on the left hand of the hearth he saw  
 The mother glancing often toward her babe,  
 But turning now and then to speak with him,  
 Her son, who stood beside her tall and strong,  
 And saying that which pleased him, for he smiled.

Now when the dead man come to  
 life beheld  
 His wife his wife no more, and saw  
 the babe  
 Hers, yet not his, upon the father's  
 knee,  
 And all the warmth, the peace, the  
 happiness,  
 And his own children tall and beauti-  
 ful,  
 And him, that other, reigning in his  
 place,  
 Lord of his rights and of his children's  
 love,—  
 Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told  
 him all,  
 Because things seen are mightier than  
 things heard,  
 Stagger'd and shook, holding the  
 branch, and fear'd  
 To send abroad a shrill and terrible  
 cry,  
 Which in one moment, like the blast  
 of doom,  
 Would shatter all the happiness of the  
 hearth.

He therefore turning softly like a  
 thief,  
 Lest the harsh shingle should grate  
 underfoot,  
 And feeling all along the garden-  
 wall,  
 Lest he should swoon and tumble and  
 be found,  
 Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and  
 closed,  
 As lightly as a sick man's chamber-  
 door,  
 Behind him, and came out upon the  
 waste.

And there he would have knelt, but  
 that his knees  
 Were feeble, so that falling prone he  
 dug  
 His fingers into the wet earth, and  
 pray'd.

'Too hard to bear! why did they  
 take me thence?  
 O God Almighty, blessed Saviour,  
 Thou

That didst uphold me on my lonely  
 isle,  
 Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness  
 A little longer! aid me, give me  
 strength  
 Not to tell her, never to let her know.  
 Help me not to break in upon her  
 peace.  
 My children too! must I not speak to  
 these?  
 They know me not. I should betray  
 myself.  
 Never: No father's kiss for me—the  
 girl  
 So like her mother, and the boy, my  
 son.'

There speech and thought and nature  
 fail'd a little,  
 And he lay tranced; but when he rose  
 and paced  
 Back toward his solitary home again,  
 All down the long and narrow street  
 he went  
 Beating it in upon his weary brain,  
 As tho' it were the burthen of a song,  
 'Not to tell her, never to let her  
 know.'

He was not all unhappy. His re-  
 solve  
 Upbore him, and firm faith, and ever-  
 more  
 Prayer from a living source within the  
 will,  
 And beating up thro' all the bitter  
 world,  
 Like fountains of sweet water in the  
 sea,  
 Kept him a living soul. 'This miller's  
 wife'  
 He said to Miriam 'that you spoke  
 about,  
 Has she no fear that her first hus-  
 band lives?'  
 'Ay, ay, poor soul' said Miriam,  
 'fear enow!  
 If you could tell her you had seen him  
 dead,  
 Why, that would be her comfort;'  
 and he thought  
 'After the Lord has call'd me she  
 shall know.

I wait His time,' and Enoch set himself,  
Scorning an alms, to work whereby to live.  
Almost to all things could he turn his hand.  
Cooper he was and carpenter, and wrought  
To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or help'd  
At lading and unlading the tall barks,  
That brought the stunted commerce of those days;  
Thus earn'd a scanty living for himself:  
Yet since he did but labor for himself,  
Work without hope, there was not life in it  
Whereby the man could live; and as the year  
Roll'd itself round again to meet the day  
When Enoch had return'd, a languor came  
Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually  
Weakening the man, till he could do no more,  
But kept the house, his chair, and last his bed.  
And Enoch bore his weakness cheerfully.  
For sure no gladlier does the stranded wreck  
See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting squall  
The boat that bears the hope of life approach  
To save the life despair'd of, than he saw  
Death dawning on him, and the close of all.

For thro' that dawning gleam'd a kindlier hope  
On Enoch thinking 'after I am gone,  
Then may she learn I lov'd her to the last.'  
He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and said  
'Woman, I have a secret—only swear,  
Before I tell you—swear upon the book  
Not to reveal it, till you see me dead.'

'Dead,' clamor'd the good woman,  
'hear him talk!  
I warrant, man, that we shall bring you round.'  
'Swear' added Enoch sternly, 'on the book.'  
And on the book, half-frighted, Miriam swore.  
Then Enoch rolling his gray eyes upon her,  
'Did you know Enoch Arden of this town?'  
'Know him?' she said, 'I knew him far away.  
Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the street;  
Held his head high, and cared for no man, he.'  
Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her;  
'His head is low, and no man cares for him.  
I think I have not three days more to live;  
I am the man.' At which the woman gave  
A half-incredulous, half-hysterical cry.  
'You Arden, you! nay,—sure he was a foot  
Higher than you be.' Enoch said again  
'My God has bow'd me down to what I am;  
My grief and solitude have broken me;  
Nevertheless, know you that I am he  
Who married—but that name has twice been changed—  
I married her who married Philip Ray.  
Sit, listen.' Then he told her of his voyage,  
His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,  
His gazing in on Annie, his resolve,  
And how he kept it. As the woman heard,  
Fast flow'd the current of her easy tears,  
While in her heart she yearn'd incessantly  
To rush abroad all round the little haven,  
Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes;



But awed and promise-bounden she  
forbore,  
Saying only 'See your bairns before  
you go!  
Eh, let me fetch 'em, Arden,' and  
arose  
Eager to bring them down, for Enoch  
hung  
A moment on her words, but then re-  
plied:

'Woman, disturb me not now at the  
last,  
But let me hold my purpose till I die.  
Sit down again; mark me and under-  
stand,  
While I have power to speak. I  
charge you now,  
When you shall see her, tell her that  
I died  
Blessing her, praying for her, loving  
her;  
Save for the bar between us, loving  
her  
As when she laid her head beside my  
own.  
And tell my daughter Annie, whom I  
saw  
So like her mother, that my latest  
breath  
Was spent in blessing her and praying  
for her.  
And tell my son that I died blessing  
him.'  
And say to Philip that I blest him  
too;  
He never meant us anything but good.  
But if my children care to see me  
dead,  
Who hardly knew me living, let them  
come,  
I am 'their father; but she must not  
come,  
For my dead face would vex her after-  
life.  
And now there is but one of all my  
blood  
Who will embrace me in the world-to-  
be:  
This hair is his: she cut it off and  
gave it,  
And I have borne it with me all these  
years.

And thought to bear it with me to my  
grave;  
But now my mind is changed, for I  
shall see him,  
My babe in bliss: wherefore when I  
am gone,  
Take, give her this, for it may comfort  
her:  
It will moreover be a token to her,  
That I am he.'

He ceased; and Miriam Lane  
Made such a voluble answer promis-  
ing all,  
That once again he roll'd his eyes upon  
her  
Repeating all he wish'd, and once  
again  
She promised.

Then the third night after this,  
While Enoch slumber'd motionless  
and pale,  
And Miriam watch'd and dozed at in-  
tervals,  
There came so loud a calling of the  
sea,  
That all the houses in the haven  
rang.  
He woke, he rose, he spread his arms  
abroad  
Crying with a loud voice 'A sail! a  
sail!  
I am saved;' and so fell back and  
spoke no more.

So past the strong heroic soul away.  
And when they buried him the little  
port  
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.

#### THE BROOK.

HERE, by this brook, we parted; I to  
the East  
And he for Italy—too late—too late:  
One whom the strong sons of the  
world despise;  
For lucky rhymes to him were scrip  
and share,

And mellow metres more than cent  
for cent;  
Nor could he understand how money  
breeds,  
Thought it a dead thing; yet himself  
could make  
The thing that is not as the thing that  
is.  
O had he lived! In our schoolbooks  
we say,  
Of those that held their heads above  
the crowd,  
They flourish'd then or then; but life  
in him  
Could scarce be said to flourish, only  
touch'd  
On such a time as goes before the leaf,  
When all the wood stands in a mist  
of green,  
And nothing perfect: yet the brook  
he loved,  
For which, in braiding summers of  
Bengal,  
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neil-  
gherry air  
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,  
Prattling the primrose faucies of the  
boy,  
To me that loved him; for 'O brook,'  
he says,  
'O babbling brook,' says Edmund in  
his rhyme,  
'Whence come you?' and the brook,  
why not? replies.

I come from haunts of coot and hern,  
I make a sudden sally,  
And sparkle out among the fern,  
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,  
Or slip between the ridges,  
By twenty thorns, a little town,  
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

'Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite  
worn out,  
Travelling to Naples. There is Darn-  
ley bridge,

It has more ivy; there the river; and  
there  
Stands Philip's farm where brook  
and river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,  
In little sharps and trebles,  
I bubble into eddying bays,  
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret  
By many a field and fallow,  
And many a fairy foreland set  
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

'But Philip chatter'd more than  
brook or bird;  
Old Philip; all about the fields you  
caught  
His weary daylong chirping, like the  
dry  
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in sum-  
mer grass.

I wind about, and in and out,  
With here a blossom sailing,  
And here and there a lusty trout,  
And here and there a foaming,

And here and there a foamy flake  
Upon me, as I travel  
With many a silvery water-break  
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

'O darling Katie Willows, his one  
child!  
A maiden of our century, yet most  
meek;  
A daughter of our meadows, yet not  
coarse;  
Straight, but as lissome as a hazel  
wand;  
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her  
hair

In gloss and hue the chestnut, when  
the shell  
Divides threefold to show the fruit  
within.

'Sweet Katie, once I did her a good  
turn,  
Her and her far-off cousin and be-  
trothed,  
James Willows, of one name and  
heart with her.  
For here I came, twenty years back—  
the week  
Before I parted with poor Edmund;  
cross  
By that old bridge which, half in ruins  
then,  
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the  
gleam  
Beyond it, where the waters marry—  
cross,  
Whistling a random bar of Bonny  
Doon,  
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate.  
The gate,  
Half-parted from a weak and scolding  
hinge,  
Stuck; and he clamor'd from a case-  
ment, "Run"  
To Katie somewhere in the walks be-  
low,  
"Run, Katie!" Katie never ran:  
she moved  
To meet me, winding under woodbine  
bowers,  
A little flutter'd, with her eyelids  
down,  
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a  
boon.

'What was it? less of sentiment  
than sense  
Had Katie; not illiterate; nor of  
those  
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive  
tears,  
And nursed by mealy-mouth'd philan-  
thropies,  
Divorce the Feeling from her mate  
the Deed.

'She told me. She and James had  
quarrell'd. Why?

What cause of quarrel? None, she  
said, no cause;  
James had no cause: but when I  
prest the cause,  
I learnt that James had flickering jea-  
lousies  
Which anger'd her. Who anger'd  
James? I said.  
But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once  
from mine,  
And sketching with her slender  
pointed foot  
Some figure like a wizard pentagram  
On garden gravel, let my query  
pass  
Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I  
ask'd  
If James were coming. "Coming  
every day,"  
She answer'd, "ever longing to ex-  
plain,  
But evermore her father came across  
With some long-winded tale, and  
broke him short;  
And James departed vext with him  
and her."  
How could I help her? "Would I—  
was it wrong?"  
(Claspt hands and that petitionary  
grace  
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere  
she spoke)  
"O would I take her father for one  
hour,  
For one half-hour, and let him talk to  
me!"  
And even while she spoke, I saw  
where James  
Made toward us, like a wader in the  
surf,  
Beyond the brook, waist-deep in  
meadow-sweet.

'O Katie, what I suffer'd for your  
sake!  
For in I went, and call'd old Philip  
out  
To show the farm: full willingly he  
rose:  
He led me thro' the short sweet-  
smelling lanes  
Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he  
went.

He praised his land, his horses, his  
 machines ;  
 He praised his ploughs, his cows, his  
 hogs, his dogs ;  
 He praised his hens, his geese, his  
 guinea-hens ;  
 His pigeons, who in session on their  
 roofs  
 Approved him, bowing at their own  
 deserts :  
 Then from the plaintive mother's teat  
 he took  
 Her blind and shuddering puppies,  
 naming each,  
 And naming those, his friends, for  
 whom they were :  
 Then crost the common into Darnley  
 chase  
 To show Sir Arthur's deer. In  
 copse and fern  
 Twinkled the innumerable ear and  
 tail.  
 Then, seated on a serpent-rooted  
 beech,  
 He pointed out a pasturing colt, and  
 said :  
 " That was the four-year-old I sold  
 the Squire."  
 And there he told a long long-winded  
 tale  
 Of how the Squire had seen the colt  
 at grass,  
 And how it was the thing his daughter  
 wish'd,  
 And how he sent the bailiff to the farm  
 To learn the price, and what the price  
 he ask'd.  
 And how the bailiff swore that he was  
 mad,  
 But he stood firm ; and so the matter  
 hung ;  
 He gave them line : and five days after  
 that  
 He met the bailiff at the Golden  
 Fleece,  
 Who then and there had offer'd some-  
 thing more,  
 But he stood firm ; and so the matter  
 hung ;  
 He knew the man ; the colt would  
 fetch its price ;  
 He gave them line : and how by  
 chance at last

(It might be May or April, he forgot,  
 The last of April or the first of May)  
 He found the bailiff riding by the  
 farm,  
 And, talking from the point, he drew  
 him in,  
 And there he mellow'd all his heart  
 with ale,  
 Until they closed a bargain, hand in  
 hand.

' Then, while I breathed in sight of  
 haven, he,  
 Poor fellow, could he help it ? recom-  
 menced,  
 And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,  
 Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy,  
 Tallyho,  
 Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon,  
 the Jilt,  
 Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the  
 rest,  
 Till, not to die a listener, I arose,  
 And with me Philip, talking still ; and  
 so  
 We turn'd our foreheads from the  
 falling sun,  
 And following our own shadows thrice  
 as long  
 As when they follow'd us from Philip's  
 door,  
 Arrived, and found the sun of sweet  
 content  
 Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all  
 things well.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,  
 I slide by hazel covers ;  
 I move the sweet forget-me-nots  
 That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,  
 Among my skimming swallows ;  
 I make the netted sunbeam dance  
 Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars  
 In brambly wildernesses ;  
 I linger by my shingly bars ;  
 I loiter round my cresses ;

And out again I curve and flow  
 To join the brimming river,  
 For men may come and men may go,  
 But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go; and  
 these are gone,  
 All gone. My dearest brother, Ed-  
 mund, sleeps,  
 Not by the well-known stream and  
 rustic spire,  
 But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome  
 Of Brunelleschi; sleeps in peace: and  
 he,  
 Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste óf  
 words  
 Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:  
 I scraped the lichen from it: Katie  
 walks  
 By the long wash of Australasian seas  
 Far off, and holds her head to other  
 stars,  
 And breathes in April-autumns. All  
 are gone.'

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a  
 stile  
 In the long hedge, and rolling in his  
 mind  
 Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er  
 the brook  
 A tonsured head in middle age for-  
 lorn,  
 Mused, and was mute. On a sudden  
 a low breath  
 Of tender air made tremble in the  
 hedge  
 The fragile bindweed-bells and briony  
 rings;  
 And he look'd up. There stood a  
 maiden near,  
 Waiting to pass. In much amaze he  
 stared  
 On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair  
 In gloss and hue the chestnut, when  
 the shell  
 Divides threefold to show the fruit  
 within:  
 Then, wondering, ask'd her 'Are you  
 from the farm?'  
 'Yes,' answer'd she. 'Pray stay a  
 little: pardon me;  
 What do they call you?' 'Katie.'  
 'That were strange.  
 What surname?' 'Willows.' 'No!'  
 'That is my name.'  
 'Indeed!' and here he look'd so  
 self-perplexed,

That Katie laugh'd, and laughing  
 blush'd, till he  
 Laugh'd also, but as one before he  
 wakes,  
 Who feels a glimmering strangeness  
 in his dream.  
 Then looking at her; 'Too happy,  
 fresh and fair,  
 Too fresh and fair in our sad world's  
 best bloom,  
 To be the ghost of one who bore your  
 name  
 About these meadows, twenty years  
 ago.'

'Have you not heard?' said Katie,  
 'we came back.  
 We bought the farm we tenanted  
 before.  
 Am I so like her? so they said on  
 board.  
 Sir, if you knew her in her English  
 days,  
 My mother, as it seems you did, the  
 days  
 That most she loves to talk of, come  
 with me.  
 My brother James is in the harvest-  
 field:  
 But she—you will be welcome—O,  
 come in!'

## AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

DUST are our frames; and, gilded  
 dust, our pride  
 Looks only for a moment whole and  
 sound;  
 Like that long-buried body of the  
 king,  
 Found lying with his urns and orna-  
 ments,  
 Which at a touch of light, an air of  
 heaven,  
 Slipt into ashes, and was found no  
 more.

Here is a story which in rougher  
 shape

Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I  
 saw  
 Sunning himself in a waste field  
 alone—  
 Old, and a mine of memories—who  
 had served,  
 Long since, a bygone Rector of the  
 place,  
 And been himself a part of what he  
 told.

SIR AYLMER AYLMER, that almighty  
 man,  
 The county God—in whose capacious  
 hall,  
 Hung with a hundred shields, the  
 family tree  
 Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate  
 king—  
 Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd  
 the spire,  
 Stood from his walls and wing'd his  
 entry-gates  
 And swang besides on many a windy  
 sign—  
 Whose eyes from under a pyramidal  
 head  
 Saw from his windows nothing save  
 his own—  
 What lovelier of his own had he than  
 her,  
 His only child, his Edith, whom he  
 loved  
 As heiress and not heir regretfully?  
 But 'he that marries her marries her  
 name.'  
 This fiat somewhat soothed himself  
 and wife,  
 His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,  
 Insipid as the Queen upon a card;  
 Her all of thought and bearing hardly  
 more  
 Than his own shadow in a sickly sun.

A land of hops and poppy-mingled  
 corn,  
 Little about it stirring save a brook!  
 A sleepy land, where under the same  
 wheel  
 The same old rut would deepen year  
 by year,  
 Where almost all the village had one  
 name;

Where Aylmer followed Aylmer at  
 the Hall  
 And Averill Averill at the Rectory  
 Thrice over; so that Rectory and  
 Hall,  
 Bound in an immemorial intimacy,  
 Were open to each other; tho' to  
 dream  
 That Love could bind them closer  
 well had made  
 The hoar hair of the Baronet bristle  
 up  
 With horror, worse than had he heard  
 his priest  
 Preach an inverted scripture, sons of  
 men  
 Daughters of God; so sleepy was the  
 land.

And might not Averill, had he  
 will'd it so,  
 Somewhere beneath his own low  
 range of roofs,  
 Have also set his many-shielded  
 tree?  
 There was an Aylmer-Averill mar-  
 riage once.  
 When the red rose was redder than  
 itself,  
 And York's white rose as red as Lan-  
 caster's,  
 With wounded peace which each had  
 prick'd to death.  
 'Not proven' Averill said, or laugh-  
 ingly  
 'Some other race of Averills'—prov'n  
 or no,  
 What cared he? what, if other or the  
 same?  
 He lean'd not on his fathers but him-  
 self.  
 But Leolin, his brother, living oft  
 With Averill, and a year or two be-  
 fore  
 Call'd to the bar, but ever call'd away  
 By one low voice to one dear neigh-  
 borhood,  
 Would often, in his walks with Edith,  
 claim  
 A distant kinship to the gracious  
 blood  
 That shook the heart of Edith hear-  
 ing him.

Sanguine he was : a but less vivid  
 hue  
 Than of that islet in the chestnut-  
 bloom  
 Flamed in his cheek ; and eager eyes,  
 that still  
 Took joyful note of all things joyful,  
 beam'd,  
 Beneath a manlike mass of rolling  
 gold,  
 Their best and brightest, when they  
 dwelt on hers,  
 Edith, whose pensive beauty, perfect  
 else,  
 But subject to the season or the mood,  
 Shone like a mystic star between the  
 less  
 And greater glory varying to and fro,  
 We know not wherefore ; bounteously  
 made,  
 And yet so finely, that a troublous  
 touch  
 Thinn'd, or would seem to thin her in  
 a day,  
 A joyous to dilate, as toward the light.  
 And these had been together from  
 the first.  
 Leolin's first nurse was, five years  
 after, hers :  
 So much the boy foreran ; but when  
 his date  
 Doubled her own, for want of play-  
 mates, he  
 (Since Averill was a decad and a half  
 His elder, and their parents under-  
 ground)  
 Had tost his ball and flown his kite,  
 and roll'd  
 His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her  
 dipt  
 Against the rush of the air in the  
 prone swing,  
 Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain,  
 arranged  
 Her garden, sow'd her name and kept  
 it green  
 In living letters, told her fairy-tales,  
 Show'd her the fairy footings on the  
 grass,  
 The little dells of cowslip, fairy palms,  
 The petty mare-stail forest, fairy  
 pines,  
 Or from the tiny pitted target blew

What look'd a flight of fairy arrows  
 aim'd  
 All at one mark, all hitting : make-be-  
 lieves  
 For Edith and himself : or else he  
 forged,  
 But that was later, boyish histories  
 Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon,  
 wreck,  
 Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and  
 true love  
 Crown'd after trial ; sketches rude  
 and faint,  
 But where a passion yet unborn per-  
 haps  
 Lay hidden as the music of the moon  
 Sleeps in the plain eggs of the night-  
 ingale.  
 And thus together, save for college-  
 times  
 Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair  
 As ever painter painted, poet sang,  
 Or Heaven in lavish bounty moulded,  
 grew.  
 And more and more, the maiden  
 woman-grown,  
 He wasted hours with Averill ; there,  
 when first  
 The tented winter-field was broken  
 up  
 Into that phalanx of the summer spears  
 That soon should wear the garland ;  
 there again  
 When burr and bine were gather'd ;  
 lastly there  
 At Christmas ; ever welcome at the  
 Hall,  
 On whose dull sameness his full tide  
 of youth  
 Broke with a phosphorescence charm-  
 ing even  
 My lady ; and the Baronet yet had  
 laid  
 No bar between them : dull and self-  
 involved,  
 Tall and erect, but bending from his  
 height  
 With half-allowing smites for all the  
 world,  
 And mighty courteous in the main—  
 his pride  
 Lay deeper than to wear it as his ring—  
 He, like an Aylmer in his Aylmerism.

Would care no more for Leolin's  
walking with her  
Than for his old Newfoundland's,  
when they ran  
To loose him at the stables, for he  
rose  
Twofooted at the limit of his chain,  
Roaring to make a third; and how  
should Love,  
Whom the cross-lightnings of four  
chancemet eyes  
Flash into fiery life from nothing,  
follow  
Such dear familiarities of dawn?  
Seldom, but when he does, Master of  
all.

So these young hearts not knowing  
that they loved,  
Not she at least, nor conscious of a  
bar  
Between them, nor by plight or broken  
ring  
Bound, but an immemorial intimacy.  
Wander'd at will, and oft accompanied  
By Averill: his, a brother's love, that  
hung  
With wings of brooding shelter o'er  
her peace,  
Might have been other, save for  
Leolin's—  
Who knows? but so they wander'd,  
hour by hour  
Gather'd the blossom that rebloom'd,  
and drank  
The magic cup that fill'd itself anew.

A whisper half reveal'd her to her-  
self.  
For out beyond her lodges, where the  
brook  
Vocal, with here and there a silence,  
ran  
By sallow rims, arose the laborers'  
homes,  
A frequent haunt of Edith, on low  
knolls  
That dimpling died into each other,  
huts  
At random scatter'd, each a nest in  
bloom.  
Her art, her hand, her counsel all had  
wrought

About them: here was one that, sum-  
mer-blanch'd,  
Was parcel-bearded with the trav-  
eller's-joy  
In Autumn, parcel ivy-clad; and here  
The warm-blue breathings of a hidden  
hearth  
Broke from a bower of vine and  
honeysuckle:  
One look'd all rosetree, and another  
wore  
A close-set robe of jasmine sown  
with stars:  
This had a rosy sea of gillyflowers  
About it; this, a milky-way on earth,  
Like visions in the Northern  
dreamer's heavens,  
A lily-avenue climbing to the doors;  
One, almost to the martin-haunted  
eaves  
A summer burial deep in hollyhocks;  
Each, its own charm; and Edith's  
everywhere;  
And Edith ever visitant with him,  
He but less loved than Edith, of her  
poor:  
For she—so lowly-lovely and so lov-  
ing,  
Queenly responsive when the loyal  
hand  
Rose from the clay it work'd in as she  
past,  
Not sowing hedgerow texts and pas-  
sing by,  
Nor dealing goodly counsel from a  
height  
That makes the lowest hate it, but a  
voice  
Of comfort and an open hand of help,  
A splendid presence flattering the  
poor roofs  
Revered as theirs, but kindlier than  
themselves  
To ailing wife or wailing infancy  
Or old bedridden palsy,—was adored;  
He, loved for her and for himself. A  
grasp  
Having the warmth and muscle of  
the heart,  
A childly way with children, and a  
laugh  
Ringing like proven golden coinage  
true,



Were no false passport to that easy realm,  
 Where once with Leolin at her side the girl,  
 Nursing a child, and turning to the warmth  
 The tender pink five-beaded baby-soles,  
 Heard the good mother softly whisper  
 'Bless,  
 God bless 'em: marriages are made  
 in Heaven.'

A flash of semi-jealousy clear'd it to her.  
 My lady's Indian kinsman unannounced  
 With half a score of swarthy faces came.  
 His own, tho' keen and bold and soldierly  
 Sear'd by the close ecliptic, was not fair;  
 Fairer his talk, a tongue that ruled the hour,  
 Tho' seeming boastful: so when first he dash'd  
 Into the chronicle of a deedful day,  
 Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile  
 Of patron 'Good! my lady's kinsman! good!'  
 My lady with her fingers interlock'd,  
 And rotatory thumbs on silken knees,  
 Call'd all her vital spirits into each ear  
 To listen: unawares they flitted off,  
 Busying themselves about the flower-age  
 That stood from out a stiff brocade in which,  
 The meteor of a splendid season, she,  
 Once with this kinsman, ah so long ago,  
 Stept thro' the stately minuet of those days:  
 But Edith's eager fancy hurried with him  
 Snatch'd thro' the perilous passes of his life:  
 Till Leolin ever watchful of her eye,  
 Hated him with a momentary hate.  
 Wife-hunting, as the rumor ran, was he:

I know not, for he spoke not, only shower'd  
 His oriental gifts on everyone  
 And most on Edith: like a storm he came,  
 And shook the house, and like a storm he went.

Among the gifts he left her (possibly He flow'd and ebb'd uncertain, to return  
 When others had been tested) there was one,  
 A dagger, in rich sheath with jewels on it  
 Sprinkled about in gold that branch'd itself  
 Fine as ice-ferns on January panes  
 Made by a breath. I know not whence at first,  
 Nor of what race, the work; but as he told  
 The story, storming a hill-fort of thieves  
 He got it; for their captain after fight,  
 His comrades having fought their last below,  
 Was climbing up the valley; at whom he shot:  
 Down from the beetling crag to which he clung  
 Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet,  
 This dagger with him, which when now admired  
 By Edith whom his pleasure was to please,  
 At once the costly Sahib yielded to her.

And Leolin, coming after he was gone,  
 Tost over all her presents petulantly:  
 And when she show'd the wealthy scabbard, saying  
 'Look what a lovely piece of workmanship!'  
 Slight was his answer 'Well—I care not for it.'  
 Then playing with the blade he prick'd his hand,  
 'A gracious gift to give a lady, this!'  
 'But would it be more gracious' ask'd the girl

'Were I to give this gift of his to one  
That is no lady?' 'Gracious? No'  
said he.

'Me?—but I cared not for it. O pardon  
me,

I seem to be ungraciousness itself.'

'Take it' she added sweetly, 'tho' his  
gift;

For I am more ungracious ev'n than  
you,

I care not for it either;' and he said

'Why then I love it: but Sir Aylmer  
past,

And neither loved nor liked the thing  
he heard.

The next day came a neighbor.

Blues and reds

They talk'd of: blues were sure of it,  
he thought:

Then of the latest fox—where started  
—kill'd

In such a bottom: 'Peter had the  
brush,

My Peter, first:' and did Sir Aylmer  
know

That great pock-pitten fellow had  
been caught?

Then made his pleasure echo, hand to  
hand,

And rolling as it were the substance  
of it

Between his palms a moment up and  
down—

'The birds were warm, the birds were  
warm upon him;

We have him now:' and had Sir Aylmer  
heard—

Nay, but he must—the land was ring-  
ing of it—

This blacksmith border-marriage—  
one they knew—

Raw from the nursery—who could  
trust a child?

That cursed France with her egalit-  
ies!

And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially  
With nearing chair and lower'd  
accent) think—

For people talk'd—that it was wholly  
wise

To let that handsome fellow Averill  
walk

So freely with his daughter? people  
talk'd—

The boy might get a notion into him;

The girl might be entangled ere she  
knew.

Sir Aylmer Aylmer slowly stiffening  
spoke:

'The girl and boy, Sir, know their  
differences!'

'Good,' said his friend, 'but watch!' and  
he, 'Enough,

More than enough, Sir! I can guard  
my own.'

They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer  
watch'd.

Pale, for on her the thunders of the  
house

Had fallen first, was Edith that same  
night;

Pale as the Jephtha's daughter, a  
rough piece

Of early rigid color, under which  
Withdrawing by the counter door to  
that

Which Leolin open'd, she cast back  
upon him

A piteous glance, and vanish'd. He,  
as one

Caught in a burst of unexpected  
storm,

And pelted with outrageous epithets,  
Turning beheld the Powers of the  
House

On either side the hearth, indignant;  
her,

Cooling her false cheek with a  
featherfan,

Him, glaring, by his own stale devil  
spurr'd,

And, like a beast hard-riden, breath-  
ing hard.

'Ungenerous, dishonorable, base,  
Presumptuous! trusted as he was  
with her,

The sole succeder to their wealth,  
their lands,

The last remaining pillar of their  
house,

The one transmitter of their ancient  
name,

Their child.' 'Our child!' 'Our  
heirress!' 'Ours!' for still,



"OR WHILE THE PATCH WAS WORN."—Page 69.



Like echoes from beyond a hollow,  
 came  
 Her sicklier iteration. Last he said,  
 'Boy, mark me! for your fortunes  
 are to make.  
 I swear you shall not make them out  
 of mine.  
 Now inasmuch as you have practised  
 on her,  
 Perplex her, made her half forget  
 herself,  
 Swerve from her duty to herself and  
 us—  
 Things in an Aylmer deem'd impos-  
 sible,  
 Far as we track ourselves—I say that  
 this—  
 Else I withdraw favor and counte-  
 nance  
 From you and yours for ever—shall  
 you do.  
 Sir, when you see her—but you shall  
 not see her—  
 No, you shall write, and not to her,  
 but me:  
 And you shall say that having spoken  
 with me,  
 And after look'd into yourself, you  
 find  
 That you meant nothing—as indeed  
 you know  
 That you meant nothing. Such a  
 match as this!  
 Impossible, prodigious!' These were  
 words,  
 As meted by his measure of him-  
 self,  
 Arguing boundless forbearance: after  
 which,  
 And Leolin's horror-stricken an-  
 swer, 'I  
 So foul a traitor to myself and her,  
 Never oh never,' for about as long  
 As the wind-hover hangs in balance,  
 paused  
 Sir Aylmer reddening from the storm  
 within,  
 Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and  
 crying  
 'Boy, should I find you by my doors  
 again,  
 My men shall lash you from them like  
 a dog;

Hence!' with a sudden execration  
 drove  
 The footstool from before him, and  
 arose;  
 So, stammering 'scoundrel' out of  
 teeth that ground  
 As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin  
 still  
 Retreated half-aghast, the fierce old  
 man  
 Follow'd, and under his own lintel  
 stood  
 Storming with lifted hands, a hoary  
 face  
 Meet for the reverence of the hearth,  
 but now,  
 Beneath a pale and unimpassion'd  
 moon,  
 Vext with unworthy madness, and  
 deform'd.

Slowly and conscious of the rageful  
 eye  
 That watch'd him, till he heard the  
 ponderous door  
 Close, crashing with long echoes thro'  
 the land,  
 Went Leolin; then, his passions all  
 in flood  
 And masters of his motion, furi-  
 ously  
 Down thro' the bright lawns to his  
 brother's ran,  
 And foam'd away his heart at Aver-  
 ill's ear:  
 Whom Averill solaced as he might,  
 amazed:  
 The man was his, had been his father's,  
 friend:  
 He must have seen, himself had seen  
 it long;  
 He must have known, himself had  
 known: besides,  
 He never yet had set his daughter  
 forth  
 Here in the woman-markets of the  
 west,  
 Where our Caucasians let themselves  
 be sold.  
 Some one, he thought, had slander'd  
 Leolin to him.  
 'Brother, for I have loved you more  
 as son

Than brother, let me tell you: I myself—

What is their pretty saying? jilted, is it?

Jilted I was: I say it for your peace. Pain'd, and, as bearing in myself the shame

The woman should have borne, humiliated,

I lived for years a stunted sunless life; Till after our good parents past away

Watching your growth, I seem'd again to grow.

Leolin, I almost sin in envying you: The very whitest lamb in all my fold

Loves you: I know her: the worst thought she has

Is whiter even than her pretty hand: She must prove true: for, brother, where two fight

The strongest wins, and truth and love are strength,

And you are happy: let her parents be.

But Leolin cried out the more upon them—

Insolent, brainless, heartless! heiress, wealth,

Their wealth, their heiress! wealth enough was theirs

For twenty matches. Were he lord of this,

Why twenty boys and girls should marry on it,

And forty blest ones bless him, and himself

Be wealthy still, ay wealthier. He believed

This filthy marriage-hindering Mammon made

The harlot of the cities: nature crost Was mother of the foul adulteries

That saturate soul with body. Name, too! name,

Their ancient name! they *might* be proud; its worth

Was being Edith's. Ah how pale she had look'd

Darling, to-night! they must have rated her

Beyond all tolerance. These old pheasant-lords,

These partridge-breeders of a thousand years,

Who had mildew'd in their thousands, doing nothing

Since Egbert—why, the greater their disgrace!

Fall back upon a name! rest, rot in that!

Not *keep* it noble, make it nobler? fools,

With such a vantage-ground for nobleness!

He had known a man, a quintessence of man,

The life of all—who madly loved—and he,

Thwarted by one of these old father-fools,

Had rioted his life out, and made an end.

He would not do it! her sweet face and faith

Held him from that: but he had powers, he knew it:

Back would he to his studies, make a name,

Name, fortune too: the world should ring of him

To shame these mouldy Aylmers in their graves:

Chancellor, or what is greatest would he be—

'O brother, I am grieved to learn your grief—

Give me my fling, and let me say my say.'

At which, like one that sees his own excess,

And easily forgives it as his own, He laugh'd; and then was mute; but presently

Wept like a storm: and honest Averill seeing

How low his brother's mood had fallen, fetch'd

His richest beeswing from a binn reserved

For banquets, praised the waiving red, and told

The vintage—when *this* Aylmer came  
of age—  
Then drank and past it; till at length  
the two,  
Tho' Leolin flamed and fell again,  
agreed  
That much allowance must be made  
for men.  
After an angry dream this kindlier  
glow  
Faded with morning, but his purpose  
held.

Yet once by night again the lovers  
met,  
A perilous meeting under the tall  
pines  
That darken'd all the northward of  
her Hall.  
Him, to her meek and modest bosom  
prest  
In agony, she promised that no force,  
Persuasion, no, nor death could alter  
her:  
He, passionately hopefuller, would  
go,  
Labor for his own Edith, and return  
In such a sunlight of prosperity  
He should not be rejected. ' Write to  
me!  
They loved me, and because I love  
their child  
They hate me: there is war between  
us, dear,  
Which breaks all bonds but ours; we  
must remain  
Sacred to one another.' So they  
talk'd,  
Poor children, for their comfort: the  
wind blew;  
The rain of heaven, and their own  
bitter tears,  
Tears, and the careless rain of heaven,  
mixt  
Upon their faces, as they kiss'd each  
other  
In darkness, and above them roar'd  
the pine.

So Leolin went; and as we task our-  
selves  
To learn a language known but  
smatteringly

In phrases here and there at random,  
toil'd  
Mastering the lawless science of our  
law,  
That codeless myriad of precedent,  
That wilderness of single instances,  
Thro' which a few, by wit or fortune  
led,  
May beat a pathway out to wealth and  
fame.  
The jests, that flash'd about the  
pleader's room,  
Lightning of the hour, the pun, the  
scurrilous tale,—  
Old scandals buried now seven decads  
deep  
In other scandals that have lived and  
died,  
And left the living scandal that shall  
die—  
Were dead to him already; bent as he  
was  
To make disproof of scorn, and strong  
in hopes,  
And prodigal of all brain-labor he,  
Charier of sleep, and wine, and exer-  
cise,  
Except when for a breathing-while at  
eve,  
Some niggard fraction of an hour, he  
ran  
Beside the river-bank: and then  
indeed  
Harder the times were, and the hands  
of power  
Were bloodier, and the according  
hearts of men  
Seem'd harder too; but the soft river-  
breeze,  
Which fann'd the gardens of that  
rival rose  
Yet fragrant in a heart remembering  
His former talks with Edith, on him  
breathed  
Far purer in his rushings to and fro,  
After his books, to flush his blood  
with air,  
Then to his books again. My lady's  
cousin,  
Half-sickening of his pension'd after-  
noon,  
Drove in upon the student once or  
twice,

Ran a Malayan amuck against the  
times,  
Had golden hopes for France and all  
mankind,  
Answer'd all queries touching those at  
home  
With a heaved shoulder and a saucy  
smile,  
And fain had haled him out into the  
world,  
And air'd him there: his nearer friend  
would say  
'Screw not the chord too sharply lest  
it snap.'  
Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger  
forth  
From where his worldless heart had  
kept it warm,  
Kissing his vows upon it like a  
knight.  
And wrinkled benchers often talk'd of  
him  
Approvingly, and prophesied his rise:  
For heart, I think, help'd head: her  
letters too,  
Tho' far between, and coming fitfully  
Like broken music, written as she  
found  
Or made occasion, being strictly  
watch'd,  
Charm'd him thro' every labyrinth till  
he saw  
An end, a hope, a light breaking upon  
him.

But they that cast her spirit into  
flesh,  
Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued  
themselves  
To sell her, those good parents, for  
her good.  
Whatever eldest-born of rank or  
wealth  
Might lie within their compass, him  
they lured  
Into their net made pleasant by the  
baits  
Of gold and beauty, wooing him to  
woo.  
So month by month the noise about  
their doors,  
And distant blaze of those dull ban-  
quets, made

The nightly wirer of their innocent  
hare  
Falter before he took it. All in vain.  
Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return'd  
Leolin's rejected rivals from their suit  
So often, that the folly taking wings  
Slipt o'er those lazy limits down the  
wind  
With rumor, and became in other  
fields  
A mockery to the yeomen over ale,  
And laughter to their lords: but those  
at home,  
As hunters round a hunted creature  
draw  
The cordon close and closer toward  
the death,  
Narrow'd her goings out and comings  
in;  
Forbad her first the house of Averill,  
Then closed her access to the wealth-  
ier farms,  
Last from her own home-circle of the  
poor  
They barr'd her: yet she bore it: yet  
her cheek  
Kept color: wondrous! but, O mys-  
tery!  
What amulet drew her down to that  
old oak,  
So old, that twenty years before, a  
part  
Falling had let appear the brand of  
John—  
Once grovelike, each huge arm a tree,  
but now  
The broken base of a black tower, a  
cave  
Of touchwood, with a single flourish-  
ing spray.  
There the manorial lord too curiously  
Raking in that millennial touchwood-  
dust  
Found for himself a bitter treasure-  
trove;  
Burst his own wyvern on the seal, and  
read  
Writhing a letter from his child, for  
which  
Came at the moment Leolin's emis-  
sary,  
A crippled lad, and coming turn'd to  
fly,



But scared with threats of jail and  
 halter gave  
 To him that fluster'd his poor parish  
 wits  
 The letter which he brought, and  
 swore besides  
 To play their go-between as hereto-  
 fore  
 Nor let them know themselves  
 betray'd; and then,  
 Soul-stricken at their kindness to him,  
 went  
 Hating his own lean heart and miser-  
 able.

Thenceforward oft from out a despot  
 dream  
 The father panting woke, and oft, as  
 dawn  
 Aroused the black republic on his  
 elms,  
 Sweeping the frothfly from the fescue  
 brush'd  
 Thro' the dim meadow toward his  
 treasure-trove,  
 Seized it, took home, and to my lady,—  
 who made  
 A downward crescent of her minion  
 mouth,  
 Listless in all despondence,—read;  
 and tore,  
 As if the living passion symbol'd  
 there  
 Were living nerves to feel the rent;  
 and burnt,  
 Now chafing at his own great self  
 defied,  
 Now striking on huge stumbling-  
 blocks of scorn  
 In babyisms, and dear diminutives  
 Scatter'd all over the vocabulary  
 Of such a love as like a chidden  
 child,  
 After much wailing, hush'd itself at  
 last  
 Hopeless of answer: then tho' Aver-  
 ill wrote  
 And bad him with good heart sustain  
 himself—  
 All would be well—the lover heeded  
 not,  
 But passionately restless came and  
 went,

And rustling once at night about the  
 place,  
 There by a keeper shot at, slightly  
 hurt,  
 Raging return'd: nor was it well for  
 her  
 Kept to the garden now, and grove of  
 pines,  
 Watch'd even there; and one was set  
 to watch  
 The watcher, and Sir Aylmer watch'd  
 them all,  
 Yet bitterer from his readings: once  
 indeed,  
 Warn'd with his wines, or taking  
 pride in her,  
 She look'd so sweet, he kiss'd her  
 tenderly  
 Not knowing what possess'd him:  
 that one kiss  
 Was Leolin's one strong rival upon  
 earth;  
 Seconded, for my lady follow'd suit,  
 Seem'd hope's returning rose: and  
 then ensued  
 A Martin's summer of his faded love,  
 Or ordeal by kindness; after this  
 He seldom crost his child without a  
 sneer;  
 The mother flow'd in shallower acri-  
 monies:  
 Never one kindly smile, one kindly  
 word:  
 So that the gentle creature shut from  
 all  
 Her charitable use, and face to face  
 With twenty months of silence, slowly  
 lost  
 Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on  
 life.  
 Last, some low fever ranging round  
 to spy  
 The weakness of a people or a house,  
 Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer,  
 or men,  
 Or almost all that is, hurting the  
 hurt—  
 Save Christ as we believe him—found  
 the girl  
 And flung her down upon a couch of  
 fire,  
 Where careless of the household faces  
 near,

And crying upon the name of Leolin,  
She, and with her the race of Aylmer,  
past.

Star to star vibrates light: may  
soul to soul  
Strike thro' a finer element of her  
own?  
So,—from afar,—touch as at once? or  
why  
That night, that moment, when she  
named his name,  
Did the keen shriek 'Yes love, yes,  
Edith, yes,'  
Shrill, till the comrade of his cham-  
bers woke,  
And came upon him half-arisen from  
sleep,  
With a weird bright eye, sweating  
and trembling,  
His hair as it were crackling into  
flames,  
His body half flung forward in pur-  
suit,  
And his long arms stretch'd as to  
grasp a flyer:  
Nor knew he wherefore he had made  
the cry;  
And being much befool'd and idioted  
By the rough amity of the other,  
sank  
As into sleep again. The second  
day,  
My lady's Indian kinsman rushing in,  
A breaker of the bitter news from  
home,  
Found a dead man, a letter edged  
with death  
Beside him, and the dagger which  
himself  
Gave Edith, redden'd with no bandit's  
blood:  
'From Edith' was engraven on the  
blade.

Then Averill went and gazed upon  
his death.  
And when he came again, his flock  
believed—  
Beholding how the years which are  
not Time's  
Had blasted him—that many thou-  
sand days

Were clipt by horror from his term of  
life.

Yet the sad mother, for the second  
death  
Scarce touch'd her thro' that nearness  
of the first,  
And being used to find her pastor  
texts,  
Sent to the harrow'd brother, praying  
him  
To speak before the people of her  
child,  
And fixt the Sabbath. Darkly that  
day rose:  
Autumn's mock sunshine of the faded  
woods  
Was all the life of it; for hard on  
these,  
A breathless burthen of low-folded  
heavens  
Stifed and chill'd at once; but every  
roof  
Sent out a listener: many too had  
known  
Edith among the hamlets round, and  
since  
The parents' harshness and the hap-  
less loves  
And double death were widely mur-  
mur'd, left  
Their own gray tower, or plain-faced  
tabernacle,  
To hear him; all in mourning these,  
and those  
With blots of it about them, ribbon,  
glove  
Or kerchief; while the church,—one  
night, except  
For greenish glimmerings thro' the  
lancets,—made  
Still paler the pale head of him, who  
tower'd  
Above them, with his hopes in either  
grave.

Long o'er his bent brows linger'd  
Averill,  
His face magnetic to the hand from  
which  
Livid he pluck'd it forth, and labor'd  
thro'  
His brief prayer-prelude, gave the  
verse 'Behold,

Your house is left unto you desolate!  
 But lapsed into so long a pause  
 again  
 As half amazed half frightened all his  
 flock:  
 Then from his height and loneliness  
 of grief  
 Bore down in flood, and dash'd his  
 angry heart  
 Against the desolations of the world.

Never since our bad earth became  
 one sea,  
 Which rolling o'er the palaces of the  
 proud,  
 And all but those who knew the liv-  
 ing God—  
 Eight that were left to make a purer  
 world—  
 When since had flood, fire, earth-  
 quake, thunder, wrought  
 Such waste and havoc as the idola-  
 tries.  
 Which from the low light of mortality  
 Shot up their shadows to the Heaven  
 of Heavens,  
 And worshipt their own darkness in  
 the Highest?  
 'Gash thyself, priest, and honor thy  
 brute Baäl,  
 And to thy worst self sacrifice thy-  
 self,  
 For with thy worst self hast thou  
 clothed thy God.  
 Then came a Lord in no wise like to  
 Baäl.  
 The babe shall lead the lion. Surely  
 now  
 The wilderness shall blossom as the  
 rose.  
 Crown thyself, worm, and worship  
 thine own lusts!—  
 No coarse and blockish God of  
 acreage  
 Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel  
 to—  
 Thy God is far diffused in noble  
 groves  
 And princely halls, and farms, and  
 flowing lawns,  
 And heaps of living gold that daily  
 grow,

And title-scrolls and gorgeous herald-  
 ries.  
 In such a shape dost thou behold  
 thy God.  
 Thou wilt not gash thy flesh for *him*;  
 for thine  
 Fares richly, in fine linen, not a hair  
 Ruffled upon the scarfskin, even while  
 The deathless ruler of thy dying  
 house  
 Is wounded to the death that cannot  
 die;  
 And tho' thou numberest with the  
 followers  
 Of One who cried, "Leave all and  
 follow me."  
 Thee therefore with His light about  
 thy feet,  
 Thee with His message ringing in  
 thine ears,  
 Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord  
 from Heaven,  
 Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,  
 Wonderful, Prince of peace, the  
 Mighty God,  
 Count the more base idolater of the  
 two;  
 Crueller: as not passing thro' the fire  
 Bodies, but souls—thy children's—  
 thro' the smoke.  
 The blight of low desires—darkening  
 thine own  
 To thine own likeness; or if one of  
 these,  
 Thy better born unhappily from thee,  
 Should, as by miracle, grow straight  
 and fair—  
 Friends, I was bid to speak of such a  
 one  
 By those who most have cause to sor-  
 row for her—  
 Fairer than Rachel by the palmy  
 well,  
 Fairer than Ruth among the fields of  
 corn,  
 Fair as the Angel that said "Hail!"  
 she seem'd,  
 Who entering fill'd the house with  
 sudden light.  
 For so mine own was brighten'd:  
 where indeed  
 The roof so lowly but that beam of  
 Heaven

Dawn'd sometime thro' the doorway?  
     whose the babe  
 Too ragged to be fondled on her  
     lap,  
 Warm'd at her bosom? The poor  
 child of shame  
 The common care whom no one cared  
 for, leapt  
 To greet her, wasting his forgotten  
 heart,  
 As with the mother he had never  
 known,  
 In gambols; for her fresh and inno-  
 cent eyes  
 Had such a star of morning in their  
 blue,  
 That all neglected places of the field  
 Broke into nature's music when they  
 saw her.  
 Low was her voice, but won myster-  
 ious way  
 Thro' the scal'd ear to which a louder  
 one  
 Was all but silence—free of alms her  
 hand—  
 The hand that robed your cottage-  
 walls with flowers  
 Has often toil'd to clothe your little  
 ones;  
 How often placed upon the sick man's  
 brow  
 Cool'd it, or laid his feverous pillow  
 smooth!  
 Had you one sorrow and she shared  
 it not?  
 One burthen and she would not lighten  
 it?  
 One spiritual doubt she did not  
 soothe?  
 Or when some heat of difference  
 sparkled out,  
 How sweetly would she glide between  
 your wraths,  
 And steal you from each other! for  
 she walk'd  
 Wearing the light yoke of that Lord  
 of love,  
 Who still'd the rolling wave of Gali-  
 lee!  
 And one—of him I was not bid to  
 speak—  
 Was always with her, whom you also  
 knew.

Him too you loved, for he was worthy  
 love.  
 And these had been together from the  
 first;  
 They might have been together till  
 the last.  
 Friends, this frail bark of ours, when  
 sorely tried  
 May wreck itself without the pilot's  
 guilt,  
 Without the captain's knowledge:  
 hope with me.  
 Whose shame is that, if he went hence  
 with shame?  
 Nor mine the fault, if losing both of  
 these  
 I cry to vacant chairs and widow'd  
 walls,  
 "My house is left unto me desolate."

While thus he spoke, his hearers  
 wept; but some,  
 Sons of the glebe, with other frowns  
 than those  
 That knit themselves for summer  
 shadow, scowl'd  
 At their great lord. He, when it  
 seem'd he saw  
 No pale sheet-lightnings from afar,  
 but fork'd  
 Of the near storm, and aiming at his  
 head,  
 Sat anger-charm'd from sorrow, sol-  
 dier-like,  
 Erect: but when the preacher's  
 cadence flow'd  
 Softening thro' all the gentle attri-  
 butes  
 Of his lost child, the wife, who  
 watch'd his face,  
 Paled at a sudden twitch of his iron  
 mouth;  
 And 'O pray God that he hold up'  
 she thought  
 'Or surely I shall shame myself and  
 him.'

'Nor yours the blame—for who  
 beside your hearths  
 Can take her place—if echoing me you  
 cry  
 "Our house is left unto us deso-  
 late?"

But thou, O thou that killest, hadst  
     thou known,  
 O thou that stonest, hadst thou under-  
     stood  
 The things belonging to thy peace and  
     ours!  
 Is there no prophet but the voice that  
     calls  
 Doom upon kings, or in the waste  
     "Repent"?  
 Is not our own child on the narrow  
     way,  
 Who down to those that saunter in the  
     broad  
 Cries "Come up hither," as a prophet  
     to us?  
 Is there no stoning save with flint  
     and rock?  
 Yes, as the dead we weep for tes-  
     tify—  
 No desolation but by sword and  
     fire?  
 Yes, as your moanings witness, and  
     myself  
 Am lonelier, darker, earthlier for my  
     loss.  
 Give me your prayers, for he is past  
     your prayers,  
 Not past the living fount of pity in  
     Heaven.  
 But I that thought myself long-suffer-  
     ing, meek,  
 Exceeding "poor in spirit"—how the  
     words  
 Have twisted back upon themselves,  
     and mean  
 Vileness, we are grown so proud—I  
     wish'd my voice  
 A rushing tempest of the wrath of  
     God  
 To 'blow these sacrifices thro' the  
     world—  
 Sent like the twelve-divided concu-  
     bine  
 To inflame the tribes: but there—out  
     yonder—earth  
 Lightens from her own central Hell—  
     O there  
 The red fruit of an old idolatry—  
 The heads of chiefs and princes fall  
     so fast,  
 They cling together in the ghastly  
     sack—

The land all shambles—naked mar-  
     riages  
 Flash from the bridge, and ever-  
     murder'd France,  
 By shores that darken with the gather-  
     ing wolf,  
 Runs in a river of blood to the sick  
     sea.  
 Is this a time to madden madness  
     then?  
 Was this a time for these to flaunt  
     their pride?  
 May Pharaoh's darkness, folds as  
     dense as those  
 Which hid the Holiest from the peo-  
     ple's eyes  
 Ere the great death, shroud this great  
     sin from all!  
 Doubtless our narrow world must  
     canvass it:  
 O rather pray for those and pity  
     them,  
 Who, thro' their own desire accom-  
     plish'd, bring  
 Their own gray hairs with sorrow to  
     the grave—  
 Who broke the bond which they  
     desired to break,  
 Which else had link'd their race with  
     times to come—  
 Who wove coarse webs to snare her  
     purity,  
 Grossly contriving their dear daugh-  
     ter's good—  
 Poor souls, and knew not what they  
     did, but sat  
 Ignorant, devising their own daugh-  
     ter's death!  
 May not that earthly chastisement  
     suffice?  
 Have not our love and reverence left  
     them bare?  
 Will not another take their heritage?  
 Will there be children's laughter in  
     their hall  
 For ever and for ever, or one stone  
 Left on another, or is it a light thing  
 That I, their guest, their host, their  
     ancient friend,  
 I made by these the last of all my  
     race,  
 Must cry to these the last of theirs, as  
     cried

Christ ere His agony to those that  
swore  
Not by the temple but the gold, and  
made  
Their own traditions God, and slew  
the Lord,  
And left their memories a world's  
curse—"Behold,  
Your house is left unto you deso-  
late"?"

Ended he had not, but she brook'd  
no more:  
Long since her heart had beat re-  
morselessly,  
Her cramp't-up sorrow pain'd her, and  
a sense  
Of meanness in her unresisting life.  
Then their eyes vex't her; for on en-  
tering  
He had cast the curtains of their seat  
aside—  
Black velvet of the costliest—she her-  
self  
Had seen to that: fain had she closed  
them now,  
Yet dared not stir to do it, only  
near'd  
Her husband inch by inch, but when  
she laid,  
Wifelike, her hand in one of his, he  
veil'd  
His face with the other, and at once,  
as falls  
A creeper when the prop is broken,  
fell  
The woman shrieking at his feet, and  
swoon'd.  
Then her own people bore along the  
nave  
Her pendent hands, and narrow mea-  
gre face  
Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty  
years:  
And her the Lord of all the landscape  
round  
Ev'n to its last horizon, and of all  
Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd  
out  
Tall and erect, but in the middle  
aisle  
Reel'd, as a footsore ox in crowded  
ways

Stumbling across the market to his  
death,  
Unpitied; for he groped as blind, and  
seem'd  
Always about to fall, grasping the  
pews  
And oaken finials till he touch'd the  
door;  
Yet to the lychgate, where his chariot  
stood,  
Strode from the porch, tall and erect  
again.

But nevermore did either pass the  
gate  
Save under pall with bearers. In one  
month,  
Thro' weary and yet ever wearier  
hours,  
The childless mother went to seek  
her child;  
And when he felt the silence of his  
house  
About him, and the change and not  
the change,  
And those fixt eyes of painted ances-  
tors  
Staring for ever from their gilded  
walls  
On him their last descendant, his own  
head  
Began to droop, to fall; the man be-  
came  
Imbecile; his one word was 'desolate;'  
Dead for two years before his death  
was he;  
But when the second Christmas came,  
escaped  
His keepers, and the silence which he  
felt,  
To find a deeper in the narrow gloom  
By wife and child; nor wanted at his  
end  
The dark retinue reverencing death  
At golden thresholds; nor from ten-  
der hearts,  
And those who sorrow'd o'er a van-  
ish'd race,  
Pity, the violet on the tyrant's grave.  
Then the great Hall was wholly  
broken down,  
And the broad woodland parcell'd  
into farms;

And where the two contrived their  
daughter's good,  
Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has  
made his run,  
The hedgehog underneath the plan-  
tain bores,  
The rabbit fondles his own harmless  
face,  
The slow-worm creeps, and the thin  
weasel there  
Follows the mouse, and all is open  
field.

## SEA DREAMS.

A CITY clerk, but gently born and  
bred;  
His wife, an unknown artist's orphan  
child—  
One babe was theirs, a Margaret,  
three years old:  
They, thinking that her clear german-  
der eye  
Droopt in the giant-facioried city-  
gloom,  
Came, with a month's leave given  
them, to the sea:  
For which his gains were dock'd, how-  
ever small:  
Small were his gains, and hard his  
work; besides,  
Their slender household fortunes  
(for the man  
Had risk'd his little) like the little  
'thrift,  
Trembled in perilous places o'er a  
deep:  
And oft, when sitting all alone, his  
face  
Would darken, as he cursed his cred-  
ulousness,  
And that one unctuous mouth which  
lured him, rogue,  
To buy strange shares in some Peru-  
vian mine.  
Now seaward-bound for health they  
gain'd a coast,  
All sand and cliff and deep-inrunning  
cave,  
At close of day; slept, woke, and  
went the next,

The Sabbath, pious varicrs from the  
church,  
To chapel; where a heated pulpiter,  
Not preaching simple Christ to sim-  
ple men,  
Announced the coming doom, and ful-  
minated  
Against the scarlet woman and her  
creed;  
For sideways up he swung his arms,  
and shriek'd  
' Thus, thus with violence,' ev'n as if  
he held  
The Apocalyptic millstone, and him-  
self  
Were that great Angel; ' Thus with  
violence  
Shall Babylon be cast into the sea;  
Then comes the close.' The gentle-  
hearted wife  
Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world;  
He at his own: but when the wordy  
storm  
Had ended, forth they came and  
paced the shore,  
Ran in and out the long sea-framing  
caves,  
Drank the large air, and saw, but  
scarce believed  
(The sootflake of so many a summer  
still  
Clung to their fancies) that they saw,  
the sea.  
So now on sand they walk'd, and now  
on cliff,  
Lingering about the thymy promonto-  
ries,  
Till all the sails were darken'd in the  
west,  
And rosed in the east: then home-  
ward and to bed:  
Where she, who kept a tender Chris-  
tian hope,  
Haunting a holy text, and still to  
that  
Returning, as the bird returns, at  
night,  
' Let not the sun go down upon your  
wrath,'  
Said, ' Love, forgive him: ' but he did  
not speak;  
And silenced by that silence lay the  
wife,

Remembering her dear Lord who  
died for all,  
And musing on the little lives of men,  
And how they mar this little by their  
feuds.

But while the two were sleeping, a  
full tide  
Rose with ground-swell, which, on the  
foremost rocks  
Touching, upjetted in spirits of wild  
sea-smoke,  
And scaled in sheets of wasteful foam,  
and fell

In vast sea-cataracts—ever and anon  
Deaf claps of thunder from within  
the cliffs  
Heard thro' the living roar. At this  
the babe,  
Their Margaret cradled near them,  
wail'd and woke  
The mother, and the father suddenly  
cried,  
'A wreck, a wreck!' then turn'd, and  
groaning said,

'Forgive! How many will say,  
"forgive," and find  
A sort of absolution in the sound  
To hate a little longer! No; the sin  
That neither God nor man can well  
forgive,  
Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once.  
Is it so true that second thoughts are  
best?  
Not first, and third, which are a riper  
first?  
Too ripe, too late! they come too late  
for use.  
Ah love, there surely lives in man and  
beast  
Something divine to warn them of  
their foes:  
And such a sense, when first I fronted  
him,  
Said, "Trust him not;" but after,  
when I came  
To know him more, I lost it, knew him  
less;  
Fought with what seem'd my own un-  
charity;  
Sat at his table; drank his costly  
wines;

Made more and more allowance for  
his talk;  
Went further, fool! and trusted him  
with all,  
All my poor scrapings from a dozen  
years  
Of dust and deskwork: there is no  
such mine,  
None; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing  
gold,  
Not making. Ruin'd! ruin'd! the  
sea roars  
Ruin: a fearful night!'

'Not fearful; fair,'  
Said the good wife, 'if every star in  
heaven  
Can make it fair: you do but hear the  
tide.  
Had you ill dreams?'

'O yes,' he said, 'I dream'd  
Of such a tide swelling toward the  
land,  
And I from out the boundless outer  
deep  
Swept with it to the shore, and enter'd  
one  
Of those dark caves that run beneath  
the cliffs.  
I thought the motion of the boundless  
deep  
Bore thro' the cave, and I was heaved  
upon it  
In darkness: then I saw one lovely  
star  
Larger and larger. "What a world,"  
I thought,  
"To live in!" but in moving on I  
found  
Only the landward exit of the cave,  
Bright with the sun upon the stream  
beyond:  
And near the light a giant woman sat.  
All over earthy, like a piece of earth,  
A pickaxe in her hand: then out I  
slipt  
Into a land all sun and blossom, trees  
As high as heaven, and every bird  
that sings  
And here the night-light flickering in  
my eyes  
Awoke me.'



'That was then your dream,' she  
said,  
'Not sad, but sweet.'

'So sweet, I lay,' said he,  
'And mused upon it, drifting up the  
stream

In fancy, till I slept again, and pieced  
The broken vision; for I dream'd that  
still

The motion of the great deep bore me  
on,

And that the woman walk'd upon the  
brink:

I wonder'd at her strength, and ask'd  
her of it:

"It came," she said, "by working in  
the mines:"

O then to ask her of my shares, I  
thought;

And ask'd; but not a word; she  
shook her head.

And then the motion of the current  
ceased,

And there was rolling thunder; and  
we reach'd

A mountain, like a wall of burs and  
thorns;

But she with her strong feet up the  
steep hill

Trod out a path: I follow'd; and at  
top

She pointed seaward: there a fleet of  
glass,

That seem'd a fleet of jewels under  
me,

Sailing along before a gloomy cloud  
That not one moment ceased to  
thunder, past

In sunshine: right across its track  
there lay,

Down in the water, a long reef of  
gold,

Or what seem'd gold: and I was glad  
at first

To think that in our often-ransack'd  
world

Still so much gold was left; and then  
I fear'd

Lest the gay navy there should  
splinter on it,

And fearing waved my arm to warn  
them off;

An idle signal, for the brittle fleet  
(I thought I could have died to save it)  
near'd,

Touch'd, clink'd, and clash'd, and  
vanish'd, and I woke,

I heard the clash so clearly. Now I  
see

My dream was Life; the woman  
honest Work;

And my poor venture but a fleet of  
glass

Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold.'

'Nay,' said the kindly wife to com-  
fort him,

'You raised your arm, you tumbled  
down and broke

The glass with little Margaret's medi-  
cine in it;

And, breaking that, you made and  
broke your dream:

A trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks.'

'No trifle,' groan'd the husband;  
'yesterday

I met him suddenly in the street, and  
ask'd

That which I ask'd the woman in my  
dream.

Like her, he shook his head. "Show  
me the books!"

He dodged me with a long and loose  
account.

"The books, the books!" but he, he  
could not wait,

Bound on a matter he of life and  
death:

When the great Books (see Daniel  
seven and ten)

Were open'd, I should find he meant  
me well;

And then began to bloat himself, and  
ooze

All over with the fat affectionate  
smile

That makes the widow lean. "My  
dearest friend,

Have faith, have faith! We live by  
faith," said he;

"And all things work together for the  
good

Of those"—it makes me sick to quote  
him—last

Gript my hand hard, and with God-  
 bless-you went.  
 I stood like one that had received a  
 blow:  
 I found a hard friend in his loose  
 accounts,  
 A loose one in the hard grip of his  
 hand,  
 A curse in his God-bless-you: then my  
 eyes  
 Pursued him down the street, and far  
 away,  
 Among the honest shoulders of the  
 crowd,  
 Read rascal in the motions of his  
 back,  
 And scoundrel in the supple-sliding  
 knee.'

'Was he so bound, poor soul?' said  
 the good wife;  
 'So are we all: but do not call him,  
 love,  
 Before you prove him, rogue, and  
 proved, forgive.  
 His gain is loss; for he that wrongs  
 his friend  
 Wrongs himself more, and ever bears  
 about  
 A silent court of justice in his breast,  
 Himself the judge and jury, and him-  
 self  
 The prisoner at the bar, ever con-  
 demn'd:  
 And that drags down his life: then  
 comes what comes  
 Hereafter: and he meant, he said he  
 meant,  
 Perhaps he meant, or partly meant,  
 you well.'

"With all his conscience and one  
 eye askew"—  
 Love, let me quote these lines, that  
 you may learn  
 A man is likewise counsel for him-  
 self,  
 Too often, in that silent court of  
 yours—  
 "With all his conscience and one eye  
 askew,  
 So false, he partly took himself for  
 true;

Whose pious talk, when most his  
 heart was dry,  
 Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round  
 his eye;  
 Who, never naming God except for  
 gain,  
 So never took that useful name in  
 vain,  
 Made Him his catspaw and the Cross  
 his tool,  
 And Christ the bait to trap his dupe  
 and fool;  
 Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace  
 he forged,  
 And snake-like slimed his victim ere  
 he gorged;  
 And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the  
 rest  
 Arising, did his holy oily best,  
 Dropping the too rough H in Hell and  
 Heaven,  
 To spread the Word by which him-  
 self had thriven."  
 How like you this old satire?'

'Nay,' she said,  
 'I loathe it: he had never kindly  
 heart,  
 Nor ever cared to better his own  
 kind,  
 Who first wrote satire, with no pity in  
 it.  
 But will you hear *my* dream, for I had  
 one  
 That altogether went to music? Still  
 It awed me.'

Then she told it, having dream'd  
 Of that same coast.

—But round the North, a light,  
 A belt, it seem'd, of luminous vapor,  
 lay,  
 And ever in it a low musical note  
 Swell'd up and died; and, as it  
 swell'd, a ridge  
 Of breaker issued from the belt, and  
 still  
 Grew with the growing note, and  
 when the note  
 Had reach'd a thunderous fulness, on  
 those cliffs

Broke, mixt with awful light (the same as that Living within the belt) whereby she saw  
That all those lines of cliffs were cliffs no more,  
But huge cathedral fronts of every age,  
Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could see,  
One after one: and then the great ridge drew,  
Lessening to the lessening music, back,  
And past into the belt and swell'd again  
Slowly to music: ever when it broke  
The statues, king or saint, or founder fell;  
Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin left  
Came men and women in dark clusters round,  
Some crying, 'Set them up! they shall not fall!'  
And others, 'Let them lie, for they have fall'n.'  
And still they strove and wrangled: and she grieved  
In her strange dream, she knew not why, to find  
Their wildest wailings never out of tune  
With that sweet note; and ever as their shrieks  
Ran highest up the gamut, that great wave  
Returning, while none mark'd it, on the crowd  
Broke, mixt with awful light, and show'd their eyes  
Glaring, and passionate looks, and swept away  
The men of flesh and blood, and men of stone,  
To the waste deeps together.

'Then I fixt  
My wistful eyes on two fair images,  
Both crown'd with stars and high among the stars,—  
The Virgin Mother standing with her child

High up on one of those dark minster-fronts—  
Till she began to totter, and the child Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry  
Which mixt with little Margaret's, and I woke,  
And my dream awed me:—well—but what are dreams?  
Yours came but from the breaking of a glass,  
And mine but from the crying of a child.'

'Child? No!' said he, 'but this tide's roar, and his,  
Our Boanerges with his threats of doom,  
And loud-lung'd Antibabylonianisms (Altho' I grant but little music there)  
Went both to make your dream: but if there were  
A music harmonizing our wild cries,  
Sphere-music such as that you dream'd about,  
Why, that would make our passions far too like  
The discords dear to the musician.  
No—  
One shriek of hate would jar all the hymns of heaven:  
True Devils with no ear, they howl in tune  
With nothing but the Devil!'

"True" indeed!  
One of our town, but later by an hour  
Here than ourselves, spoke with me on the shore;  
While you were running down the sands, and made  
The dimpled flounce of the sea-furbelow flap,  
Good man, to please the child. She brought strange news.  
Why were you silent when I spoke to-night?  
I had set my heart on your forgiving him  
Before you knew. We *must* forgive the dead.'

'Dead! who is dead?'

'The man your eye pursued,  
A little after you had parted with  
him,  
He suddenly dropt dead of heart-  
disease.'

'Dead? he? of heart-disease? what  
heart had he  
To die of? dead!'

'Ah, dearest, if there be  
A devil in man, there is an angel too,  
And if he did that wrong you charge  
him with,  
His angel broke his heart. But your  
rough voice  
(You spoke so loud) has roused the  
child again.  
'Sleep, little birdie, sleep! will she  
not sleep  
Without her "little birdie"? well  
then, sleep,  
And I will sing you "birdie."'

Saying this,  
The woman half turn'd round from  
him she loved,  
Left him one hand, and reaching thro'  
the night  
Her other, found (for it was close be-  
side)  
And half-embraced the basket cradle-  
head  
With one soft arm, which, like the  
pliant bough  
That moving moves the nest and nest-  
ling, sway'd  
The cradle, while she sang this baby  
song

What does little birdie say  
In her nest at peep of day?  
Let me fly, says little birdie,  
Mother, let me fly away.  
Birdie, rest a little longer,  
Till the little wings are stronger.  
So she rests a little longer,  
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,  
In her bed at peep of day?  
Baby says, like little birdie,  
Let me rise and fly away.

Baby, sleep a little longer,  
Till the little limbs are stronger.  
If she sleeps a little longer,  
Baby too shall fly away.

'She sleeps: let us too, let all evil  
sleep.  
He also sleeps—another sleep than  
ours.  
He can do no more wrong: forgive  
him, dear,  
And I shall sleep the sounder!'

Then the man,  
'His deeds yet live, the worst is yet  
to come.  
Yet let your sleep for this one night  
be sound:  
I do forgive him!'

'Thanks, my love,' she said,  
'Your own will be the sweeter,' and  
they slept.

#### LUCRETIVS.

LUCILIA, wedded to Lucretius, found  
Her master cold; for when the morn-  
ing flush  
Of passion and the first embrace had  
died  
Between them, tho' he lov'd her none  
the less,  
Yet often when the woman heard his  
foot  
Return from pacings in the field, and  
ran  
To greet him with a kiss, the master  
took  
Small notice, or austere; for—his  
mind  
Half buried in some weightier argu-  
ment,  
Or fancy-borne perhaps upon the rise  
And long roll of the Hexameter—he  
past  
To turn and ponder those three hun-  
dred scrolls  
Left by the Teacher, whom he held  
divine.  
She brook'd it not; but wrathful, pet-  
ulant,

Dreaming some rival, sought and  
 found a witch  
 Who brew'd the philtre which had  
 power, they said,  
 To lead an errant passion home again.  
 And this, at times, she mingled with  
 his drink,  
 And this destroy'd him; for the  
 wicked broth  
 Confused the chemic labor of the  
 blood,  
 And tickling the brute brain within  
 the man's  
 Made havoc among those tender  
 cells, and check'd  
 His power to shape: he loathed him-  
 self; and once  
 After a tempest woke upon a morn  
 That mock'd him with returning calm,  
 and cried:

' Storm in the night! for thrice I  
 heard the rain  
 Rushing; and once the flash of a  
 thunderbolt—  
 Methought I never saw so fierce a  
 fork—  
 Struck out the streaming mountain-  
 side, and show'd  
 A riotous confluence of watercourses  
 Blanching and billowing in a hollow  
 of it.  
 Where all but yester-eve was dusty-  
 dry.

' Storm, and what dreams, ye holy  
 Gods, what dreams!  
 For thrice I waken'd after dreams.  
 Perchance  
 We do but recollect the dreams that  
 come  
 Just ere the waking: terrible! for it  
 seem'd  
 A void was made in Nature; all her  
 bonds  
 Crack'd; and I saw the flaring atom-  
 streams  
 And torrents of her myriad universe,  
 Ruining along the illimitable inane,  
 Fly on to clash together again, and  
 make  
 Another and another frame of  
 things

For ever: that was mine, my dream, I  
 knew it—  
 Of and belonging to me, as the dog  
 With inward yelp and restless forefoot  
 plies  
 His function of the woodland: but  
 the next!  
 I thought that all the blood by Sylla  
 shed  
 Came, driving rainlike down again on  
 earth,  
 And where it dash'd the reddening  
 meadow, sprang  
 No dragon warriors from Cadmean  
 teeth,  
 For these I thought my dream would  
 show to me,  
 But girls, Hetairai, curious in their  
 art,  
 Hired animalisms, vile as those that  
 made  
 The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies  
 worse  
 Than aught they fable of the quiet  
 Gods.  
 And hands they mixt, and yell'd and  
 round me drove  
 In narrowing circles till I yell'd again  
 Half-suffocated, and sprang up, and  
 saw—  
 Was it the first beam of my latest  
 day?

' Then, then, from utter gloom stood  
 out the breasts,  
 The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly  
 a sword  
 Now over and now under, now  
 direct,  
 Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down  
 shamed  
 At all that beauty; and as I stared, a  
 fire,  
 The fire that left a roofless Iliou,  
 Shot out of them, and scorch'd me  
 that I woke.

' Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus,  
 thine,  
 Because I would not one of thine own  
 doves,  
 Not ev'n a rose, were offer'd to thee?  
 thine,

Forgetful how my rich procemion  
 makes  
 Thy glory fly along the Italian field,  
 In lays that will outlast thy Deity?

'Deity? nay, thy worshippers. My  
 tongue  
 Trips, or I speak profanely. Which  
 of these  
 Angers thee most, or angers thee at  
 all?  
 Not if thou be'st of those who, far  
 aloof  
 From envy, hate and pity, and spite  
 and scorn,  
 Live the great life which all our great-  
 est fain  
 Would follow, center'd in eternal calm.

'Nay, if thou canst, O Goddess,  
 like ourselves  
 Touch, and be touch'd, then would I  
 cry to thee  
 To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender  
 arms  
 Round him, and keep him from the  
 lust of blood  
 That makes a steaming slaughter-  
 house of Rome.

'Ay, but I meant not thee; I meant  
 not her,  
 Whom all the pines of Ida shook to  
 see  
 Slide from that quiet heaven of hers,  
 and tempt  
 The Trojan, while his neat-herds were  
 abroad;  
 Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter  
 wept  
 Her Deity false in human-amorous  
 tears;  
 Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter,  
 Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,  
 Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called  
 Calliope to grace his golden verse—  
 Ay, and this Kypris also—did I take  
 That popular name of thine to shadow  
 forth  
 The all-generating powers and genial  
 heat  
 Of Nature, when she strikes thro' the  
 thick blood

Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs  
 are glad  
 Nosing the mother's udder, and the  
 bird  
 Makes his heart voice amid the blaze  
 of flowers:  
 Which things appear the work of  
 mighty Gods.

'The Gods! and if I go *my* work is  
 left  
 Unfinish'd—if I go. The Gods, who  
 haunt  
 The lucid interspace of world and  
 world,  
 Where never creeps a cloud, or moves  
 a wind,  
 Nor ever falls the least white star of  
 snow,  
 Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,  
 Nor sound of human sorrow mounts  
 to mar  
 Their sacred everlasting calm! and  
 such,  
 Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm,  
 Not such, nor all unlike it, man may  
 gain  
 Letting his own life go. The Gods,  
 the Gods!  
 If all be atoms, how then should the  
 Gods  
 Being atomic not be dissoluble,  
 Not follow the great law? My master  
 held  
 That Gods there are, for all men so  
 believe.  
 I prest my footsteps into his, and  
 meant  
 Surely to lead my Memmius in a train  
 Of flowery clauses onward to the proof  
 That Gods there are, and deathless.  
 Meant? I meant?  
 I have forgotten what I meant: my  
 mind  
 Stumbles, and all my faculties are  
 lamed.

'Look where another of our Gods,  
 the Sun,  
 Apollo, Delius, or of older use  
 All-seeing Hyperion—what you will—  
 Has mounted yonder; since he never  
 sware,

Except his wrath were wreak'd on  
 wretched man,  
 That he would only shine among the  
 dead  
 Hereafter; tales! for never yet on  
 earth  
 Could dead flesh creep, or bits of  
 roasting ox  
 Moan round the spit—nor knows he  
 what he sees;  
 King of the East altho' he seem, and  
 girt  
 With song and flame and fragrance,  
 slowly lifts  
 His golden feet on those empurpled  
 stairs  
 That climb into the windy halls of  
 heaven:  
 And here he glances on an eye new-  
 born,  
 And gets for greeting but a wail of  
 pain;  
 And here he stays upon a freezing orb  
 That fain would gaze upon him to the  
 last;  
 And here upon a yellow eyelid fall'n  
 And closed by those who mourn a  
 friend in vain,  
 Not thankful that his troubles are no  
 more.  
 And me, altho' his fire is on my face  
 Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can  
 tell  
 Whether I mean this day to end my-  
 self,  
 Or lend an ear to Plato where he  
 says,  
 That men like soldiers may not quit  
 the post  
 Allotted by the Gods: but he that  
 holds  
 The Gods are careless, wherefore  
 need he care  
 Greatly for them, nor rather plunge  
 at once,  
 Being troubled, wholly out of sight,  
 and sink  
 Past earthquake—ay, and gout and  
 stone, that break  
 Body toward death, and palsy, death-  
 in-life,  
 And wretched age—and worst disease  
 of all,

These prodigies of myriad naked-  
 nesses,  
 And twisted shapes of lust, unspeak-  
 able,  
 Abominable, strangers at my hearth  
 Not welcome, harpies miring every  
 dish,  
 The phantom husks of something  
 foully done,  
 And fleeting thro' the boundless uni-  
 verse,  
 And blasting the long quiet of my  
 breast  
 With animal heat and dire insanity?

'How should the mind, except it  
 loved them, clasp  
 These idols to herself? or do they  
 fly  
 Now thinner, and now thicker, like  
 the flakes  
 In a fall of snow, and so press in, per-  
 force  
 Of multitude, as crowds that in an  
 hour  
 Of civic tumult jam the doors, and  
 bear  
 The keepers down, and throng, their  
 rags and they  
 The basest, far into that council-hall  
 Where sit the best and statelyest of  
 the land?

'Can I not fling this horror off me  
 again,  
 Seeing with how great ease Nature  
 can smile,  
 Balmier and nobler from her bath of  
 storm,  
 At random ravage? and how easily  
 The mountain there has cast his  
 cloudy slough,  
 Now towering o'er him in serenest  
 air,  
 A mountain o'er a mountain,—ay, and  
 within  
 All hollow as the hopes and fears of  
 men?

'But who was he, that in the garden  
 snared  
 Picus and Faunus, rustic Gods? a  
 tale

To laugh at—more to laugh at in myself—  
 For look! what is it? there? yon arbutus  
 Totters; a noiseless riot underneath  
 Strikes through the wood, sets all the tops quivering—  
 The mountain quickens into Nymph and Faun;  
 And here an Oread—how the sun delights  
 To glance and shift about her slippery sides,  
 And rosy knees and supple roundedness,  
 And budded bosom-peaks—who this way runs  
 Before the rest—A satyr, a satyr, see,  
 Follows; but him I proved impossible;  
 Twy-natured is no nature: yet he draws  
 Nearer and nearer, and I scan him now  
 Beastlier than any phantom of his kind  
 That ever butted his rough brother-brute  
 For lust or lusty blood or provender:  
 I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him; and she  
 Loathes him as well; such a precipitate heel,  
 Fledged as it were with Mercury's ankle-wing,  
 Whirls her to me: but will she fling herself,  
 Shameless upon me? Catch her, goat-foot: nay,  
 Hide, hide them, million-myrtled wilderness,  
 And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide! do I wish—  
 What?—that the bush were leafless? or to whelm  
 All of them in one massacre? O ye Gods,  
 I know you careless, yet, behold, to you  
 From childly wont and ancient use I call—  
 I thought I lived securely as yourselves—

No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-spite,  
 No madness of ambition, avarice, none:  
 No larger feast than under plane or pine  
 With neighbors laid along the grass, to take  
 Only such cups as left us friendly-warm,  
 Affirming each his own philosophy—  
 Nothing to mar the sober majesties  
 Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life.  
 But now it seems some unseen monster lays  
 His vast and filthy hands upon my will,  
 Wrenching it backward into his; and spoils  
 My bliss in being; and it was not great;  
 For save when shutting reasons up in rhythm,  
 Or Heliconian honey in living words,  
 To make a truth less harsh, I often grew  
 Tired of so much within our little life,  
 Or of so little in our little life—  
 Poor little life that toddles half an hour  
 Crown'd with a flower or two, and there an end—  
 And since the nobler pleasure seems to fade,  
 Why should I, beastlike as I find myself,  
 Not manlike end myself?—our privilege—  
 What beast has heart to do it? And what man,  
 What Roman would be dragg'd in triumph thus?  
 Not I; not he, who bears one name with her  
 Whose death-blow struck the dateless doom of kings,  
 When, brooking not the Tarquin in her veins,  
 She made her blood in sight of Collatine  
 And all his peers, flushing the guiltless air,



Spout from the maiden fountain in  
her heart.  
And from it sprang the Common-  
wealth, which breaks  
As I am breaking now!

‘And therefore now  
Let her, that is the womb and tomb  
of all,  
Great Nature, take, and forcing far  
apart  
Those blind beginnings that have  
made me man,  
Dash them anew together at her will  
Thro’ all her cycles—into man once  
more,  
Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent  
flower:  
But till this cosmic order everywhere  
Shatter’d into one earthquake in one  
day  
Cracks all to pieces,—and that hour  
perhaps  
Is not so far when momentary man  
Shall seem no more a something to  
himself,  
But he, his hopes and hates, his  
homes and fanes,  
And even his bones long laid within  
the grave,  
The very sides of the grave itself  
shall pass,  
Vanishing, atom and void, atom and  
void,  
Into the unseen for ever,—till that  
hour,  
My golden work in which I told a  
truth  
That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel,

And numbs the Fury’s ringlet-snake,  
and plucks  
The mortal soul from out immortal  
hell,  
Shall stand: ay, surely: then it fails  
at last  
And perishes as I must; for O Thou,  
Passionless bride, divine Tranquillity,  
Yeard’d after by the wisest of the  
wise,  
Who fail to find thee, being as thou  
art  
Without one pleasure and without  
one pain,  
Howbeit I know thou surely must be  
mine  
Or soon or late, yet out of season,  
thus  
I woo thee roughly, for thou carest  
not  
How roughly men may woo thee so  
they win—  
Thus—thus: the soul flies out and  
dies in the air.’

With that he drove the knife into  
his side:  
She heard him raging, heard him fall;  
ran in,  
Beat breast, tore hair, cried out upon  
herself  
As having fail’d in duty to him,  
shriek’d  
That she but meant to win him back,  
fell on him,  
Clasp’d, kiss’d him, wail’d: he an-  
swer’d, ‘Care not thou!  
Thy duty? What is duty? Fare thee  
well!’

## MAUD; A MONODRAMA.

### PART I.

I.

I.

I HATE the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,  
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red heath,  
The red-ribb’d ledges drip with a silent horror of blood,  
And Echo there, whatever is ask’d her, answers ‘Death.’

## II.

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was found,  
His who had given me life—O father ! O God ! was it well ?—  
Mangled, and flatten'd, and crush'd, and dinto into the ground :  
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell.

## III.

Did he fling himself down ? who knows ? for a vast speculation had fail'd,  
And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd with despair,  
And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken worldling wail'd,  
And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro' the air.

## IV.

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were stirr'd  
By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a whisper'd fright,  
And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart as I heard  
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night.

## V.

Villainy somewhere ! whose ? One says, we are villains all.  
Not he : his honest fame should at least by me be maintained :  
But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and the Hall,  
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us flaccid and drain'd.

## VI.

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace ? we have made them a curse,  
Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not its own ;  
And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better or worse  
Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his own hearthstone ?

## VII.

But these are the days of advance, the works of the men of mind,  
When who but a fool would have faith in a tradesman's ware or his word ?  
Is it peace or war ? Civil war, as I think, and that of a kind  
The vilest, as underhand, not openly bearing the sword.

## VIII.

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print  
Of the golden age—why not ? I have neither hope nor trust ;  
May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as a flint,  
Cheat and be cheated, and die : who knows ? we are ashes and dust.

## IX.

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days gone by,  
When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together, each sex, like swine,  
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men lie ;  
Peace in her vineyard—yes !—but a company forges the wine.

## X.

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's head,  
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled wife,  
And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for bread,  
And the spirit of murder works in the very means of life,

## XI.

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villainous centre-bits  
Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moonless nights,  
While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps, as he sits  
To pestle a poison'd poison behind his crimson lights.

## XII.

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial fee,  
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's bones,  
Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and by sea,  
War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones.

## XIII.

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,  
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out of the foam,  
That the smooth-faced snubnosed rogue would leap from his counter and till,  
And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yardwand, home.—

## XIV.

What! am I raging alone as my father raged in his mood?  
Must I too creep to the hollow and dash myself down and die  
Rather than hold by the law that I made, nevermore to brood  
On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched swindler's lie?

## XV.

Would there be sorrow for *me*? there was *love* in the passionate shriek,  
Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to the grave—  
Wrapt in a cloak, as I saw him, and thought he would rise and speak  
And rave at the lie and the liar, ah God, as he used to rave.

## XVI.

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the moor and the main.  
Why should I stay? can a sweeter chance ever come to me here?  
O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves of pain,  
Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit and the fear?

## XVII.

Workmen up at the Hall!—they are coming back from abroad;  
The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a millionaire:  
I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular beauty of Maud;  
I play'd with the girl when a child; she promised then to be fair.

## XVIII.

Maud with her venturous climbings and tumbles and childish escapes,  
 Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the Hall,  
 Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father dangled the grapes,  
 Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced darling of all,—

## XIX.

What is she now? My dreams are bad. She may bring me a curse.  
 No, there is fatter game on the moor; she will let me alone.  
 Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman or man be the worse.  
 I will bury myself in myself, and the Devil may pipe to his own.

## II.

Long have I sigh'd for a calm: God grant I may find it at last!  
 It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither savor nor salt,  
 But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her carriage past,  
 Perfectly beautiful: let it be granted her: where is the fault?  
 All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to be seen)  
 Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,  
 Dead perfection, no more; nothing more, if it had not been  
 For a chance of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect of the rose,  
 Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too full,  
 Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensitive nose,  
 From which I escaped heart-free, with the least little touch of spleen.

## III.

Cold and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly meek,  
 Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was drown'd,  
 Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the cheek,  
 Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom profound;  
 Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient wrong  
 Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale as before  
 Growing and fading and growing upon me without a sound,  
 Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the night long  
 Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it no more,  
 But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden ground,  
 Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung shipwrecking roar,  
 Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd down by the wave,  
 Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and found  
 The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.

## IV.

## I.

A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime  
 In the little grove where I sit—ah, wherefore cannot I be  
 Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful season bland,  
 When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer clime.



"THOU ART MATED WITH A CLOWN."—Page 79



Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,  
The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land?

## II.

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet and small!  
And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and spite;  
And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies as a Czar;  
And here on the landward side, by a red rock, glimmers the Hall;  
And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like a light;  
But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading star!

## III.

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled head of the race?  
I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her brother I bow'd:  
I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the moor;  
But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beautiful face.  
O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being so proud;  
Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am nameless and poor.

## IV.

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander and steal;  
I know it, and smile a hard-set smile, like a stoic, or like  
A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way:  
For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can heal;  
The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow spear'd by the shrike,  
And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of plunder and prey.

## V.

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair in her flower;  
Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen hand at a game  
That pushes us off from the board, and others ever succeed?  
Ah yet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an hour;  
We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a brother's shame;  
However we brave it out, we men are a little breed.

## VI.

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,  
For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,  
And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.  
As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for his birth,  
So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man:  
He now is first, but is he the last? is he not too base?

## VII.

The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and vain,  
An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and poor;  
The passionate heart of the poet is whirl'd into folly and vice.  
I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate brain;  
For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it, were more  
Than to walk all day like the sultan of old in a garden of spice.

## VIII.

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the veil.  
 Who knows the ways of the world, how God will bring them about?  
 Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world is wide.  
 Shall I weep if a Poland fall? shall I shriek if a Hungary fail?  
 Or an infant civilization be ruled with rod or with knout?  
 I have not made the world, and He that made it will guide.

## IX.

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland ways,  
 Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be my lot,  
 Far-off from the clamor of liars belied in the hubbub of lies;  
 From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are ever hissing dispraise  
 Because their natures are little, and, whether he heed it or not,  
 Where each man walks with his head in a cloud of poisonous flies.

## X.

And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness of love,  
 The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill.  
 Ah Maud, you milkwhite fawn, you are all unmeet for a wife.  
 Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in marble above;  
 Your father is ever in London, you wander about at your will:  
 You have but fed on the roses and lain in the lilies of life.

## V.

## I.

A voice by the cedar tree  
 In the meadow under the Hall!  
 She is singing an air that is known to  
 me,

A passionate ballad gallant and gay,  
 A martial song like a trumpet's call!  
 Singing alone in the morning of life,  
 In the happy morning of life and of  
 May,

Singing of men that in battle array,  
 Ready in heart and ready in hand,  
 March with banner and bugle and  
 fife  
 To the death, for their native land.

## II.

Maud with her exquisite face,  
 And wild voice pealing up to the sunny  
 sky,  
 And feet like sunny gems on an Eng-  
 lish green,  
 Maud in the light of her youth and her  
 grace,

Singing of Death, and of Honor that  
 cannot die,  
 Till I well could weep for a time so  
 sordid and mean,  
 And myself so languid and base."

## III.

Silence, beautiful voice!  
 Be still, for you only trouble the mind  
 With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,  
 A glory I shall not find.  
 Still! I will hear you no more,  
 For your sweetness hardly leaves me  
 a choice  
 But to move to the meadow and fall  
 before  
 Her feet on the meadow grass, and  
 adore,  
 Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,  
 Not her, not her, but a voice.

## VI.

## I.

Morning arises stormy and pale,  
 No sun, but a wannish glare



In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,  
And the budded peaks of the wood are  
    bow'd  
Caught and cuff'd by the gale :  
I had fancied it would be fair.

## II.

Whom but Maud should I meet  
Last night, when the sunset burn'd  
On the blossom'd gable-ends  
At the head of the village street,  
Whom but Maud should I meet ?  
And she touch'd my hand with a smile  
    so sweet,  
She made me divine amends  
For a courtesy not return'd.

## III.

And thus a delicate spark  
Of glowing and growing light  
Thro' the livelong hours of the dark  
Kept itself warm in the heart of my  
    dreams,  
Ready to burst in a color'd flame ;  
Till at last when the morning came  
In a cloud, it faded, and seems  
But an ashen-gray delight.

## IV.

What if with her sunny hair,  
And smile as sunny as cold,  
She meant to weave me a snare  
Of some coquettish deceit,  
Cleopatra-like as of old  
To entangle me when we met,  
To have her lion roll in a silken net  
And fawn at a victor's feet.

## V.

Ah, what shall I be at fifty  
Should Nature keep me alive,  
If I find the world so bitter  
When I am but twenty-five ?  
Yet, if she were not a cheat,  
If Maud were all that she seem'd,  
And her smile were all that I dream'd,  
Then the world were not so bitter  
But a smile could make it sweet.

## VI.

What if tho' her eye seem'd full  
Of a kind intent to me,  
What if that dandy-despot, he,  
That jewell'd mass of millinery,  
That oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull  
Smelling of musk and of insolence,  
Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,  
Who wants the finer politic sense  
To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,  
With a glassy smile his brutal scorn—  
What if he had told her yesternorn  
How prettily for his own sweet sake  
A face of tenderness might be feign'd,  
And a moist mirage in desert eyes,  
That so, when the rotten hustings  
    shake  
In another month to his brazen lies,  
A wretched vote may be gain'd.

## VII.

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,  
Keep watch and ward, keep watch  
    and ward,  
Or thou wilt prove their tool.  
Yea, too, myself from myself I guard,  
For often a man's own angry pride  
Is cap and bells for a fool.

## VIII.

Perhaps the smile and tender tone  
Came out of her pitying womanhood,  
For am I not, am I not, here alone  
So many a summer since she died,  
My mother, who was so gentle and  
    good ?  
Living alone in an empty house,  
Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,  
Where I hear the dead at midday  
    moan,  
And the shrieking rush of the wainscot  
    mouse,  
And my own sad name in corners  
    cried,  
When the shiver of dancing leaves is  
    thrown  
About its echoing chambers wide,  
Till a morbid hate and horror have  
    grown  
Of a world in which I have hardly  
    mixin,

And a morbid eating lichen fixt  
On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

## IX.

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and  
caught  
By that you swore to withstan ?  
For what was it else within me wrought  
But, I fear, the new strong wine of  
love,  
That made my tongue so stammer and  
trip  
When I saw the treasured splendor,  
her hand,  
Come sliding out of her sacred glove,  
And the sunlight broke from her lip?

## X.

I have play'd with her when a child;  
She remembers it now we meet.  
Ah well, well, well, I *may* be beguiled  
By some coquettish deceit.  
Yet, if she were not a cheat,  
If Maud were all that she seem'd,  
And her smile had all that I dream'd,  
Then the world were not so bitter  
But a smile could make it sweet.

## VII.

## I.

Did I hear it half in a doze  
Long since, I know not where?  
Did I dream it an hour ago,  
When asleep in this arm-chair?

## II.

Men were drinking together,  
Drinking and talking of me;  
'Well, if it prove a girl, the boy  
Will have plenty: so let it be.'

## III.

Is it an echo of something  
Read with a boy's delight,  
Viziers nodding together  
In some Arabian night?

## IV.

Strange, that I hear two men,  
Somewhere, talking of me;

'Well, if it prove a girl, my boy  
Will have plenty: so let it be.'

## VIII.

She came to the village church,  
And sat by a pillar alone;  
An angel watching an urn  
Wept over her, carved in stone;  
And once, but once, she lifted her  
eyes,  
And suddenly, sweetly, strangely  
biush'd  
To find they were met by my own;  
And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat  
stronger  
And thicker, until I heard no longer  
The snowy-banded, dilettante,  
Delicate-handed priest intone;  
And thought, is it pride, and mused  
and sigh'd  
'No surely, now it cannot be pride.'

## IX.

I was walking a mile,  
More than a mile from the shore,  
The sun look'd out with a smile  
Betwixt the cloud and the moor  
And riding at set of day  
Over the dark moor land,  
Rapidly riding far away,  
She waved to me with her hand.  
There were two at her side,  
Something flash'd in the sun,  
Down by the hill I saw them ride,  
In a moment they were gone:  
Like a sudden spark  
Struck vainly in the night,  
Then returns the dark  
With no more hope of light.

## X.

## I.

Sick, am I sick of a jealous dread?  
Was not one of the two at her side  
This new-made lord, whose splendor  
plucks  
The slavish hat from the villager's  
head?  
Whose old grandfather has lately  
died,  
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom

Grimy nakedness dragging his trucks  
 And laying his trams in a poison'd  
 gloom  
 Wrought, till he crept from a gutted  
 mine  
 Master of half a servile shire,  
 And left his coal all turn'd into gold  
 To a grandson, first of his noble line,  
 Rich in the grace all women desire,  
 Strong in the power that all men  
 adore,  
 And simper and set their voices lower,  
 And soften as if to a girl, and hold  
 Awe-stricken breaths at a work di-  
 vine,  
 Seeing his gewgaw castle shine,  
 New as his title, built last year,  
 There amid perky larches and pine,  
 And over the sullen-purple moor  
 (Look at it) pricking a cockney ear.

## II.

What, has he found my jewel out?  
 For one of the two that rode at her  
 side  
 Bound for the Hall, I am sure was  
 he:  
 Bound for the Hall, and I think for a  
 bride.  
 Blithe would her brother's acceptance  
 be.  
 Maud could be gracious too, no doubt  
 To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,  
 A bought commission, a waxen face,  
 A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—  
 Bought? what is it he cannot buy?  
 And therefore splenetic, personal,  
 base,  
 A wounded thing with a rancorous  
 cry,  
 At war with myself and a wretched  
 race,  
 Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

## III.

Last week came one to the county  
 town,  
 To preach our poor little army down,  
 And play the game of the despot  
 kings,  
 Tho' the state has done it and thrice  
 as well:

This broad-brim'd hawker of holy  
 things,  
 Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton,  
 and rings  
 Even in dreams to the chink of his  
 pence,  
 This huckster put down war! can he  
 tell  
 Whether war be a cause or a conse-  
 quence?  
 Put down the passions that make  
 earth Hell!  
 Down with ambition, avarice, pride,  
 Jealousy, down! cut off from the  
 mind  
 The bitter springs of anger and fear;  
 Down too, down at your own fireside,  
 With the evil tongue and the evil ear,  
 For each is at war with mankind.

## IV.

I wish I could hear again  
 The chivalrous battle-song  
 That she warbled alone in her joy!  
 I might persuade myself then  
 She would not do herself this great  
 wrong,  
 To take a wanton dissolute boy  
 For a man and leader of men.

## V.

Ah God, for a man with heart, head,  
 hand,  
 Like some of the simple great ones  
 gone  
 For ever and ever by,  
 One still strong man in a blatant land,  
 Whatever they call him, what care I,  
 Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat—one  
 Who can rule and dare not lie.

## VI.

And ah for a man to arise in me,  
 That the man I am may cease to be!

## XI.

## I.

O let the solid ground  
 Not fail beneath my feet  
 Before my life has found

What some have found so sweet ;  
Then let come what come may,  
What matter if I go mad,  
I shall have had my day.

## II.

Let the sweet heavens endure,  
Not close and darken above me  
Before I am quite quite sure  
That there is one to love me ;  
Then let come what come may  
To a life that has been so sad,  
I shall have had my day.

## XII.

## I.

Birds in the high Hall-garden  
When twilight was falling,  
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,  
They were crying and calling.

## II.

Where was Maud ? in our wood ;  
And I, who else, was with her,  
Gathering woodland lilies,  
Myriads blow together.

## III.

Birds in our wood sang  
Ringing thro' the valleys,  
Maud is here, here, here  
In among the lilies.

## IV.

I kiss'd her slender hand,  
She took the kiss sedately ;  
Maud is not seventeen,  
But she is tall and stately.

## V.

I to cry out on pride  
Who have won her favor !  
O Maud were sure of Heaven  
If lowliness could save her.

## VI.

I know the way she went  
Home with her maiden posy,

For her feet have touch'd the meadows  
And left the daisies rosy.

## VII.

Birds in the high Hall-garden  
Were crying and calling to her,  
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud ?  
One is come to woo her.

## VIII.

Look, a horse at the door,  
And little King Charley snarling,  
Go back, my lord, across the moor,  
You are not her darling.

## XIII.

## I.

Scorn'd, to be scorn'd by one that I  
scorn,  
Is that a matter to make me fret ?  
That a calamity hard to be borne ?  
Well, he may live to hate me yet.  
Fool that I am to be vex't with his  
pride !  
I past him, I was crossing his lands ;  
He stood on the path a little aside ;  
His face, as I grant, in spite of spite,  
Has a broad-blown comeliness, red  
and white,  
And six feet two, as I think, he  
stands ;  
But his essences turn'd the live air  
sick,  
And barbarous opulence jewel-thick  
Sunn'd itself on his breast and his  
hands.

## II.

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,  
I long'd so heartily then and there  
To give him the grasp of fellowship ;  
But while I past he was humming an  
air,  
Stopt, and then with a riding whip  
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,  
And curving a contumelious lip,  
Gorgonized me from head to foot  
With a stony British stare.

## III.

Why sits he here in his father's chair?  
That old man never comes to his  
place:

Shall I believe him ashamed to be  
seen?

For only once, in the village street,  
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his  
face,

A gray old wolf and a lean.

Scarcely, now, would I call him a  
cheat;

For then, perhaps, as a child of de-  
ceit,

She might by a true descent be un-  
true;

And Maud is as true as Maud is  
sweet:

Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due  
To the sweeter blood by the other  
side;

Her mother has been a thing com-  
plete,

However she came to be so allied.

And fair without, faithful within,

Maud to him is nothing akin:

Some peculiar mystic grace  
Made her only the child of her  
mother,

And heap'd the whole inherited sin  
On that huge scapegoat of the race,  
All, all upon the brother.

## IV.

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be!  
Has not his sister smiled on me?

## XIV.

## I.

Maud has a garden of roses  
And lilies fair on a lawn;  
There she walks in her state  
And tends upon bed and bower,  
And thither I climb'd at dawn  
And stood by her garden-gate;  
A lion ramps at the top,  
He is clapt by a passion-flower.

## II.

Maud's own little oak-room  
(Which Maud, like a precious stone

Set in the heart of the carven gloom,  
Lights with herself, when alone  
She sits by her music and books  
And her brother lingers late  
With a roystering company) looks  
Upon Maud's own garden-gate:  
And I thought as I stood, if a hand,  
as white

As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid  
On the hasp of the window, and my  
Delight

Had a sudden desire, like a glorious  
ghost, to glide,

Like a beam of the seventh Heaven,  
down to my side,

There were but a step to be made.

## III.

The fancy flatter'd my mind,  
And again seem'd overbold;  
Now I thought that she cared for me,  
Now I thought she was kind  
Only because she was cold.

## IV.

I heard no sound where I stood  
But the rivulet on from the lawn  
Running down to my own dark wood;  
Or the voice of the long sea-wave as  
it swell'd

Now and then in the dim-gray dawn;  
But I look'd, and round, all round the  
house I beheld

The death-white curtain drawn;  
Felt a horror over me creep,  
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,  
Knew that the death-white curtain  
meant but sleep,

Yet I shudder'd and thought like a  
fool of the sleep of death.

## XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,  
And I make myself such evil  
cheer,

That if I be dear to some one else,  
Then some one else may have much  
to fear;

But if I be dear to some one else,  
Then I should be to myself more  
dear.

Shall I not take care of all that I  
think,  
Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,  
If I be dear,  
If I be dear to some one else.

## XVI.

## I.

This lump of earth has left his estate  
The lighter by the loss of his weight ;  
And so that he find what he went to  
seek,  
And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and  
drown  
His heart in the gross mud-honey of  
town,  
He may stay for a year who has gone  
for a week :  
But this is the day when I must  
speak,  
And I see my Oread coming down,  
O this is the day !  
O beautiful creature, what am I  
That I dare to look her way ;  
Think I may hold dominion sweet,  
Lord of the pulse that is lord of her  
breast,  
And dream of her beauty with tender  
dread,  
From the delicate Arab arch of her  
feet  
To the grace that, bright and light as  
the crest  
Of a peacock, sits on her shining  
head,  
And she knows it not : O, if she knew  
it,  
To know her beauty might half undo  
it.  
I know it the one bright thing to save  
My yet young life in the wilds of  
Time,  
Perhaps from madness, perhaps from  
crime,  
Perhaps from a selfish grave.

## II.

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool  
lord,  
Dare I bid her abide by her word ?  
Should I love her so well if she

Had given her word to a thing so  
low ?  
Shall I love her well if she  
Can break her word were it even for  
me ?  
I trust that it is not so.

## III.

Catch not my breath, O clamorous  
heart,  
Let not my tongue be a thrall to my  
eye,  
For I must tell her before we part,  
I must tell her, or die.

## XVII.

Go not, happy day,  
From the shaming fields,  
Go not, happy day,  
Till the maiden yields.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth  
When the happy Yes  
Falters from her lips,  
Pass and blush the news  
Over glowing ships ;  
Over blowing seas,  
Over seas at rest,  
Pass the happy news,  
Blush it thro' the West ;  
Till the red man dance  
By his red cedar-tree,  
And the red man's babe  
Leap, beyond the sea.  
Blush from West to East.  
Blush from East to West,  
Till the West is East.  
Blush it thro' the West.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth.

## XVIII.

## I.

I have led her home, my love, my  
only friend.  
There is none like her, none.

And never yet so warmly ran my  
blood  
And sweetly, on and on  
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for  
end,  
Full to the banks, close on the prom-  
ised good.

## II.

None like her, none.  
Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pat-  
tering talk  
Seem'd her light foot along the gar-  
den walk,  
And shook my heart to think she  
comes once more;  
But even then I heard her close the  
door,  
The gates of Heaven are closed, and  
she is gone.

## III.

There is none like her, none.  
Nor will be when our summers have  
deceased.  
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon  
In the long breeze that streams to thy  
delicious East,  
Sighing for Lebanon,  
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here  
increased,  
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,  
And looking to the South, and fed  
With honey'd rain and delicate air,  
And haunted by the starry head  
Of her whose gentle will has changed  
my fate,  
And made my life a perfumed altar-  
flame;  
And over whom thy darkness must  
have spread  
With such delight as theirs of old, thy  
great  
Forefathers of the thornless garden,  
there  
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from  
whom she came.

## IV.

Here will I lie, while these long  
branches sway,

And you fair stars that crown a  
happy day  
Go in and out as if at merry play,  
Who am no more so all forlorn,  
As when it seem'd far better to be  
born  
To labor and the mattock-harden'd  
hand,  
Than nursed at ease and brought to  
understand  
A sad astrology, the boundless plan  
That makes you tyrants in your iron  
skies,  
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,  
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and  
brand  
His nothingness into man.

## V.

But now shine on, and what care I,  
Who in this stormy gulf have found a  
pearl  
The countercharm of space and hol-  
low sky,  
And do accept my madness, and  
would die  
To save from some slight shame one  
simple girl.

## VI.

Would die; for sullen-seeming Death  
may give  
More life to Love than is or ever was  
In our low world, where yet 'tis sweet  
to live.  
Let no one ask me how it came to  
pass;  
It seems that I am happy, that to me  
A livelier emerald twinkles in the  
grass,  
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

## VII.

Not die; but live a life of truest  
breath,  
And teach true life to fight with mor-  
tal wrongs.  
O, why should Love, like men in  
drinking-songs,  
Spice his fair banquet with the dust  
of death?

Make answer, Maud my bliss,  
 Maud made my Maud by that long  
     loving kiss,  
 Life of my life, wilt thou not answer  
     this?  
 'The dusky strand of Death inwoven  
     here  
 With dear Love's tie, makes Love  
     himself more dear.'

## VIII.

Is that enchanted moan only the  
     swell  
 Of the long waves that roll in yonder  
     bay?  
 And hark the clock within, the silver  
     knell  
 Of twelve sweet hours that past in  
     bridal white,  
 And died to live, long as my pulses  
     play;  
 But now by this my love has closed  
     her sight  
 And given false death her hand, and  
     stol'n away  
 To dreamful wastes where footless  
     fancies dwell  
 Among the fragments of the golden  
     day.  
 May nothing there her maiden grace  
     affright!  
 Dear heart, I feel with thee the  
     drowsy spell.  
 My bride to be, my evermore de-  
     light,  
 My own heart's heart, my ownest  
     own, farewell;  
 It is but for a little space I go:  
 And ye meanwhile far over moor and  
     fell  
 Beat to the noiseless music of the  
     night!  
 Has our whole earth gone nearer to  
     the glow  
 Of your soft splendors that you look  
     so bright?  
 I have climb'd nearer out of lonely  
     Hell.  
 Beat, happy stars, timing with things  
     below,  
 Beat with my heart more blest than  
     heart can tell,

Blest, but for some dark undercurrent  
     woe  
 That seems to draw—but it shall not  
     be so:  
 Let all be well, be well.

## XIX.

## I.

Her brother is coming back to-night,  
 Breaking up my dream of delight.

## II.

My dream? do I dream of bliss?  
 I have walk'd awake with Truth.  
 O when did a morning shine  
 So rich in atonement as this  
 For my dark-dawning youth,  
 Darken'd watching a mother decline  
 And that dead man at her heart and  
     mine:  
 For who was left to watch her but I?  
 Yet so did I let my freshness die.

## III.

I trust that I did not talk  
 To gentle Maud in our walk  
 (For often in lonely wanderings  
 I have cursed him even to lifeless  
     things)  
 But I trust that I did not talk,  
 Not touch on her father's sin:  
 I am sure I did but speak  
 Of my mother's faded cheek  
 When it slowly grew so thin,  
 That I felt she was slowly dying  
 Vext with lawyers and harass'd with  
     debt:  
 For how often I caught her with eyes  
     all wet,  
 Shaking her head at her son and sigh-  
     ing  
 A world of trouble within!

## IV.

And Maud too, Maud was moved  
 To speak of the mother she loved  
 As one scarce less forlorn,  
 Dying abroad and it seems apart  
 From him who had ceased to share  
     her heart,



And ever mourning over the feud,  
The household Fury sprinkled with  
blood

By which our houses are torn :  
How strange was what she said,  
When only Maud and the brother  
Hung over her dying bed—  
That Maud's dark father and mine  
Had bound us one to the other,  
Betrothed us over their wine,  
On the day when Maud was born ;  
Seal'd her mine from her first sweet  
breath.  
Mine, mine by a right, from birth till  
death.  
Mine, mine—our fathers have sworn.

## v.

But the true blood spilt had in it a  
heat  
To dissolve the precious seal on a  
bond,  
That, if left uncancell'd, had been ' so  
sweet :  
And none of us thought of a some-  
thing beyond,  
A desire that awoke in the heart of  
the child,  
As it were a duty done to the tomb,  
To be friends for her sake, to be  
reconciled ;  
And I was cursing them and my doom,  
And letting a dangerous thought run  
wild  
While often abroad in the fragrant  
gloom  
Of foreign churches—I see her there,  
Bright English lily, breathing a prayer  
To be friends, to be reconciled !

## vi.

But then what a flint is he !  
Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,  
I find whenever she touch'd on me  
This brother had laugh'd her down,  
And at last, when each came home,  
He had darken'd into a frown,  
Chid her, and forbid her to speak  
To me, her friend of the years before ;  
And this was what had redden'd her  
cheek  
When I bow'd to her on the moor.

## vii.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind  
To the faults of his heart and mind,  
I see she cannot but love him,  
And says he is rough but kind,  
And wishes me to approve him,  
And tells me, when she lay  
Sick once, with a fear of worse,  
That he left his wine and horses and  
play.  
Sat with her, read to her, night and  
day,  
And tended her like a nurse.

## viii.

Kind ? but the deathbed desire  
Spurr'd by this heir of the liar—  
Rough but kind ? yet I know  
He has plotted against me in this,  
That he plots against me still.  
Kind to Maud ? that were not amiss.  
Well, rough but kind ; why let it be  
so :  
For shall not Maud have her will ?

## ix.

For, Maud, so tender and true,  
As long as my life endures  
I feel I shall owe you a debt,  
That I never can hope to pay ;  
And if ever I should forget  
That I owe this debt to you  
And for your sweet sake to yours ;  
O then, what then shall I say ?—  
If ever I *should* forget,  
May God make me more wretched  
Than ever I have been yet !

## x.

So now I have sworn to bury  
All this dead body of hate,  
I feel so free and so clear  
By the loss of that dead weight,  
That I should grow light-headed, I  
fear,  
Fantastically merry ;  
But that her brother comes, like a  
blight  
On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-  
night.

## XX.

## I.

Strange, that I felt so gay,  
 Strange, that I tried to-day  
 To beguile her melancholy;  
 The Sultan, as we name him,—  
 She did not wish to blame him—  
 But he vext her and perplext her  
 With his worldly talk and folly:  
 Was it gentle to reprove her  
 For stealing out of view  
 From a little lazy lover  
 Who but claims her as his due?  
 Or for chilling his caresses  
 By the coldness of her manners,  
 Nay, the plainness of her dresses?  
 Now I know her but in two,  
 Nor can pronounce upon it  
 If one should ask me whether  
 The habit, hat, and feather,  
 Or the frock and gipsy bonnet  
 Be the neater and completer;  
 For nothing can be sweeter  
 Than maiden Maud in either.

## II.

But to-morrow, if we live,  
 Our ponderous squire will give  
 A grand political dinner  
 To half the squirelings near;  
 And Maud will wear her jewels,  
 And the bird of prey will hover,  
 And the titmouse hope to win her  
 With his chirrup at her ear.

## III.

A grand political dinner  
 To the men of many acres,  
 A gathering of the Tory,  
 A dinner and then a dance  
 For the maids and marriage-makers,  
 And every eye but mine will glance  
 At Maud in all her glory.

## IV.

For I am not invited,  
 But, with the Sultan's pardon,  
 I am all as well delighted,  
 For I know her own rose-garden,  
 And mean to linger in it

Till the dancing will be over;  
 And then, oh then, come out to me  
 For a minute, but for a minute,  
 Come out to your own true lover,  
 That your true lover may see  
 Your glory also, and render  
 All homage to his own darling,  
 Queen Maud in all her splendor.

## XXI.

Rivulet crossing my ground,  
 And bringing me down from the Hall  
 This garden-rose that I found,  
 Forgetful of Maud and me,  
 And lost in trouble and moving round  
 Here at the head of a tinkling fall,  
 And trying to pass to the sea;  
 O Rivulet, born at the Hall,  
 My Maud has sent it by thee  
 (If I read her sweet will right)  
 On a blushing mission to me,  
 Saying in odor and color, 'Ah, be  
 Among the roses to-night.'

## XXII.

## I.

Come into the garden, Maud,  
 For the black bat, night, has flown,  
 Come into the garden, Maud,  
 I am here at the gate alone;  
 And the woodbine spices are wafted  
 abroad,  
 And the musk of the rose is blown.

## II.

For a breeze of morning moves,  
 And the planet of Love is on high,  
 Beginning to faint in the light that  
 she loves  
 On a bed of daffodil sky,  
 To faint in the light of the sun she  
 loves,  
 To faint in his light, and to die.

## III.

All night have the roses heard  
 'The flute, violin, bassoon;  
 All night has the casement jessamine  
 stirr'd  
 To the dancers dancing in tune;

Till a silence fell with the waking  
bird,  
And a hush with the setting moon.

## IV.

I said to the lily, 'There is but one  
With whom she has heart to be gay.  
When will the dancers leave her  
alone?

She is weary of dance and play.'  
Now half to the setting moon are  
gone,  
And half to the rising day;  
Low on the sand and loud on the  
stone  
The last wheel echoes away.

## V.

I said to the rose, 'The brief night  
goes  
In babble and revel and wine.  
O young lord-lover, what sighs are  
those.  
For one that will never be thine?  
But mine, but mine,' so I sware to the  
rose,  
'For ever and ever, mine.'

## VI.

And the soul of the rose went into my  
blood,  
As the music clash'd in the hall,  
And long by the garden lake I stood,  
For I heard your rivulet fall  
From the lake to the meadow and on  
to the wood,  
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

## VII.

From the meadow your walks have  
left so sweet  
That whenever a March-wind sighs  
He sets the jewel-print of your feet  
In violets blue as your eyes,  
To the woody hollows in which we  
meet  
And the valleys of Paradise.

## VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake

One long milk-bloom on the tree;  
The white lake-blossom fell into the  
lake

As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;  
But the rose was awake all night for  
your sake,  
Knowing your promise to me;  
The lilies and roses were all awake,  
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

## IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of  
girls,  
Come hither, the dances are done,  
In gloss of satin and glimmer of  
pearls,  
Queen lily and rose in one;  
Shine out, little head, sunning over  
with curls,  
To the flowers, and be their sun.

## X.

There has fallen a splendid tear  
From the passion-flower at the gate.  
She is coming, my dove, my dear;  
She is coming, my life, my fate;  
The red rose cries, 'She is near, she  
is near';  
And the white rose weeps, 'She is  
late';  
The larkspur listens, 'I hear, I hear';  
And the lily whispers, 'I wait.'

## XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet;  
Were it ever so airy a tread.  
My heart would hear her and beat.  
Were it earth in an earthy bed;  
My dust would hear her and beat,  
Had I lain for a century dead;  
Would start and tremble under her  
feet,  
And blossom in purple and red.

## PART II.

## I.

## I.

'THE fault was mine, the fault was  
mine'—

Why am I sitting here so stunn'd and still,

Plucking the harmless wild-flower on the hill?—

It is this guilty hand!—

And there rises ever a passionate cry  
From underneath in the darkening land—

What is it, that has been done?

O dawn of Eden bright over earth and sky,

The fires of Hell brake out of thy rising sun,

The fires of Hell and of Hate;

For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken a word,

When her brother ran in his rage to the gate,

He came with the babe-faced lord;

Heap'd on her terms of disgrace,

And while she wept, and I strove to be cool,

He fiercely gave me the lie,

Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,  
And he struck me, madman, over the face,

Struck me before the languid fool,

Who was gaping and grinning by:

Struck for himself an evil stroke;  
Wrought for his house an irredeemable woe;

For front to front in an hour we stood,

And a million horrible bellowing echoes broke

From the red-ribb'd hollow behind the wood,

And thunder'd up into Heaven the Christless code,

That must have life for a blow.

Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to grow.

Was it he lay there with a fading eye?

'The fault was mine,' he whisper'd,  
'fly!'

Then glided out of the joyous wood

The ghastly Wraith of one that I know;

And there rang on a sudden a passionate cry,

A cry for a brother's blood:

It will ring in my heart and my ears,  
till I die, till I die.

## ii.

Is it gone? my pulses beat—

What was it? a lying trick of the brain?

Yet I thought I saw her stand,

A shadow there at my feet,  
High over the shadowy land.

It is gone; and the heavens fall in a gentle rain,

When they should burst and drown  
with deluging storms

The feeble vassals of wine and anger  
and lust,

The little hearts that know not how to forgive:

Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold  
Thee just,

Strike dead the whole weak race of  
venomous worms,

That sting each other here in the  
dust;

We are not worthy to live.

## ii.

## i.

See what a lovely shell,

Small and pure as a pearl,

Lying close to my foot,

Frail, but a work divine,

Made so fairly well

With delicate spire and whorl,

How exquisitely minute,

A miracle of design!

## ii.

What is it? a learned man

Could give it a clumsy name.

Let him name it who can,

The beauty would be the same.

## iii.

The tiny cell is forlorn,

Void of the little living will

That made it stir on the shore.

Did he stand at the diamond door

Of his house in a rainbow frill?

Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,

A golden foot or a fairy horn

Thro' his dim water-world?

## IV.

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap  
Of my finger-nail on the sand,  
Small, but a work divine,  
Frail, but of force to withstand,  
Year upon year, the shock  
Of cataract seas that snap  
The three-decker's oaken spine  
Athwart the ledges of rock,  
Here on the Breton strand!

## V.

Breton, not Briton; here  
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast  
Of ancient fable and fear—  
Plagued with a flitting to and fro,  
A disease, a hard mechanic ghost  
That never came from on high  
Nor ever arose from below,  
But only moves with the moving eye,  
Flying along the land and the main—  
Why should it look like Maud?  
Am I to be overawed  
By what I cannot but know  
Is a juggle born of the brain?

## VI.

Back from the Breton coast,  
Sick of a nameless fear,  
Back to the dark sea-line  
Looking, thinking of all I have lost;  
An old song vexes my ear;  
But that of Lamech is mine.

## VII.

For years, a measureless ill,  
For years, for ever, to part—  
But she, she would love me still;  
And as long, O God, as she  
Have a grain of love for me,  
So long, no doubt, no doubt,  
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,  
However weary, a spark of will  
Not to be trampled out.

## VIII.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught  
With a passion so intense  
One would think that it well  
Might drown all life in the eye,—

That it should, by being so over-  
wrought,  
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense  
For a shell, or a flower, little things  
Which else would have been past by!  
And now I remember, I,  
When he lay dying there,  
I noticed one of his many rings  
(For he had many, poor worm) and  
thought  
It is his mother's hair.

## IX.

Who knows if he be dead?  
Whether I need have fled?  
Am I guilty of blood?  
However this may be,  
Comfort her, comfort her, all things  
good,  
While I am over the sea!  
Let me and my passionate love go  
by,  
But speak to her all things holy and  
high,  
Whatever happen to me!  
Me and my harmful love go by;  
But come to her waking, and her  
asleep,  
Powers of the height, Powers of the  
deep,  
And comfort her tho' I die.

## III.

Courage, poor heart of stone!  
I will not ask thee why  
Thou canst not understand  
That thou art left for ever alone:  
Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—  
Or if I ask thee why,  
Care not thou to reply:  
She is but dead, and the time is at  
hand  
When thou shalt more than die.

## IV.

## I.

O that 'twere possible  
After long grief and pain  
To find the arms of my true love  
Round me once again!

## II.

When I was wont to meet her  
In the silent woody places  
By the home that gave me birth,  
We stood tranced in long embraces  
Mixt with kisses sweeter sweeter  
Than anything on earth.

## III.

A shadow flits before me,  
Not thou, but like to thee:  
Ah Christ, that it were possible  
For one short hour to see  
The souls we loved, that they might  
tell us  
What and where they be.

## IV.

It leads me forth at evening,  
It lightly winds and steals  
In a cold white robe before me,  
When all my spirit reels  
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,  
And the roaring of the wheels.

## V.

Half the night I waste in sighs,  
Half in dreams I sorrow after  
The delight of early skies;  
In a wakeful doze I sorrow  
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,  
For the meeting of the morrow,  
The delight of happy laughter,  
The delight of low replies.

## VI.

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,  
And a dewy splendor falls  
On the little flower that clings  
To the turrets and the walls;  
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,  
And the light and shadow fleet;  
She is walking in the meadow,  
And the woodland echo rings;  
In a moment we shall meet;  
She is singing in the meadow  
And the rivulet at her feet  
Ripples on in light and shadow  
To the ballad that she sings.

## VII.

Do I hear her sing as of old,  
My bird with the shining head,  
My own dove with the tender eye?  
But there rings on a sudden passion-  
ate cry,

There is some one dying or dead,  
And a sullen thunder is roll'd;  
For a tumult shakes the city,  
And I wake, my dream is fled;  
In the shuddering dawn, behold,  
Without knowledge, without pity,  
By the curtains of my bed  
That abiding phantom cold.

## VIII.

Get thee hence, nor come again,  
Mix not memory with doubt,  
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,  
Pass and cease to move about!  
'Tis the blot upon the brain  
That *will* show itself without.

## IX.

Then I rise, the cavedrops fall,  
And the yellow vapors choke  
The great city sounding wide;  
The day comes, a dull red ball  
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke  
On the misty river-tide.

## X.

Thro' the hubbub of the market  
I steal, a wasted frame,  
It crosses here, it crosses there,  
Thro' all that crowd confused and  
loud,  
The shadow still the same;  
And on my heavy eyelids  
My anguish hangs like shame.

## XI.

Alas for her that met me,  
That heard me softly call,  
Came glimmering thro' the laurels  
At the quiet evenfall,  
In the garden by the turrets  
Of the old manorial hall.

## XII.

Would the happy spirit descend,  
From the realms of light and song,  
In the chamber or the street,  
As she looks among the blest,  
Should I fear to greet my friend  
Or to say 'Forgive the wrong,'  
Or to ask her, 'Take me, sweet,  
To the regions of thy rest'?

## XIII.

But the broad light glares and beats,  
And the shadow flits and fleets  
And will not let me be;  
And I loathe the squares and streets,  
And the faces that one meets,  
Hearts with no love for me:  
Always I long to creep  
Into some still cavern deep,  
There to weep, and weep, and weep  
My whole soul out to thee.

## V.

## I.

Dead, long dead,  
Long dead!  
And my heart is a handful of dust,  
And the wheels go over my head,  
And my bones are shaken with pain,  
For into a shallow grave they are  
thrust,  
Only a yard beneath the street,  
And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,  
The hoofs of the horses beat,  
Beat into my scalp and my brain,  
With never an end to the stream of  
passing feet,  
Driving, hurrying, marrying, burying  
Clamor and rumble, and ringing and  
clatter,  
And here beneath it is all as bad,  
For I thought the dead had peace,  
but it is not so;  
To have no peace in the grave, is that  
not sad?  
But up and down and to and fro,  
Ever about me the dead men go;  
And then to hear a dead man chatter  
Is enough to drive one mad.

## II.

Wretchedest age, since Time began,  
They cannot even bury a man;  
And tho' we paid our tithes in the  
days that are gone,  
Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was  
read;  
It is that which makes us loud in the  
world of the dead;  
There is none that does his work, not  
one;  
A touch of their office might have  
sufficed,  
But the churchmen fain would kill  
their church,  
As the churches have kill'd their  
Christ.

## III.

See, there is one of us sobbing,  
No limit to his distress;  
And another, a lord of all things, pray-  
ing  
To his own great self, as I guess;  
And another, a statesman there, be-  
traying  
His party-secret, fool, to the press;  
And yonder a vile physician, blabbing  
The case of his patient—all for what?  
To tickle the maggot born in an  
empty head,  
And wheedle a world that loves him  
not,  
For it is but a world of the dead.

## IV.

Nothing but idiot gabble!  
For the prophecy given of old  
And then not understood,  
Has come to pass as foretold;  
Not let any man think for the public  
good,  
But babble, merely for babble.  
For I never whisper'd a private affair  
Within the hearing of cat or mouse,  
No, not to myself in the closet alone,  
But I heard it shouted at once from  
the top of the house;  
Everything came to be known.  
Who told *him* we were there?

## v.

Not that gray old wolf, for he came  
not back  
From the wilderness, full of wolves,  
where he used to lie;  
He has gather'd the bones for his  
o'ergrown whelp to crack;  
Crack them now for yourself, and  
howl, and die.

## vi.

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,  
And curse me the British vermin, the  
rat;  
I know not whether he came in the  
Hanover ship,  
But I know that he lies and listens  
mute  
In an ancient mansion's crannies and  
holes:  
Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,  
Except that now we poison our babes,  
poor souls!  
It is all used up for that.

## vii.

Tell him now: she is standing here at  
my head;  
Not beautiful now, not even kind;  
He may take her now; for she never  
speaks her mind,  
But is ever the one thing silent here.  
She is not *of* us, as I divine;  
She comes from another stiller world  
of the dead,  
Stiller, not fairer than mine.

## viii.

But I know where a garden grows,  
Fairer than aught in the world be-  
side,  
All made up of the lily and rose  
That blow by night, when the season  
is good,  
To the sound of dancing music and  
flutes:  
It is only flowers, they had no fruits,

And I almost fear they are not roses,  
but blood;  
For the keeper was one, so full of  
pride,  
He linkt a dead man there to a spec-  
tral bride;  
For he, if he had not been a Sultan of  
brutes,  
Would he have that hole in his side?

## ix.

But what will the old man say?  
He laid a cruel snare in a pit  
To catch a friend of mine one stormy  
day;  
Yet now I could even weep to think  
of it;  
For what will the old man say  
When he comes to the second corpse  
in the pit?

## x.

Friend, to be struck by the public  
foe,  
Then to strike him and lay him low,  
That were a public merit, far,  
Whatever the Quaker holds, from  
sin;  
But the red life spilt for a private  
blow—  
I swear to you, lawful and lawless  
war  
Are scarcely even akin.

## xi.

O me, why have they not buried me  
deep enough?  
Is it kind to have made me a grave so  
rough,  
Me, that was never a quiet sleeper?  
Maybe still I am but half-dead;  
Then I cannot be wholly dumb;  
I will cry to the steps above my head  
And somebody, surely, some kind  
heart will come  
To bury me, bury me  
Deeper, ever so little deeper.



## PART III.

## VI.

## I.

My life has crept so long on a broken wing  
Thro' cells of madness, haunts of horror and fear,  
That I come to be grateful at last for a little thing :  
My mood is changed, for it fell at a time of year  
When the face of night is fair on the dewy downs,  
And the shining daffodil dies, and the Charioteer  
And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns  
Over Orion's grave low down in the west,  
That like a silent lightning under the stars  
She seem'd to divide in a dream from a band of the blest,  
And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars—  
' And in that hope, dear soul, let trouble have rest,  
Knowing I tarry for thee,' and pointed to Mars  
As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast.

## II.

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded a dear delight  
To have look'd, tho' but in a dream, upon eyes so fair,  
That had been in a weary world my one thing bright ;  
And it was but a dream, yet it lighten'd my despair  
When I thought that a war would arise in defence of the right,  
That an iron tyranny now should bend or cease,  
The glory of manhood stand on his ancient height,  
Nor Britain's one sole God be the millionaire :  
No more shall commerce be all in all, and Peace  
Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid note,  
And watch her harvest ripen, her herd increase,  
Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a slothful shore,  
And the cobweb woven across the cannon's throat  
Shall shake its threaded tears in the wind no more.

## III.

And as months ran on and rumor of battle grew,  
' It is time, it is time, O passionate heart,' said I  
(For I cleaved to a cause that I felt to be pure and true),  
' It is time, O passionate heart and morbid eye,  
That old hysterical mock-disease should die.'  
And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd my breath  
With a loyal people shouting a battle cry,  
Till I saw the dreary phantom arise and fly  
Far into the North, and battle, and seas of death.

## IV.

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the higher aims  
Of a land that has lost for a little her lust of gold,

And love of a peace that was full of wrongs and shames,  
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be told ;  
And hail once more to the banner of battle unroll'd !  
Tho' many a light shall darken, and many shall weep  
For those that are crush'd in the clash of jarring claims,  
Vet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd on a giant liar ;  
And many a darkness into the light shall leap,  
And shine in the sudden making of splendid names,  
And noble thought be freer under the sun,  
And the heart of a people beat with one desire ;  
For the peace, that I deem'd no peace, is over and done,  
And now by the side of the Black and the Baltic deep,  
And deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress, flames  
The blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.

## v.

Let it flame or fade, and the war roll down like a wind.  
We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are noble still,  
And myself have awaked, as it seems, to the better mind ;  
It is better to fight for the good than to rail at the ill ;  
I have felt with my native land, I am one with my kind,  
I embrace the purpose of God, and the doom assign'd.

## THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

## I.

'WAIT a little,' you say, 'you are sure  
it 'll all come right,'  
But the boy was born i' trouble, an'  
looks so wan an' so white :  
Wait ! an' once I ha' waited—I hadn't  
to wait for long.  
Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry.—  
No, no, you are doing me wrong !  
Harry and I were married : the boy  
can hold up his head,  
The boy was born in wedlock, but  
after my man was dead ;  
I ha' work'd for him fifteen years, an'  
I work an' I wait to the end.  
I am all alone in the world, an' you  
are my only friend.

## II.

Doctor, if *you* can wait, I'll tell you  
the tale o' my life.

When Harry an' I were children, he  
call'd me his own little wife ;  
I was happy when I was with him, an'  
sorry when he was away,  
An' when we play'd together, I loved  
him better than play ;  
He workt me the daisy chain—he  
made me the cowslip ball,  
He fought the boys that were rude, an'  
I loved him better than all.  
Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at  
home in disgrace.  
I never could quarrel with Harry—I  
had but to look in his face.

## III.

There was a farmer in Dorset of  
Harry's kin, that had need  
Of a good stout lad at his farm ; he  
sent, an' the father agreed ;  
So Harry was bound to the Dorset-  
shire farm for years an' for  
years ;  
I walked with him down to the quay,  
poor lad, an' we parted in  
tears.

The boat was beginning to move, we  
heard them a-ringing the bell,  
'I'll never love any but you, God bless  
you, my own little Nell.'

## IV.

I was a child, an' he was a child, an'  
he came to harm;  
There was a girl, a hussy, that workt  
with him up at the farm,  
One had deceived her an' left her  
alone with her sin an' her shame,  
And so she was wicked with Harry;  
the girl was the most to blame.

## V.

And years went over till I that was  
little had grown so tall,  
The men would say of the maids, 'Our  
Nelly's the flower of 'em all.'  
I didn't take heed o' *them*, but I taught  
myself all I could  
To make a good wife for Harry, when  
Harry came home for good.

## VI.

Often I seem'd unhappy, and often as  
happy too,  
For I heard it abroad in the fields 'I'll  
never love any but you';  
'I'll never love any but you' the  
morning song of the lark,  
'I'll never love any but you' the night-  
ingale's hymn in the dark.

## VII.

And Harry came home at last, but he  
look'd at me sidelong and shy,  
Vext me a bit, till he told me that so  
many years had gone by,  
I had grown so handsome and tall—  
that I might ha' forgot him  
somehow—  
For he thought—there were other lads  
—he was fear'd to look at me  
now.

## VIII.

Hard was the frost in the field, we  
were married o' Christmas day,

Married among the red berries, an' all  
as merry as May—  
Those were the pleasant times, my  
house an' my man were my  
pride,  
We seem'd like ships i' the Channel  
a-sailing with wind an' tide.

## IX.

But work was scant in the Isle, tho'  
he tried the villages round,  
So Harry went over the Solent to see  
if work could be found;  
An' he wrote 'I ha' six weeks' work,  
little wife, so far as I know;  
I'll come for an hour to-morrow, an'  
kiss you before I go.'

## X.

So I set to righting the house, for  
wasn't he coming that day?  
An' I hit on an old deal-box that was  
push'd in a corner away,  
It was full of old odds an' ends, an' a  
letter along wi' the rest,  
I had better ha' put my naked hand  
in a hornets' nest.

## XI.

'Sweetheart'—this was the letter—  
this was the letter I read—  
'You promised to find me work near  
you, an' I wish I was dead—  
Didn't you kiss me an' promise? you  
haven't done it my lad,  
An' I almost died o' your going away,  
an' I wish that I had.'

## XII.

I too wish that I had—in the pleasant  
times that had past.  
Before I quarrel'd with Harry—*my*  
quarrel—the first an' the last.

## XIII.

For Harry came in, an' I flung him  
the letter that drove me wild,  
An' he told it me all at once, as sim-  
ple as any child,

‘What can it matter, my lass, what I  
did wi’ my single life?  
I ha’ been as true to you as ever a  
man to his wife;  
An’ *she* wasn’t one o’ the worst.  
‘Then,’ I said, ‘I’m none o’ the  
best.’  
An’ he smiled at me, ‘Ain’t you, my  
love? Come, come, little wife,  
let it rest!  
The man isn’t like the woman, no  
need to make such a stir.’  
But he anger’d me all the more, an’ I  
said ‘You were keeping with  
her,  
When I was a-loving you all along an’  
the same as before.’  
An’ he didn’t speak for a while, an’ he  
anger’d me more and more.  
Then he patted my hand in his gentle  
way, ‘Let bygones be!’  
‘Bygones! you kept yours hush’d,’ I  
said, ‘when you married me!  
By-gones ma’ be come-agains; an’ *she*  
—in her shame an’ her sin—  
You’ll have her to nurse my child, if I  
die o’ my lying in!  
You’ll make her its second mother!  
I hate her—an’ I hate you!’  
Ah, Harry, my man, you had better  
ha’ beaten me black an’  
blue  
Than ha’ spoken as kind as you did,  
when I were so crazy wi’  
spite,  
‘Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it’ll  
all come right.’

## XIV.

An’ he took three turns in the rain,  
an’ I watch’d him, an’ when he  
came in  
I felt that my heart was hard, he was  
all wet thro’ to the skin,  
An’ I never said ‘off wi’ the wet,’ I  
never said ‘on wi’ the dry,’  
So I knew my heart was hard, when  
he came to bid me goodbye.  
‘You said that you hated me, Ellen,  
but that isn’t true, you know;  
I am going to leave you a bit—you’ll  
kiss me before I go?’

## XV

‘Going! you’re going to her—kiss her  
—if you will,’ I said—  
I was near my time wi’ the boy, I  
must ha’ been light i’ my  
head—  
‘I had sooner be cursed than kiss’d!’  
—I didn’t know well what I  
meant,  
But I turn’d my face from *him*, an’ he  
turn’d *his* face an’ he went.

## XVI.

And then he sent me a letter, ‘I’ve  
gotten my work to do;  
You wouldn’t kiss me, my lass, an’ I  
never loved any but you;  
I am sorry for all the quarrel an’ sorry  
for what she wrote,  
I ha’ six weeks’ work in Jersey an’ go  
to-night by the boat.’

## XVII.

An’ the wind began to rise, an’ I  
thought of him out at sea,  
An’ I felt I had been to blame; he  
was always kind to me.  
‘Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it’ll  
all come right’—  
An’ the boat went down that night—  
the boat went down that night.

## RIZPAH.

17—.

## I.

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind  
over land and sea—  
And Willy’s voice in the wind, ‘O  
mother, come out to me.’  
Why should he call me to-night, when  
he knows that I cannot go?  
For the downs are as bright as day,  
and the full moon stares at the  
snow.

## II.

We should be seen, my dear; they  
would spy us out of the town.

The loud black nights for us, and the storm rushing over the down,  
When I cannot see my own hand, but am led by the creak of the chain,  
And grovel and grope for my son till I find myself drenched with the rain.

## III.

Anything fallen again? nay—what was there left to fall?  
I have taken them home, I have number'd the bones, I have hidden them all.  
What am I saying? and what are you? do you come as a spy?  
Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree falls so must it lie.

## IV.

Who let her in? how long has she been? you—what have you heard?  
Why did you sit so quiet? you never have spoken a word.  
O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none of their spies—  
But the night has crept into my heart, and begun to darken my eyes.

## V.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what shor' I you know of the night,  
The blast and the burning shame and the bitter frost and the fright?  
I have done it, while you were asleep—you were only made for the day.  
I have gather'd my baby together—and now you may go your way.

## VI.

Nay—for it's kind of you, Madam, to sit by an old dying wife.  
But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only an hour of life.  
I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he went out to die.  
'They dared me to do it,' he said, and he never has told me a lie.

I whipt him for robbing an orchard once when he was but a child—  
'The farmer dared me to do it,' he said; he was always so wild—  
And idle—and couldn't be idle—my Willy, he never could rest.  
The King should have made him a soldier, he would have been one of his best.

## VII.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and they never would let him be good;  
They swore that he dare not rob the mail, and he swore that he would;  
And he took no life, but he took one purse, and when all was done  
He flung it among his fellows—I'll none of it, said my son.

## VIII.

I came into court to the Judge and the lawyers. I told them my tale,  
God's own truth—but they kill'd him, they kill'd him for robbing the mail.  
They hang'd him in chains for a show—we had always borne a good name—  
To be hang'd for a thief—and then put away—isn't that enough shame?  
Dust to dust—low down—let us hide! but they set him so high  
That all the ships of the world could stare at him, passing by.  
God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and horrible fowls of the air,  
But not the black heart of the lawyer who kill'd him and hang'd him there.

## IX.

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid him my last goodbye;  
They had fasten'd the door of his cell.  
'O mother!' I heard him cry.

I couldn't get back tho' I tried, he  
had something further to say,  
And now I never shall know it. The  
jailer forced me away.

## x.

Then since I couldn't but hear that  
cry of my boy that was dead,  
They seized me and shut me up: they  
fasten'd me down on my bed.  
'Mother, O mother!'—he call'd in  
the dark to me year after  
year—  
They beat me for that, they beat me—  
you know that I couldn't but  
hear;  
And then at the last they found I had  
grown so stupid and still  
They let me abroad again—but the  
creatures had worked their will.

## xi.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone  
of my bone was left—  
I stole them all from the lawyers—and  
you, will you call it a theft?—  
My baby, the bones that had suck'd  
me, the bones that had laughed  
and had cried—  
Theirs? O no! they are mine—not  
theirs—they had moved in my  
side.

## xii.

Do you think I was scared by the  
bones? I kiss'd 'em, I buried  
'em all—  
I can't dig deep, I am old—in the  
night by the churchyard wall.  
My Willy 'll rise up whole when the  
trumpet of judgment 'll sound,  
But I charge you never to say that I  
laid him in holy ground.

## xiii.

They would scratch him up—they  
would hang him again on the  
cursed tree.  
Sin? O yes—we are sinners, I know  
—let all that be,

And read me a Bible verse of the  
Lord's good will toward men—  
'Full of compassion and mercy, the  
Lord'—let me hear it again;  
'Full of compassion and mercy—long-  
suffering.' Yes, O yes!  
For the lawyer is born but to murder  
—the Saviour lives but to  
bless.  
He'll never put on the black cap  
except for the worst of the  
worst,  
And the first may be last—I have  
heard it in church—and the last  
may be first.  
Suffering—O long-suffering—yes, as  
the Lord must know,  
Year after year in the mist and the  
wind and the shower and the  
snow.

## xiv.

Heard, have you? what? they have  
told you he never repented his  
sin.  
How do they know it? are *they* his  
mother? are *you* of his kin?  
Heard! have you ever heard, when  
the storm on the downs be-  
gan,  
The wind that 'll wail like a child  
and the sea that 'll moan like  
a man?

## xv.

Election, Election and Reprobation—  
it's all very well.  
But I go to-night to my boy, and I  
shall not find him in Hell.  
For I cared so much for my boy that  
the Lord has look'd into my  
care,  
And He means me I'm sure to be  
happy with Willy, I know not  
where.

## xvi.

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my*  
soul, that is all your desire:  
Do you think that I care for *my* soul  
if my boy be gone to the fire?



"UNCLASP'D THE WEDDED EAGLES OF HER BELT."—Page 84.





I have been with God in the dark—  
go, go, you may leave me  
alone—  
You never have borne a child—you  
are just as hard as a stone.

XVII.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think  
that you mean to be kind,  
But I cannot hear what you say for  
my Willy's voice in the wind—  
The snow and the sky so bright—he  
used but to call in the dark,  
And he calls to me now from the  
church and not from the gibbet  
—for hark!  
Nay—you can hear it yourself—it is  
coming—shaking the walls—  
Willy—the moon's in a cloud—  
Good-night. I am going. He  
calls.

THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

I.

WAÄIT till our Sally cooms in, fur  
thou mun a' sights<sup>1</sup> to tell.  
Eh, but I be maäin glad to seeä tha  
sa 'arty an' well.  
'Cast awaäy on a disolut land wi' a  
vartical soon<sup>2</sup>!'  
Strange fur to goä fur to think what  
säälors a' seëan an' a' doon;  
'Summat to drink—sa' 'ot?' I 'a  
nowt but Adam's wine:  
What's the 'eät o' this little 'ill-side to  
the 'eät o' the line?

<sup>1</sup> The vowels *ai*, pronounced separately though in the closest conjunction, best render the sound of the long *i* and *y* in this dialect. But since such words as *crallin' dain'*, *whai*, *ai* (II), etc., look awkward except in a page of express phonetics, I have thought it better to leave the simple *i* and *y*, and to trust that my readers will give them the broader pronunciation.

<sup>2</sup> The *ee* short, as in 'wood.'

II.

'What's i' tha bottle a-stanning  
theer?' I'll tell tha. Gin.  
But if thou wants thy grog, tha mun  
goä fur it down to the inn.  
Naay—fur I be maäin-glad, but thaw  
tha was iver sa dry,  
Thou gits naw gin fro' the bottle  
theer, an' I'll tell tha why.

III.

Mea an' thy sister was married, when  
wur it? back-end o' June,  
Ten year sin', and wa 'greed as well  
as a fiddle i' tune:  
I could fettle and clump owd booöts  
and shoes wi' the best on 'em  
all,  
As fer as fro' Thursby thurn hup to  
Harmsby and Hutterby Hall.  
We was busy as beëas i' the bloom  
an' as 'appy as 'art could think.  
An' then the babby wur burn, and  
then I taäkes to the drink.

IV.

An' I weänt gaäinsaäy it, my lad,  
thaw I be hafe shaämed on it  
now,  
We could sing a good song at the  
Plow, we could sing a good  
song at the Plow;  
Thaw once of a frosty night I slither'd  
an' hurted my huck,<sup>1</sup>  
An' I coom'd neck-an-crop soomtimes  
slaäpe down i' the squad an'  
the muck:  
An' once I fowt wi' the Taäilor—not  
hafe ov a man, my lad—  
Fur he scrawm'd an' scatted my  
faäce like a cat, an' it maäde  
'er sa mad  
That Sally she turn'd a tongue-  
banger,<sup>2</sup> an' raäted ma. 'Sot-  
tin' thy braäins  
Guzzlin' an' soäkin' an' smoäkin' an'  
hawmin'<sup>3</sup> about i' the laänes,  
Soä sow-dronk that tha does not  
touch thy 'at to the Squire;'

<sup>1</sup> Hip.

<sup>2</sup> Scold.

<sup>3</sup> Lounging.

An' I looök'd cock-eyed at my noäse  
 an' I seeäd 'im a-gittin' o' fire;  
 But sin' I wur hallus i' liquor an' hal-  
 lus as droonk as a king,  
 Foälks' coostom flitted awaäy like a  
 kite wi' a brokken string.

## v.

An' Sally she wesh'd foalks' cloäths  
 to keep the wolf fro' the door,  
 Eh but the moor she riled me, she  
 druv me to drink the moor,  
 Fur I fun', when 'er back wur turn'd,  
 wheer Sally's owd stockin' wur  
 'id,  
 An' I grabb'd the munny she maäde,  
 and I weär'd it o' liquor, I did.

## vi.

An' one night I cooms 'oäm like a  
 bull gotten loose at a faäir,  
 An' she wur a-waäitin' fo'mma, an'  
 cryin' and teäirin' 'er 'aäir,  
 An' I tumbled athurt the craädle an'  
 sweär'd as I'd breäk ivry stick  
 O' furnitur 'ere i' the 'ouse, an' I gied  
 our Sally a kick,  
 An' I mash'd the taäbles an' chairs,  
 an' she an' the babby beäl'd,<sup>1</sup>  
 Fur I knaw'd naw moor what I did  
 nor a mortal beäst o' the feäld.

## vii.

An' when I waäked i' the murnin' I  
 seeäd that our Sally went  
 läämed  
 Cos' o' the kick as I gied 'er, an' I  
 wur dreädful ashaämed;  
 An' Sally wur sloomy<sup>2</sup> an' draggle  
 taäl'd in an owd turn gown,  
 An' the babby's faäce wurn't wesh'd  
 an' the 'ole 'ouse hupside down

## viii.

An' then I minded our Sally sa pratty  
 an' neät an' sweeät,  
 Straät as a pole an' cleän as a flower  
 fro' 'eäd to feeät :

<sup>1</sup> Bellowed, cried out.

<sup>2</sup> Sluggish, out of spirits.

An' then I minded the fust kiss I gied  
 'er by Thursby thurn;  
 Theer wur a lark a-singin' 'is best of  
 a Sunday at murn,  
 Couldn't see 'im, we 'eärd 'im a-  
 mountin' oop 'igher an' 'igher,  
 An' then 'e turn'd to the sun, an' 'e  
 shined like a sparkle o' fire.  
 'Doesn't tha see 'im, she axes, 'fur I  
 can see 'im?' an' I  
 Seeäd nobbut the smile o' the sun as  
 danced in 'er pratty blue eye;  
 An' I says 'I mun gie tha a kiss,' an'  
 Sally says 'Noä, thou moänt,  
 But I gied 'er a kiss, an' then anoother,  
 an' Sally says 'doant!'

## ix.

An' when we coom'd into Meeätin', at  
 fust she wur all in a tew,  
 But, arter, we sing'd the 'ymn together  
 like birds on a beugh;  
 An' Muggins 'e preäch'd o' Hell-fire  
 an' the loov o' God fur men,  
 An' then upo' coomin' awaäy Sally  
 gied me a kiss ov 'ersen.

## x.

Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick  
 like Saätan as fell  
 Down out o' heaven i' Hell-fire—thaw  
 theer's naw drinkin' i' Hell;  
 Mea fur to kick our Sally as kep the  
 wolf fro' the door,  
 All along o' the drink, fur I loov'd 'er  
 as well as afoor.

## xi.

Sa like a greät num-cumpus I blub-  
 ber'd awaäy o' the bed—  
 'Weänt niver do it naw moor;' an'  
 Sally looökt up an' she said,  
 'I'll upwod it<sup>1</sup> tha weänt; thou'rt like  
 the rest o' the men,  
 Thou'll goä sniffin' about the tap till  
 tha does it agéan.  
 Theer's thy hennemy, man, an' I  
 knaws, as knaws tha sa well,  
 That, if tha seeäs 'im an' smells 'im  
 tha'll foller 'im slick into Hell.'

<sup>1</sup> I'll uphold it.

## XII.

'Naäy,' says I, 'fur I weänt goä sniffin'  
about the tap.  
'Weänt tha?' she says, an' mysen I  
thowt i' mysen 'mayhap.  
'Noä: 'an' I started awaäy like a shot,  
an' down to the Hinn,  
An' I browt what tha secäs stannin'  
theer, yon big black bottle o' gin.

## XIII.

'That caps owt,'<sup>1</sup> says Sally, an' saw  
she begins to cry,  
But I puts it inter 'er 'ands an' I says  
to 'er, 'Sally,' says I,  
'Stan' 'im theer i' the nääme o' the  
Lord an' the power ov 'is  
Graäce,  
Stan' 'im theer, fur I'll looök my hen-  
nemy straït i' the faäce,  
Stan' 'im theer i' the winder, an' let  
ma looök at 'im then,  
'E secäms naw moor nor watter, an'  
'e's the Divil's oän sen.'

## XIV.

An' I wur down i' tha mouth, couldn't  
do naw work an' all,  
Nasty an' snaggy an' shaäky, an'  
poonch'd my 'and wi' the hawl,  
But she wur a power o' coomfut, an'  
sattled 'ersen o' my knee,  
An' coäkd an' coodled me oop till  
ageän I feel'd mysen free.

## XV.

An' Sally she tell'd it about, an' foälk  
stood a-gawmin'<sup>2</sup> in,  
As thaw it wur summat bewitch'd  
instead of a quart o' gin;  
An' some on 'em said it wur watter—  
an' I wur chousin' the wife,  
Fur I couldn't 'owd 'ands off gin, wur  
it nobbut to sääve my life;  
An' blacksmith 'e strips me the thick  
ov 'is airm, an' 'e shaws it to me,  
'Feäl thou this! thou can't graw this  
upo' watter!' says he.

<sup>1</sup> That's beyond everything.

<sup>2</sup> Staring vacantly.

An' Doctor 'e calls o' Sunday an' just  
as candles was lit,  
'Thou moänt do it,' he says, 'tha mun  
breäk 'im off bit by bit.'  
'Thou'rt but a Methody-man,' says  
Parson, and laäys down 'is 'at,  
An' 'e points to the bottle o' gin, 'but  
I respects tha fur that';  
An' Squire, his oän very sen, walks  
down fro' the 'All to sec,  
An' 'e spansks 'is 'and into mine, 'fur I  
respects tha,' says 'e;  
An' coostom ageän draw'd in like a  
wind fro' far an' wide,  
And browt me the booöts to be cob-  
bled fro' hafe the countryside.

## XVI.

An' theer 'e stans an' theer 'e shall  
stan to my dying daäy;  
I 'a gotten to loov 'im ageän in an-  
oother kind of a waäy,  
Proud on 'im, like, my lad, an' I  
keeäps 'im cleän an' bright,  
Loovs 'im, an' roobs 'im, an' doosts  
'im, an' puts 'im back i' the light.

## XVII.

Wouldn't a pint a' sarved as well as a  
quart? Naw doubt:  
But I liked a bigger feller to fight wi'  
an' fowt it out.  
Fine an' meller 'e mun be by this, if I  
cared to taäste,  
But I moänt, my lad, and I weänt fur  
I'd feäl mysen cleän disgräaced.

## XVIII.

An' once I said to the Missis, 'My  
lass, when I cooms to die,  
Smash the bottle to smithers, the  
Divil's in 'im,' said I.  
But arter I chänged my mind, an' if  
Sally be left aloän,  
I'll hev 'im a-buried wi' mma an' taäke  
'im afoor the Throän.

## XIX.

Coom thou 'eer—yon laädy a-steppin'  
along the streeät,

Doesn't tha know 'er—sa pratty, an'  
feät, an' neät, an' sweet?  
Look at the cloaths on 'er back,  
thebbe ammost spick-span-new,  
An' Tommy's faice he as fresh as a  
codlin wesh'd i' the dew.

## xx.

'Ere be our Sally an' Tommy, an' we  
be a-going to dine,  
Baäcon an' taätes, an' a beslings-pud-  
din'<sup>1</sup> an' Adam's wine;  
But if tha wants ony grog tha mun goä  
fur it down to the Hinn,  
Fur I weänt shed a drop on 'is blood,  
noä, not fur Sally's oän kin.

## THE REVENGE.

## A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

## I.

AT FLORES in the Azores Sir Richard  
Grenville lay,  
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird,  
came flying from far away:  
'Spanish ships of war at sea! we  
have sighted fifty-three!'  
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard:  
'Fore God I am no coward;  
But I cannot meet them here, for my  
ships are out of gear,  
And the half my men are sick. I  
must fly, but follow quick.  
We are six ships of the line; can we  
fight with fifty-three?'

## II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville:  
'I know you are no coward;  
You fly them for a moment to fight  
with them again.  
But I've ninety men and more that are  
lying sick ashore.  
I should count myself a coward if I  
left them, my Lord Howard,  
To these Inquisition dogs and the  
devildoms of Spain.

<sup>1</sup> A pudding made with the first milk of  
the cow after calving.

## III.

So Lord Howard past away with five  
ships of war that day,  
Till he melted like a cloud in the  
silent summer heaven;  
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his  
sick men from the land  
Very carefully and slow.  
Men of Bideford in Devon,  
And we laid them on the ballast down  
below;  
For we brought them all aboard,  
And they blest him in their pain, that  
they were not left to Spain,  
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for  
the glory of the Lord.

## IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to  
work the ship and to fight,  
And he sailed away from Flores till  
the Spaniard came in sight,  
With his huge sea-castles heaving  
upon the weather bow.  
'Shall we fight or shall we fly?  
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,  
For to fight is but to die!  
There'll be little of us left by the  
time this sun be set.'  
And Sir Richard said again: 'We be  
all good English men.  
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the  
children of the devil,  
For I never turn'd my back upon Don  
or devil yet.'

## V.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd,  
and we roar'd a hurrah, and so  
The little Revenge ran on sheer into  
the heart of the foe,  
With her hundred fighters on deck,  
and her ninety sick below;  
For half of their fleet to the right and  
half to the left were seen,  
And the little Revenge ran on thro'  
the long sea-lane between.

## VI.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd  
down from their decks and  
laugh'd.

Thousands of their seamen made  
mock at the mad little craft  
Running on and on, till delay'd  
By their mountain-like San Philip  
that, of fifteen hundred tons,  
And up-shadowing high above us  
with her yawning tiers of guns,  
Took the breath from our sails, and  
we stay'd.

VII.

And while now the great San Philip  
hung above us like a cloud  
Whence the thunderbolt will fall  
Long and loud,  
Four galleons drew away  
From the Spanish fleet that day,  
And two upon the larboard and two  
upon the starboard lay,  
And the battle-thunder broke from  
them all.

VIII.

But anon the great San Philip, she  
bethought herself and went  
Having that within her womb that  
had left her ill content ;  
And the rest they came aboard us,  
and they fought us hand to  
hand,  
For a dozen times they came with  
their pikes and musqueteers,  
And a dozen times we shook 'em off  
as a dog that shakes his ears  
When he leaps from the water to the  
land.

IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars  
came out far over the summer  
sea,  
But never a moment ceased the fight  
of the one and the fifty-three.  
Ship after ship, the whole night long,  
their high-built galleons came,  
Ship after ship, the whole night long,  
with her battle-thunder and  
flame ;  
Ship after ship, the whole night long,  
drew back with her dead and  
her shame.

For some were sunk and many were  
shatter'd, and so could fight us  
no more—  
God of battles, was ever a battle like  
this in the world before?

X.

For he said ' Fight on ! fight on !'  
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck ;  
And it chanced that, when half of the  
short summer night was gone,  
With a grisly wound to be drest he  
had left the deck,  
But a bullet struck him that was  
dressing it suddenly dead,  
And himself he was wounded again in  
the side and the head,  
And he said ' Fight on ! fight on !'

XI.

And the night went down, and the sun  
smiled out far over the summer  
sea,  
And the Spanish fleet with broken  
sides lay round us all in a ring ;  
But they dared not touch us again,  
for they fear'd that we still  
could sting,  
So they watch'd what the end would  
be.  
And we had not fought them in vain,  
But in perilous plight were we,  
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were  
slain,  
And half of the rest of us maim'd for  
life  
In the crash of the cannonades and  
the desperate strife ;  
And the sick men down in the hold  
were most of them stark and  
cold,  
And the pikes were all broken or  
bent, and the powder was all of  
it spent ;  
And the masts and the rigging were  
lying over the side ;  
But Sir Richard cried in his English  
pride,  
' We have fought such a fight for a  
day and a night  
As may never be fought again !  
We have won great glory, my men !

And a day less or more  
At sea or ashore,  
We die—does it matter when?  
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—  
sink her, split her in twain!  
Fall into the hands of God, not into  
the hands of Spain!

## XII.

And the gunner said 'Ay, ay,' but  
the seamen made reply:  
'We have children, we have wives,  
And the Lord hath spared our lives.  
We will make the Spantiard promise,  
if we yield, to let us go;  
We shall live to fight again and to  
strike another blow.'  
And the lion there lay dying, and they  
yielded to the foe.

## XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their  
flagship bore him then,  
Where they laid him by the mast, old  
Sir Richard caught at last,  
And they praised him to his face with  
their courtly foreign grace;  
But he rose upon their decks, and he  
cried:  
'I have fought for Queen and Faith  
like a valiant man and true;  
I have only done my duty as a man is  
bound to do:  
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard  
Grenville die!'  
And he fell upon their decks, and he  
died.

## XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had  
been so valiant and true,  
And had holden the power and glory  
of Spain so cheap  
That he dared her with one little ship  
and his English few;  
Was he devil or man? He was devil  
for aught they knew,  
But they sank his body with honor  
down into the deep,

And they mann'd the Revenge with a  
swarthier alien crew,  
And away she sail'd with her loss and  
long'd for her own;  
When a wind from the lands they had  
ruin'd awoke from sleep,  
And the water began to heave and the  
weather to moan,  
And or ever that evening ended a  
great gale blew,  
And a wave like the wave that is  
raised by an earthquake grew,  
Till it smote on their hulls and their  
sails and their masts and their  
flags,  
And the whole sea plunged and fell  
on the shot-shatter'd navy of  
Spain,  
And the little Revenge herself went  
down by the island crags  
To be lost evermore in the main.

## THE SISTERS.

THEY have left the doors ajar; and  
by their clash,  
And prelude on the keys, I know the  
song,  
Their favorite—which I call 'The  
Tables Turned.'  
Evelyn begins it 'O diviner Air.'

## EVELYN.

O diviner Air,  
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust,  
the glare,  
Far from out the west in shadowing  
showers,  
Over all the meadow baked and bare,  
Making fresh and fair  
All the bowers and the flowers,  
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,  
Over all this weary world of ours,  
Breathe, diviner Air!

A sweet voice that—you scarce could  
better that.  
Now follows Edith echoing Evelyn.

EDITH.

O diviner light,  
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon  
with night,  
Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding  
showers,  
Far from out a sky for ever bright,  
Over all the woodland's flooded  
bowers,  
Over all the meadow's drowning  
flowers,  
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,  
Break, diviner light!

Marvellously like, their voices—and  
themselves!  
Tho' one is somewhat deeper than the  
other,  
As one is somewhat graver than the  
other—

Edith than Evelyn. Your good  
Uncle, whom  
You count the father of your fortune,  
longs

For this alliance: let me ask you  
then,  
Which voice most takes you? for I  
do not doubt

Being a watchful parent, you are  
taken

With one or other: tho' sometimes I  
fear

You may be flickering, fluttering in a  
doubt

Between the two—which must not be  
—which might

Be death to one: they both are beau-  
tiful:

Evelyn is gayer, wittier, prettier,  
says

The common voice, if one may trust  
it: she?

No! but the paler and the graver,  
Edith.

Woo her and gain her then: no wa-  
vering, boy!

The graver is perhaps the one for  
you

Who jest and laugh so easily and so  
well.

For love will go by contrast, as by  
likes.

No sisters ever prized each other  
more.

Not so: their mother and her sister  
loved

More passionately still.

But that my best  
And oldest friend, your Uncle, wishes  
it,

And that I know you worthy every-  
way

To be my son, I might, perchance, be  
loath

To part them, or part from them: and  
yet one

Should marry, or all the broad lands  
in your view

From this bay window—which our  
house has held

Three hundred years—will pass col-  
laterally.

My father with a child on either  
knee,

A hand upon the head of either child,  
Smoothing their locks, as golden as  
his own

Were silver, 'get them wedded'  
would he say.

And once my prattling Edith ask'd  
him 'why?'

Ay, why? said he, 'for why should  
I go lame?'

Then told them of his wars, and of  
his wound.

For see—this wine—the grape from  
whence it flow'd

Was blackening on the slopes of Por-  
tugal,

When that brave soldier, down the  
terrible ridge

Plunged in the last fierce charge at  
Waterloo,

And caught the laming bullet. He  
left me this,

Which yet retains a memory of its  
youth,

As I of mine, and my first passion.  
Come

Here's to your happy union with my  
child!

Yet must you change your name:  
no fault of mine!

You say that you can do it as willingly  
 As birds make ready for their bridal-time  
 By change of feather: for all that, my boy,  
 Some birds are sick and sullen when they moult.  
 An old and worthy name! but mine that stirr'd  
 Among our civil wars and earlier too  
 Among the Roses, the more venerable.  
 I care not for a name—no fault of mine.  
 Once more—a happier marriage than my own!

You see yon Lombard poplar on the plain.  
 The highway running by it leaves a breadth  
 Of sword to left and right, where, long ago,  
 One bright May morning in a world of song,  
 I lay at leisure, watching overhead  
 The aerial poplar wave, an amber spire.

I dozed; I woke. An open landaulet  
 Whirl'd by, which, after it had past me, show'd  
 Turning my way, the loveliest face on earth.  
 The face of one there sitting opposite,  
 On whom I brought a strange unhappiness,  
 That time I did not see.

Love at first sight  
 May seem—with goodly rhyme and reason for it—  
 Possible—at first glimpse, and for a face  
 Gone in a moment—strange. Yet once, when first  
 I came on lake Llanberris in the dark,  
 A moonless night with storm—one lightning-fork

Flash'd out the lake; and tho' I loiter'd there  
 The full day after, yet in retrospect  
 That less than momentary thunder-sketch  
 Of lake and mountain conquers all the day.

The Sun himself has limn'd the face for me.  
 Not quite so quickly, no, nor half as well  
 For look you here—the shadows are too deep,  
 And like the critic's blurring comment make  
 The veriest beauties of the work appear  
 The darkest faults: the sweet eyes frown: the lips  
 Seem but a gash. My sole memorial  
 Of Edith—no, the other,—both indeed.

So that bright face was flash'd thro' sense and soul  
 And by the poplar vanish'd—to be found  
 Long after, as it seem'd, beneath the tall  
 Tree-bowers, and those long-sweeping beechen boughs  
 Of our New Forest. I was there alone:  
 The phantom of the whirling landaulet  
 For ever past me by: when one quick peal  
 Of laughter drew me thro' the glimmering glades  
 Down to the snowlike sparkle of a cloth  
 On fern and foxglove. Lo, the face again,  
 My Rosalind in this Arden—Edith—all  
 One bloom of youth, health, beauty, happiness,  
 And moved to merriment at a passing jest.

There one of those about her knowing me



Call'd me to join them ; so with these  
I spent  
What seem'd my crowning hour, my  
day of days.

I woo'd her then, nor unsuccessful-  
fully,  
The worse for her, for me! was I  
content ?  
Ay—no, not quite ; for now and then  
I thought  
Laziness, vague love-longings, the  
bright May,  
Had made a heated haze to magnify  
The charm of Edith—that a man's  
ideal  
Is high in Heaven, and lodged with  
Plato's God,  
Not findable here—content, and not  
content,  
In some such fashion as a man may  
be  
That having had the portrait of his  
friend  
Drawn by an artist, looks at it, and  
says,  
' Good ! very like ! not altogether he.'

As yet I had not bound myself by  
words,  
Only, believing I loved Edith, made  
Edith love *me*. Then came the day  
when I,  
Flattering myself that all my doubts  
were fools  
Born of the fool this Age that doubts  
of all—  
Not I that day of Edith's love or  
mine—  
Had braced my purpose to declare  
myself :  
I stood upon the stairs of Paradise.  
The golden gates would open at a  
word.  
I spoke it—told her of my passion,  
seen  
And lost and found again, had got  
so far,  
Had caught her hand, her eyelids fell  
—I heard  
Wheels, and a noise of welcome at  
the doors—  
On a sudden after two Italian years

Had set the blossom of her health  
again,  
The younger sister, Evelyn, enter'd—  
there.  
There was the face, and altogether  
she.  
The mother fell about the daughter's  
neck,  
The sisters closed in one another's  
arms,  
Their people throng'd about them  
from the hall,  
And in the thick of question and reply  
I fled the house, driven by one angel  
face,  
And all the Furies.

I was bound to her ;  
I could not free myself in honor—  
bound  
Not by the sounded letter of the word,  
But counterpressures of the yielded  
hand  
That timorously and faintly echoed  
mine,  
Quick blushes, the sweet dwelling of  
her eyes  
Upon me when she thought I did not  
see—  
Were these not bonds ? nay, nay, but  
could I wed her  
Loving the other ? do her that great  
wrong ?  
Had I not dream'd I loved her yester-  
morn ?  
Had I not known where Love, at first  
a fear,  
Grew after marriage to full height and  
form ?  
Yet after marriage, that mock-sister  
there—  
Brother-in-law—the fiery nearness of  
it—  
Unlawful and disloyal brotherhood—  
What end but darkness could ensue  
from this  
For all the three ? So Love and Honor  
jarr'd  
Tho' Love and Honor join'd to raise  
the full  
High-tide of doubt that sway'd me up  
and down  
Advancing nor retreating.

Edith wrote:  
 ' My mother bids me ask ' (I did not  
 tell you—  
 A widow with less guile than many a  
 child.  
 God help the wrinkled children that  
 are Christ's  
 As well as the plump cheek—she  
 wrought us harm,  
 Poor soul, not knowing) ' are you ill? '  
 (so ran  
 The letter) ' you have not been here  
 of late.  
 You will not find me here. At last I  
 go  
 On that long-promised visit to the  
 North.  
 I told your wayside story to my mother  
 And Evelyn. She remembers you.  
 Farewell.  
 Pray come and see my mother. Al-  
 most blind  
 With ever-growing cataract, yet she  
 thinks  
 She sees you when she hears. Again  
 farewell.'

Cold words from one I had hoped  
 to warm so far  
 That I could stamp my image on her  
 heart!  
 ' Pray come and see my mother, and  
 farewell.'  
 Cold, but as welcome as free airs of  
 heaven  
 After a dungeon's closeness. Selfish,  
 strange!  
 What dwarfs are men! my strangled  
 vanity  
 Utter'd a stifled cry—to have vext  
 myself  
 And all in vain for her—cold heart or  
 none—  
 No bride for me. Yet so my path  
 was clear  
 To win the sister.

Whom I woo'd and won.  
 For Evelyn knew not of my former  
 suit,  
 Because the simple mother work'd  
 upon  
 By Edith pray'd me not to whisper  
 of it.

And Edith would be bridesmaid on  
 the day.

But on that day, not being all at  
 ease,  
 I from the altar glancing back upon  
 her,  
 Before the first 'I will' was utter'd,  
 saw  
 The bridesmaid pale, statuelike, pas-  
 sionless—  
 'No harm, no harm' I turn'd again,  
 and placed  
 My ring upon the finger of my bride.

So, when we parted, Edith spoke no  
 word,  
 She wept no 'tear, but round my  
 Evelyn clung  
 In utter silence for so long, I thought  
 'What, will she never set her sister  
 free?'

We left her, happy each in each,  
 and then,  
 As tho' the happiness of each in each  
 Were not enough, must fain have tor-  
 rents, lakes,  
 Hills, the great things of Nature and  
 the fair,  
 To lift us as it were from common-  
 place,  
 And help us to our joy. Better have  
 sent  
 Our Edith thro' the glories of the  
 earth,  
 To change with her horizon, if true  
 Love  
 Were not his own imperial all-in-all.

Far off we went. My God, I would  
 not live  
 Save that I think this gross hard-  
 seeming world  
 Is our misshaping vision of the Powers  
 Behind the world, that make our griefs  
 our gains.

For on the dark night of our  
 marriage-day  
 The great Tragedian, that had  
 quenched herself  
 In that assumption of the bridesmaid  
 —she

That loved me—our true Edith—her  
 brain broke  
 With over-acting, till she rose and  
 fled  
 Beneath a pitiless rush of Autumn  
 rain  
 To the deaf church—to be let in—to  
 pray  
 Before *that* altar—so I think; and  
 there  
 They found her beating the hard Prot-  
 estant doors.  
 She died and she was buried ere we  
 knew.

I learnt it first. I had to speak.  
 At once  
 The bright quick smile of Evelyn, that  
 had sunn'd  
 The morning of our marriage, past  
 away:  
 And on our home-return the daily  
 want  
 Of Edith in the house, the garden,  
 still  
 Haunted us like her ghost; and by  
 and by,  
 Either from that necessity for talk  
 Which lives with blindness, or plain  
 innocence  
 Of nature, or desire that her lost  
 child  
 Should earn from both the praise of  
 heroism,  
 The mother broke her promise to the  
 dead,  
 And told the living daughter with  
 what love  
 Edith had welcomed my brief wooing  
 of her,  
 And all her sweet self-sacrifice and  
 death.

Henceforth that mystic bond be-  
 twixt the twins—  
 Did I not tell you they were twins?—  
 prevail'd  
 So far that no caress could win my  
 wife  
 Back to that passionate answer of full  
 heart  
 I had from her at first. Not that her  
 love,

Tho' scarce as great as Edith's power  
 of love,  
 Had lessen'd, but the mother's garru-  
 lous wail  
 For ever woke the unhappy Past  
 again,  
 Till that dead bridesmaid, meant to be  
 my bride,  
 Put forth cold hands between us, and  
 I fear'd  
 The very fountains of her life were  
 chill'd;  
 So took her thence, and brought her  
 here, and here  
 She bore a child, whom reverently we  
 call'd  
 Edith; and in the second year was  
 born  
 A second—this I named from her own  
 self,  
 Evelyn; then two weeks—no more—  
 she joined,  
 In and beyond the grave, that one she  
 loved.  
 Now in this quiet of declining  
 life,  
 Thro' dreams by night and trances of  
 the day,  
 The sisters glide about me hand in  
 hand,  
 Both beautiful alike, nor can I tell  
 One from the other, no, nor care to  
 tell  
 One from the other, only know they  
 come,  
 They smile upon me, till, remember-  
 ing all  
 The love they both have borne me,  
 and the love  
 I bore them both—divided as I am  
 From either by the stillness of the  
 grave—  
 I know not which of these I love the  
 best.

But *you* love Edith; and her own  
 true eyes  
 Are traitors to her; our quick  
 Evelyn—  
 The merrier, prettier, wittier, as they  
 talk,  
 And not without good reason, my  
 good son—

Is yet untouch'd: and I that hold  
 them both  
 Dearest of all things—well, I am not  
 sure—  
 But if there lie a preference either-  
 way,  
 And in the rich vocabulary of Love  
 'Most dearest' be a true superlative—  
 I think / likewise love your Edith  
 most.

THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR,  
 THE ENTAIL.<sup>1</sup>

## I.

'OUSE-KEEPER sent tha my lass, fur  
 New Squire coom'd last night.  
 Butter an' heggs—yis—yis. I'll goä  
 wi' tha back: all right;  
 Butter I warrants be prime, an' I war-  
 rants the heggs be as well,  
 Hafe a pint o' milk runs out when ya  
 bräkks the shell.

## II.

Sit thysen down fur a bit: hev a glass  
 o' cowslip wine!  
 I liked the owd Squire an' 'is gells as  
 thaw they was gells o' mine.  
 Fur then we was all es one, the Squire  
 an' 'is darters an' me,  
 Hall but Miss Annie, the heldest, I  
 niver not took to she:  
 But Nelly, the last of the cletch,<sup>2</sup> I  
 liked 'er the fust on 'em all,  
 Fur hoffens we talkt o' my darter es  
 died o' the fever at fall:  
 An' I thowt 'twur the will o' the Lord,  
 but Miss Annie she said it wur  
 draäins,  
 Fur she hedn't naw coomfut in 'er, an'  
 an'd naw thanks fur 'er päains.  
 Eh! thebbe all wi' the Lord my  
 childer, I han't gotten none!  
 Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in  
 'is 'and, an' owd Squire's gone.

<sup>1</sup> See note to 'Northern Cobbler.'

<sup>2</sup> A brood of chickens.

## III.

Fur 'staate be i' taäil, my lass: tha  
 dosn' know what that be?  
 But I knaws the law, I does, for the  
 lawyer ha tow'd it me.  
 'When theer's naw 'ead to a 'Ouse by  
 the fault o' that ere maäle—  
 The gells they counts fur nowt, and  
 the next un he taäkes the taäil.'

## IV.

What be the next un like? can tha tell  
 ony harm on 'im lass?—  
 Naay sit down—naw 'urry—sa  
 cowd!—hev another glass!  
 Straänge an' cowd fur the time! he  
 may happen a fall o' snaw—  
 Not es I cares fur to hear ony harm,  
 but I likes to know.  
 An' I 'oäps es 'e beänt booökklarn'd:  
 but 'e dosn' not coom fro' the  
 shere;  
 We'd anew o' that wi' the Squire, an'  
 we haätes booökklarnin' ere.

## V.

Fur Squire wur a Varsity scholard, an'  
 niver lookt arter the land—  
 Whoäts or tonups or taätes—'e 'ed  
 hallus a booök i' 'is 'and.  
 Hallus aloan wi' 'is booöks, thaw nigh  
 upo' seventy year.  
 An' booöks, what's booöks? thou  
 knaws thebbe naither 'ere nor  
 theer.

## VI.

An' the gells, they hedn't naw taäils.  
 an' the lawyer he tow'd it me  
 That 'is taäil were soä tied up es he  
 couldn't cut down a tree!  
 'Drat the trees,' says I, to be sewer I  
 haätes 'em, my lass,  
 Fur we puts the muck o' the land an'  
 they sucks the muck fro' the  
 grass.

## VII.

An' Squire wur hallus a-smilin', an'  
 gied to the tramps goin' by—

An' all o' the wust i' the parish—wi' hoffers a drop in 'is eye.

An' ivry darter o' Squire's hed her awn ridin-erse to 'ersen,

An' they rampaged about wi' their grooms, an' was 'untip' arter the men,

An' hallus a-dallackt<sup>1</sup> an' dizen'd out, an' a-buyin' new cloäthes,

While 'e sit like a great glimmer-gowk<sup>2</sup> wi' 'is glasses athurt 'is noäse,

An' 'is noäse sa gruffed wi' snuff es it couldn't be scroob'd awaäy,

Fur atween 'is readin' an' writin' 'e sniff up a box in a daäy.

An' 'e niver runn'd arter the fox, nor arter the birds wi' 'is gun,

An' 'e niver not shot one 'are, but 'e leaved it to Charlie 'is son,

An' 'e niver not fish'd 'is awn ponds, but Charlie 'e catch'd the pike,

Fur 'e warn't not burn to the land, an' 'e didn't take kind to it like :

But I ears es 'e'd gie fur a howry<sup>3</sup> owd book thuty pound an' moor,

An' 'e'd wrote an owd book, his awn sen, sa I know'd es 'e'd coom to be poor;

An' 'e gied—I be fear'd fur to tell the 'ow much—fur an owd scatted stoän,

An' 'e digg'd up a loomp i' the land an' 'e got a brown pot an' a boän,

An' 'e bowt owd money, es wouldn't goä, wi' good gowd o' the Queen,

An' 'e bowt little statutes all-naäkt an' which was a shaäme to be seen;

But 'e niver loökt over a bill, nor 'e niver not seed to owt,

An' 'e niver knowd nowt but booaks, an' booäks, as thou knows, beänt nowt.

VIII.

But owd Squire's laädy es long es she lived she kep 'em all clear,

Thaw es long es she lived I niver hed none o' 'er darters 'ere;

<sup>1</sup> Overdrest in gay colors.      <sup>2</sup> Owl.

<sup>3</sup> Filthy.

But arter she died we was all es one, the childer an' me,

An' sarvints runn'd in an' out, an' offens we hed 'em to tea.

Lawk! 'ow I laugh'd when the lasses 'ud talk o' their Missis's waäys,

An' the Missis talk'd o' the lasses. —I'll tell tha some o' these daäys.

Hoänly Miss Annie were saw stuck oop, like 'er mother afoor—

'Er an' 'er blessed darter—they niver derken'd my door.

IX.

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled till 'e'd gotten a fright at last,

An' 'e calls fur 'is son, fur the 'turney's letters they foller'd sa fast;

But Squire wur afeard o' 'is son, an' 'e says to 'im, meekas a mouse,

'Lad, thou mun cut off thy taäil, or the gells 'ull goä to the 'Ouse,

Fur I finds es I be that i' debt, es I 'oäps es thou'll 'elp me a bit,

An' if thou'll 'gree to cut off thy taäil I may saäve mysen yit.'

X.

But Charlie 'e sets back 'is ears, an' 'e sweärs, an' 'e says to 'im ' Noa.

I've gotten the 'staäte by the taäil an' be dang'd if I iver let goä!

C'oom! coom! feyther, 'e says, 'why shouldn't thy booöks be sowd?

I hears es soom o' thy booöks mebbe worth their weight i' gowd.'

XI.

Heäps an' heäps o' booöks, I ha' see'd 'em, belong'd to the Squire,

But the lasses 'ed teärd out leäves i' the middle to kindle the fire;

Sa moäst on 'is owd big booöks fetch'd nigh to nowt at the saäle,

And Squire were at Charlie ageän to git 'im to cut off 'is taäil.

XII.

Ya wouldn't find Charlie's likes—'e were that outdacious at 'oäm,

Not thaw ya went fur to raäke out  
 Hell wi' a smail-tooth coämb—  
 Droonk wi' the Quoloty's wine, an'  
 droonk wi' the farmer's ääle,  
 Mad wi' the lasses an' all—an' 'e  
 wouldn't cut off the taäil.

## XIII.

Thou's coom'd oop by the beck; and  
 a thurn be a-grawin' theer,  
 I niver ha seed it sa white wi' the  
 Maäy es I see'd it to-year—  
 Theerabouts Charlie joomp!—and it  
 gied me a scare tother night,  
 Fur I thowt it wur Charlie's ghoäst i'  
 the derk, fur it loökt sa white.  
 'Billy,' says 'e, 'hev a joomp!—thaw  
 the banks o' the beck be sa high,  
 Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un,  
 thaw niver a hair wur awry;  
 But Billy fell bakkuds o' Charlie, an'  
 Charlie 'e brok 'is neck,  
 Sa theer wur a hend o' the taäil, fur  
 'e lost 'is taäil i' the beck.

## XIV.

Sa 'is taäil wur lost an' 'is booöks wur  
 gone an' 'is boy wur deäd,  
 An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled, but  
 'e niver not lift oop 'is 'eäd:  
 Hallus a soft un Squire! an' 'e  
 smiled, fur 'e hedn't naw friend,  
 Sa feyther an' son was buried to-  
 gether, an' this wur the hend.

## XV.

An' Parson as hesn't the call, nor the  
 mooney, but hes the pride,  
 'E reäds of a sewer an' sartan 'oäp o'  
 the tother side;  
 But I beänt that sewer es the Lord,  
 howsiver they praäy'd an'  
 praäy'd,  
 Lets them inter 'eaven eäsy es leäves  
 their debts to be paäid.  
 Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo'  
 poor owd Squire i' the wood,  
 An' I cried along wi' the gells, fur  
 they weänt niver coom to naw  
 good.

## XVI.

Fur Molly the long un she walkt  
 awaäy wi' a hofficer lad,  
 An' nawbody 'eärd on 'er sin, sa o'  
 coorse she be gone to the bad!  
 An' Lucy wur laäme o' onc leg, sweet-  
 'arts she niver 'ed none—  
 Straänge an' unheppen<sup>1</sup> Miss Lucy!  
 we naämed her 'Dot an' gaw  
 one!  
 An' Hetty wur weak i' the hattics, wi'  
 out ony harm i' the legs,  
 An' the fever 'ed baäked Jinny's 'eäd  
 as bald as one o' them heggs,  
 An' Nelly wur up fro' the craädle as  
 big i' the mouth as a cow,  
 An' saw she mun hammergrate,<sup>2</sup> lass,  
 or she weänt git a maäte ony-  
 how!  
 An' es for Miss Annie es call'd me  
 afoor my awn foälks to my faäce  
 'A hignorant village wife as 'ud hev  
 to be larn'd her awn plaäce,'  
 Hes fur Miss Hannie the heldest hes  
 now be a-grawin' sa howd,  
 I knaws that mooch o' sheä, es it  
 beänt not fit to be towd!

## XVII.

Sa I didn't not taäke it kindly ov owd  
 Miss Annie to saäy  
 Es I should be talkin ageän 'em, es  
 soon es they went awaäy,  
 Fur, lawks! 'ow I cried when they  
 went, an' our Nelly she gied me  
 'er 'and,  
 Fur I'd ha done owt for the Squire  
 an' 'is gells es belong'd to the  
 land;  
 Booöks, es I said afoor, thebbe ney-  
 ther 'ere nor theer!  
 But I sarved 'em wi' butter an' heggs  
 fur huppuds o' twenty year.

## XVIII.

An' they hallus paäid what I hax'd,  
 sa I hallus deal'd wi' the Hall,  
 An' they knaw'd what butter wur, an'  
 they knaw'd what a hegg wur  
 an' all;

<sup>1</sup> Ungainly, awkward. <sup>2</sup> Emigrate.

Hugger-mugger they lived, but they  
wasn't that eäsy to please,  
Till I gied 'em Hinjian curn, an' they  
lääd big heggs es tha seesas;  
An' I niver puts saäme<sup>1</sup> i' *my* butter,  
they does it at Willis's farm,  
Taäste another drop o' the wine—  
twänt do tha naw harm.

XIX.

Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is taäl in  
'is 'and, an' owd Squire's gone;  
I heard 'im a roomlin' by, but arter  
my nightcap wur on;  
Sa I han't clapt eyes on 'im yit, fur  
he coom'd last night sa lääte—  
Pluksh! ! !<sup>2</sup> the hens i' the peas!  
why didn't tha hesp the gaäte?

IN THE CHILDREN'S  
HOSPITAL.

EMMIE.

I.

OUR doctor had call'd in another, I  
never had seen him before,  
But he sent a chill to my heart when I  
saw him come in at the door,  
Fresh from the surgery-schools of  
France and of other lands—  
Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest,  
big merciless hands!  
Wonderful cures he had done, O yes,  
but they said too of him  
He was happier using the knife than  
in trying to save the limb,  
And that I can well believe, for he  
look'd so coarse and so red,  
I could think he was one of those who  
would break their jests on the  
dead,  
And mangle the living dog that had  
loved him and fawu'd at his  
knee—

<sup>1</sup> Lard.

<sup>2</sup> A cry accompanied by a clapping of hands to scare trespassing fowl.

Drench'd with the hellish oorali—  
that ever such things should  
be!

II.

Here was a boy—I am sure that some  
of our children would die  
But for the voice of Love, and the  
smile, and the comforting eye—  
Here was a boy in the ward, every  
bone seem'd out of its place—  
Caught in a mill and crush'd—it was  
all but a hopeless case:  
And he handled him gently enough;  
but his voice and his face were  
not kind,  
And it was but a hopeless case, he  
had seen it and made up his  
mind,  
And he said to me roughly 'The lad  
will need little more of your  
care.'  
'All the more need,' I told him, 'to  
seek the Lord Jesus in prayer;  
They are all his children here, and I  
pray for them all as my own:'  
But he turu'd to me, 'Ay, good  
woman, can prayer set a broken  
bone?'  
Then he mutter'd half to himself, but  
I know that I heard him say  
'All very well—but the good Lord  
Jesus has had his day.'

III.

Had? has it come? It has only  
dawn'd. It will come by and  
by.  
O how could I serve in the wards if  
the hope of the world were a  
lie?  
How could I bear with the sights and  
the loathsome smells of dis-  
ease  
But that He said 'Ye do it to me,  
when ye do it to these?'

IV.

So he went. And we past to this  
ward where the younger chil-  
dren are laid:

Here is the cot of our orphan, our  
darling, our meek little maid;  
Empty you see just now! We have  
lost her who loved her so  
much—

Patient of pain tho' as quick as a  
sensitive plant to the touch;  
Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often  
moved me to tears,

Hers was the gratefullest heart I have  
found in a child of her years—  
Nay you remember our Emmie; you  
used to send her the flowers;

How she would smile at 'em, play  
with 'em, talk to 'em hours  
after hours!

They that can wander at will where  
the works of the Lord are  
reveal'd

Little guess what joy can be got from  
a cowslip out of the field;

Flowers to these 'spirits in prison'  
are all they can know of the  
spring,

They freshen and sweeten the wards  
like the waft of an Angel's  
wing;

And she lay with a flower in one hand  
and her thin hands crost on her  
breast—

Wan, but as pretty as heart can  
desire, and we thought her at  
rest,

Quietly sleeping—so quiet, our doctor  
said 'Poor little dear,  
Nurse, I must do it to-morrow; she'll  
never live thro' it, I fear.'

## v.

I walk'd with our kindly old doctor as  
far as the head of the stair,  
Then I return'd to the ward; the  
child didn't see I was there.

## vi.

Never since I was nurse, had I been  
so grieved and so vext!  
Emmie had heard him. Softly she  
call'd from her cot to the next,  
'He says I shall never live thro' it, O  
Annie, what shall I do?'

Annie consider'd. 'If I,' said the  
wise little Annie, 'was you,  
I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to  
help me, for, Emmie, you  
see,

It's all in the picture there: "Little  
children should come to  
me."'

(Meaning the print that you gave us, I  
find that it always can please

Our children, the dear Lord Jesus  
with children about his knees.)

'Yes, and I will,' said Emmie, 'but  
then if I call to the Lord,

How should he know that it's me?  
such a lot of beds in the ward!'

That was a puzzle for Annie. Again  
she consider'd and said:

'Emmie, you put out your arms, and  
you leave 'em outside on the  
bed—

The Lord has so much to see to!  
but, Emmie, you tell it him  
plain,

It's the little girl with her arms lying  
out on the counterpane.'

## vii.

I had sat three nights by the child—I  
could not watch her for four—  
My brain had begun to reel—I felt I  
could do it no more.

That was my sleeping-night, but I  
thought that it never would  
pass.

There was a thunderclap once, and a  
clatter of hail on the glass,  
And there was a phantom cry that I  
heard as I tost about,

The motherless bleat of a lamb in the  
storm and the darkness with-  
out;

My sleep was broken besides with  
dreams of the dreadful knife

And fears for our delicate Emmie  
who scarce would escape with  
her life;

Then in the gray of the morning it  
seem'd she stood by me and  
smiled,

And the doctor came at his hour, and  
we went to see the child.



VIII.

He had brought his ghastly tools: we  
believed her asleep again—  
Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying  
out on the counterpane;  
Say that His day is done! Ah why  
should we care what they say?  
The Lord of the children had heard  
her, and Emmie had past away.

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE  
PRINCESS ALICE.

DEAD PRINCESS, living Power, if that,  
which lived  
True life, live on—and if the fatal  
kiss,  
Born of true life and love, divorce  
thee not  
From earthly love and life—if what  
we call  
The spirit flash not all at once from  
out  
This shadow into Substance—then  
perhaps  
The mellow'd murmur of the people's  
praise  
From thine own State, and all our  
breadth of realm,  
Where Love and Longing dress thy  
deeds in light,  
Ascends to thee; and this March  
morn that sees  
Thy Soldier-brother's bridal orange-  
bloom  
Break thro' the yews and cypress of  
thy grave,  
And thine Imperial mother smile  
again,  
May send one ray to thee! and who  
can tell—  
Thou—England's England-loving  
daughter—thou  
Dying so English thou wouldst have  
her flag  
Borne on thy coffin—where is he can  
swear  
But that some broken gleam from our  
poor earth

May touch thee, while remembering  
thee, I lay  
At thy pale feet this ballad of the  
deeds  
Of England, and her banner in the  
East?

THE DEFENCE OF  
LUCKNOW.

I.

BANNER of England, not for a season,  
O banner of Britain, hast thou  
Floated in conquering battle or flapt to  
the battle-cry!  
Never with mightier glory than when  
we had rear'd thee on high  
Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly  
siege of Lucknow—  
Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but  
ever we raised thee anew,  
And ever upon the topmost roof our  
banner of England blew.

II.

Frail were the works that defended  
the hold that we held with our  
lives—  
Women and children among us, God  
help them, our children and  
wives!  
Hold it we might—and for fifteen days  
or for twenty at most.  
'Never surrender, I charge you, but  
every man die at his post!'  
Voice of the dead whom we loved, our  
Lawrence the best of the brave:  
Cold were his brows when we kiss'd  
him—we laid him that night in  
his grave.  
'Every man die at his post!' and there  
hail'd on our houses and halls  
Death from their rifle-bullets, and  
death from their cannon-balls,  
Death in our innermost chamber, and  
death at our slight barricade,  
Death while we stood with the musket,  
and death while we stoopt to the  
spade,

Death to the dying, and wounds to the wounded, for often there fell,  
Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro' it, their shot and their shell,  
Death—for their spies were among us, their marksmen were told of our best,  
So that the brute bullet broke thro' the brain that could think for the rest;  
Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and bullets would rain at our feet—  
Fire from ten thousand at once of the rebels that girdled us round—  
Death at the glimpse of a finger from over the breadth of a street,  
Death from the heights of the mosque and the palace, and death in the ground!  
Mine? yes, a mine! Countermine! down, down! and creep thro' the hold!  
Keep the revolver in hand! you can hear him—the murderous mole!  
Quiet, ah! quiet—wait till the point of the pickaxe be thro'!  
Click with the pick, coming nearer and nearer again than before—  
Now let it speak, and you fire, and the dark pioneer is no more;  
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew!

## III.

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many times, and it chanced on a day  
Soon as the blast of that underground thunderclap echo'd away,  
Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur like so many fiends in their hell—  
Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on volley, and yell upon yell—  
Fiercely on all the defences our myriad enemy fell.  
What have they done? where is it?  
Out yonder. Guard the Redan!  
Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the Bailey-gate! storm, and it ran

Surging and swaying all round us, as ocean on every side  
Plunges and heaves at a bank that is daily devour'd by the tide—  
So many thousands that if they be bold enough, who shall escape?  
Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall know we are soldiers and men!  
Ready! take aim at their leaders—their masses are gapp'd with our grape—  
Backward they reel like the wave, like the wave flinging forward again,  
Flying and foil'd at the last by the handful they could not subdue;  
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

## IV.

Handful of men as we were, we were English in heart and in limb,  
Strong with the strength of the race to command, to obey, to endure,  
Each of us fought as if hope for the garrison hung but on him;  
Still—could we watch at all points? we were every day fewer and fewer.  
There was a whisper among us, but only a whisper that past:  
'Children and wives—if the tigers leap into the fold unawares—  
Every man die at his post—and the foe may outlive us at last—  
Better to fall by the hands that they love, than to fall into theirs!  
Roar upon roar in a moment two mines by the enemy sprung  
Clove into perilous chasms our walls and our poor palisades.  
Rifeman, true is your heart, but be sure that your hand be as true!  
Sharp is the fire of assault, better aimed are your flank fusillades—  
Twice do we hurl them to earth from the ladders to which they had clung,  
Twice from the ditch where they shelter we drive them with hand-grenades;  
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

v.

Then on another wild morning another  
wild earthquake out-tore  
Clean from our lines of defence ten or  
twelve good paces or more.  
Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden  
there from the light of the sun—  
One has leapt up on the breach, crying  
out: 'Follow me, follow  
me!'—  
Mark him—he falls! then another,  
and *him* too, and down goes he.  
Had they been bold enough then, who  
can tell but the traitors had  
won?  
Boardings and rafters and doors—an  
embrasure! make way for the  
gun!  
Now double-charge it with grape! It  
is charged and we fire, and they  
run.  
Praise to our Indian brothers, and let  
the dark face have his due!  
Thanks to the kindly dark faces who  
fought with us, faithful and few,  
Fought with the bravest among us, and  
drove them, and smote them,  
and slew,  
That ever upon the topmost roof our  
banner in India blew.

vi.

Men will forget what we suffer and  
not what we do. We can  
fight!  
But to be soldier all day and be senti-  
nel all thro' the night—  
Ever the mine and assault, our sallies,  
their lying alarms,  
Bugles and drums in the darkness, and  
shoutings and soundings to  
arms,  
Ever the labor of fifty that had to be  
done by five,  
Ever the marvel among us that one  
should be left alive,  
Ever the day with its traitorous death  
from the loopholes around, ●  
Ever the night with its coffinless  
corpse to be laid in the ground,  
Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a  
deluge of cataract skies,

Stench of old offal decaying, and  
infinite torment of flies,  
Thoughts of the breezes of May blow-  
ing over an English field,  
Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound  
that *would* not be heal'd,  
Lopping away of the limb by the piti-  
ful-pitiless knife,—  
Torture and trouble in vain,—for it  
never could save us a life.  
Valor of delicate women who tended  
the hospital bed,  
Horror of women in travail among  
the dying and dead,  
Grief for our perishing children, and  
never a moment for grief,  
Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering  
hopes of relief,  
Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butch-  
er'd for all that we knew—  
Then day and night, day and night,  
coming down on the still-shat-  
ter'd walls  
Millions of musket-bullets, and thou-  
sands of cannon-balls—  
But ever upon the topmost roof our  
banner of England blew.

vii.

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true  
what was told by the scout,  
Outram and Havelock breaking their  
way through the fell mutineers?  
Surely the pibroch of Europe is ring-  
ing again in our ears!  
All on a sudden the garrison utter a  
jubilant shout,  
Havelock's glorious Highlanders an-  
swer with conquering cheers,  
Sick from the hospital echo them,  
women and children come out,  
Blessing the wholesome white faces  
of Havelock's good fusileers,  
Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the  
Highlander wet with their  
tears!  
Dance to the pibroch!—saved! we  
are saved!—is it you? is it  
you?  
Saved by the valor of Havelock,  
saved by the blessing of  
Heaven!

'Hold it for fifteen days!' we have  
held it for eighty-seven!  
And ever aloft on the palace roof the  
old banner of England blew.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD  
COBHAM.

(IN WALES.)

My friend should meet me somewhere  
hereabout  
To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I have broke their cage, no gilded  
one, I trow—  
I read no more the prisoner's mute  
wall  
Scribbled or carved upon the pitiless  
stone;  
I find hard rocks, hard life, hard  
cheer, or none,  
For I am emptier than a friar's  
brains;  
But God is with me in this wilderness,  
These wet black passes and foam-  
churning chasms—  
And God's free air, and hope of better  
things.

I would I knew their speech; not  
now to glean,  
Not now—I hope to do it—some scat-  
ter'd ears,  
Some ears for Christ in this wild field  
of Wales—  
But, bread, merely for bread. This  
tongue that wagg'd  
They said with such heretical arro-  
gance  
Against the proud archbishop Arun-  
del—  
So much God's cause was fluent in it  
—is here  
But as a Latin Bible to the crowd;  
'Bara!'—what use? The Shepherd,  
when I speak,  
Vailing a sudden eyelid with his hard  
'Dim Saesneg' passes, wroth at  
things of old—

No fault of mine. Had he God's  
word in Welsh  
He might be kindlier: happily come  
the day!

Not least art thou, thou little Beth-  
lehem  
In Judah, for in thee the Lord was  
born;  
Nor thou in Britain, little Latter-  
worth,  
Least, for in thee the word was born  
again.

Heaven-sweet Evangel, ever-living  
word,  
Who whilome spake to the South in  
Greek  
About the soft Mediterranean shores,  
And then in Latin to the Latin crowd,  
As good need was—thou hast come  
to talk our isle.  
Hereafter thou, fulfilling Pentecost,  
Must learn to use the tongues of all  
the world.  
Yet art thou thine own witness that  
thou bringest,  
Not peace, a sword, a fire.

What did he say,  
My frighted Wiclif-preacher whom I  
crost  
In flying hither? that one night a  
crowd  
Throng'd the waste field about the  
city gates:  
The king was on them suddenly with  
a host.  
Why there? they came to hear their  
preacher. Then  
Some cried on Cobham, on the good  
Lord Cobham;  
Ay, for they love me! but the king—  
nor voice  
Nor finger raised against him—took  
and hang'd,  
Took, hang'd and burnt—how many  
—thirty-nine—  
Call'd it rebellion—hang'd, poor  
friends, as rebels  
And burn'd alive as heretics! for your  
Priest  
Labels—to take the king along with  
him—

All heresy, treason: but to call men  
traitors  
May make men traitors.  
Rose of Lancaster,  
Red in thy birth, redder with house-  
hold war,  
Now reddest with the blood of holy  
men,  
Redder to be, red rose of Lancaster—  
If somewhere in the North, as Rumor  
sang  
Fluttering the hawks of this crown-  
lusting line—  
By firth and loch thy silver sister  
grow,<sup>1</sup>  
That were my rose, there my all-  
giance due.  
Self-starved, they say—nay, murder'd,  
doubtless dead.  
So to this king I cleaved: my friend  
was he,  
Once my fast friend: I would have  
given my life  
To help his own from scathe, a thou-  
sand lives  
To save his soul. 'He might have  
come to learn  
Our Wiclif's learning: but the  
worldly Priests  
Who fear the king's hard common-  
sense should find  
What rotten piles uphold their ma-  
son-work,  
Urge him to foreign war. O had he  
will'd  
I might have stricken a lusty stroke  
for him,  
But he would not; far liever led my  
friend  
Back to the pure and universal church,  
But he would not: whether that heir-  
less flaw  
In his throne's title make him feel so  
frail,  
He leans on Antichrist; or that his  
mind,  
So quick, so capable in soldiership,  
In matters of the faith, alas the while!  
More worth than all the kingdoms of  
this world,  
Runs in the rut, a coward to the Priest.

<sup>1</sup> Richard II.

Burnt—good Sir Roger Acton, my  
dear friend!  
Burnt too, my faithful preacher, Bever-  
erley!  
Lord give thou power to thy two wit-  
nesses!  
Lest the false faith make merry over  
them!  
Two—nay but thirty-nine have risen  
and stand,  
Dark with the smoke of human sacri-  
fice,  
Before thy light, and cry continu-  
ally—  
Cry—against whom?  
Him, who should bear the sword  
Of Justice—what! the kingly, kindly  
boy;  
Who took the world so easily hereto-  
fore,  
My boon companion, tavern-fellow—  
him—  
Who gibed and japed—in many a  
merry tale  
That shook our sides—at Pardoners,  
Summoners,  
Friars, absolution-sellers, monkeries  
And nunneries, when the wild hour  
and the wine  
Had set the wits aflame.  
Harry of Monmouth,  
Or Amurath of the East?  
Better to sink  
Thy fleurs-de-lys in slime again, and  
fling  
Thy royalty back into the riotous fits  
Of wine and harlotry—thy shame, and  
mine,  
Thy comrade—than to persecute the  
Lord,  
And play the Saul that never will be  
Paul.

Burnt, burnt! and while this mitred  
Arundel  
Dooms our unlicensed preacher to the  
flame,  
The mitre-sanction'd harlot draws his  
clerks  
Into the suburb—their hard celibacy,  
Sworn to be veriest ice of pureness,  
molten  
Into adulterous living, or such crime

As holy Paul—a shame to speak of  
them—

Among the heathen—

Sanctuary granted  
To bandit, thief, assassin—yea to him  
Who hacks his mother's throat—de-  
nied to him,

Who finds the Saviour in his mother  
tongue.

The Gospel, the Priest's pearl, flung  
down to swine—

The swine, lay-men, lay-women, who  
will come,

God willing, to outlearn the filthy  
friar.

Ah rather, Lord, than that thy Gospel,  
meant

To course and range thro' all the  
world, should be

Tether'd to these dead pillars of the  
Church—

Rather than so, if thou wilt have it so,  
Burst vein, snap sinew, and crack  
heart, and life

Pass in the fire of Babylon! but how  
long,

O Lord, how long!

My friend should meet me here.  
Here is the cosp, the fountain and—a  
Cross!

To thee, dead wood, I bow not head  
nor knees.

Rather to thee, green boscaige, work  
of God,

Black holly, and white-flower'd way-  
faring tree!

Rather to thee, thou living water,  
drawn

By this good Wiclif mountain down  
from heaven,

And speaking clearly in thy native  
tongue—

No Latin—He that thirsteth, come  
and drink!

Eh! how I anger'd Arundel asking  
me

To worship Holy Cross! I spread  
mine arms,

God's work, I said, a cross of flesh  
and blood

And holier. That was heresy. (My  
good friend

By this time should be with me.)  
'Images?'

'Bury them as God's truer images  
Are daily buried.' 'Heresy.—Pen-  
ance?' 'Fast,

Hairshirt and scourge—nay, let a  
man repent,

Do penance in his heart, God hears  
him.' 'Heresy—

Not shriven, not saved?' 'What  
profits an ill Priest

Between me and my God? I would  
not spurn

Good counsel of good friends, but  
shrive myself

No, not to an Apostle.' 'Heresy.'  
(My friend is long in coming.) 'Pil-  
grimages?

'Drink, bagpipes, revelling, devil's-  
dances, vice.

The poor man's money gone to fat the  
friar.

Who reads of begging saints in Script-  
ure?'—'Heresy'—

(Hath he been here—not found me—  
gone again?

Have I mislearnt our place of meet-  
ing?) 'Bread—

Bread left after the blessing?' how  
they stared

That was their main test-question—  
glared at me!

'He veil'd Himself in flesh, and now  
He veils

His flesh in bread, body and bread  
together.'

Then rose the howl of all the cassock'd  
wolves,

'No bread, no bread. God's body!'  
Archbishop, Bishop,

Priors, Canons, Friars, bellringers,  
Parish-clerks—

'No bread, no bread!'—'Authority  
of the Church,

Power of the keys!'—Then I, God  
help me, I

So mock'd, so spurn'd, so baited two  
whole days—

I lost myself and fell from evenness,  
And rail'd at all the Popes, that ever  
since

Sylvester shed the venom of world-  
wealth

Into the church, had only prov'n them-  
selves  
Poisoners, murderers. Well—God  
pardon all—  
Me, them, and all the world—yea,  
that proud Priest,  
That mock-meek mouth of utter Anti-  
christ,

That traitor to King Richard and the  
truth,  
Who rose and doom'd me to the fire.

Amen!

Nay, I can burn, so that the Lord of  
life

Be by me in my death.

Those three! the fourth  
Was like the Son of God! Not burnt  
were they.

On *them* the smell of burning had not  
past.

That was a miracle to convert the king.  
These Pharisees, this Caiaphas-Arun-  
del

What miracle could turn? *He* here  
again,

*He* thwarting their traditions of Him-  
self,

*He* would be found a heretic to Him-  
self,

And doom'd to burn alive.

So, caught, I burn.  
Burn? heathen men have borne as  
much as this.

For freedom, or the sake of those  
they loved,

Or some less cause, some cause far less  
than mine;

For every other cause is less than  
mine.

The moth will singe her wings, and  
singed return,

Her love of light quenching her fear  
of pain—

How now, my soul, we do not heed  
the fire?

Faint-hearted? tut!—faint-stomach'd!  
faint as I am,

God willing, I will burn for Him.

Who comes?  
A thousand marks are set upon my  
head.

Friend?—foe perhaps—a tussle for it  
then

Nay, but my friend. Thou art so  
well disguised,

I knew thee not. Hast thou brought  
bread with thee?

I have not broken bread for fifty  
hours.

None? I am damn'd already by the  
Priest

For holding there was bread where  
bread was none—

No bread. My friends await me  
yonder? Yes.

Lead on then. *Up* the mountain? Is  
it far?

Not far. Climb first and reach me  
down thy hand.

I am not like to die for lack of bread,  
For I must live to testify by fire.<sup>1</sup>

### COLUMBUS.

CHAINS, my good lord: in your raised  
brows I read

Some wonder at our chamber orna-  
ments.

We brought this iron from our isles  
of gold.

Does the king know you deign to  
visit him

Whom once he rose from off his  
throne to greet

Before his people, like his brother  
king?

I saw your face that morning in the  
crowd.

At Barcelona—tho' you were not  
then

So bearded. Yes. The city deck'd  
herself

To meet me, roar'd my name; the  
king, the queen

Bad me be seated, speak, and tell  
them all

The story of my voyage, and while I  
spoke

The crowd's roar fell as at the 'Peace,  
be still!'

<sup>1</sup> He was burnt on Christmas Day, 1417.

And when I ceased to speak, the  
king, the queen,  
Sank from their thrones, and melted  
into tears,  
And knelt, and lifted hand and heart  
and voice  
In praise to God who led me thro' the  
waste.  
And then the great 'Laudamus' rose  
to heaven.

Chains for the Admiral of the  
Ocean! chains  
For him who gave a new heaven, a  
new earth,  
As holy John had prophesied of me,  
Gave glory and more empire to the  
kings  
Of Spain than all their battles! chains  
for him  
Who push'd his prows into the setting  
sun,  
And made West East, and sail'd the  
Dragon's mouth,  
And came upon the Mountain of the  
World,  
And saw the rivers roll from Para-  
dise!

Chains! we are Admirals of the  
Ocean, we,  
We and our sons for ever. Ferdi-  
nand  
Hath sign'd it and our Holy Catholic  
queen—  
Of the Ocean—of the Indies—Ad-  
mirals we—  
Our title, which we never mean to  
yield,  
Our guerdon not alone for what we  
did,  
But our amends for all we might have  
done—  
The vast occasion of our stronger  
life—  
Eighteen long years of waste, seven  
in your Spain,  
Lost, showing courts and kings a  
truth the babe  
Will suck in with his milk hereafter—  
earth  
A sphere.

Were *you* at Salamanca? No.  
We fronted there the learning of all  
Spain,  
All their cosmogonies, their astron-  
omies:  
Guess-work *they* guess'd it, but the  
golden guess  
Is morning-star to the full round of  
truth.  
No guess-work! I was certain of my  
goal;  
Some thought it heresy, but that  
would not hold.  
King David call'd the heavens a hide,  
a tent  
Spread over earth, and so this earth  
was flat:  
Some cited old Lactantius: could it  
be  
That trees grew downward, rain fell  
upward, men  
Walk'd like the fly on ceilings? and  
besides,  
The great Augustine wrote that none  
could breathe  
Within the zone of heat; so might  
there be  
Two Adams, two mankind, and that  
was clean  
Against God's word: thus was I  
beaten back,  
And chiefly to my sorrow by the  
Church,  
And thought to turn my face from  
Spain, appeal  
Once more to France or England; but  
our Queen  
Recall'd me, for at last their High-  
nesses  
Were half-assured this earth might be  
a sphere.

All glory to the all-blessed Trinity,  
All glory to the mother of our Lord,  
And Holy Church, from whom I  
never swerved  
Not even by one hair's-breadth of  
heresy,  
I have accomplish'd what I came to  
do.

Not yet—not all—last night a  
dream—I sail'd



On my first voyage, harass'd by the  
 frights  
 Of my first crew, their curses and  
 their groans.  
 The great flame-banner borne by Ten-  
 criffe,  
 The compass, like an old friend false  
 at last  
 In our most need, appall'd them, and  
 the wind  
 Still westward, and the weedy seas—  
 at length  
 The landbird, and the branch with  
 berries on it,  
 The carven staff—and last the light,  
 the light  
 On Guanahani! but I changed the  
 name;  
 San Salvador I call'd it; and the  
 light  
 Grew as I gazed, and brought out a  
 broad sky  
 Of dawning over—not those alien  
 palms,  
 The marvel of that fair new nature—  
 not  
 That Indian isle, but our most an-  
 cient East  
 Moriah with Jerusalem; and I saw  
 The glory of the Lord flash up, and  
 beat  
 Thro' all the homely town from jas-  
 per, sapphire,  
 Chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sar-  
 dius,  
 Chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase,  
 Jacynth, and amethyst—and those  
 twelve gates,  
 Pearl—and I woke, and thought—  
 death—I shall die—  
 I am written in the Lamb's own  
 Book of Life  
 To walk within the glory of the Lord  
 Sunless and moonless, utter light—  
 but no!  
 The Lord had sent this bright, strange  
 dream to me  
 To mind me of the secret vow I  
 made  
 When Spain was waging war against  
 the Moor—  
 I strove myself with Spain against  
 the Moor.

There came two voices from the  
 Sepulchre,  
 Two friars crying that if Spain should  
 oust  
 The Moslem from her limit, he, the  
 fierce  
 Soldan of Egypt, would break down  
 and raze  
 The blessed tomb of Christ; whereon  
 I vow'd  
 That, if our Princes harken'd to my  
 prayer,  
 Whatever wealth I brought from that  
 new world  
 Should, in this old, be consecrate to  
 lead  
 A new crusade against the Saracen,  
 And free the Holy Sepulchre from  
 thrall.

Gold? I had brought your Princes  
 gold enough  
 If left alone! Being but a Geno-  
 vese,  
 I am handled worse than had I been a  
 Moor,  
 And breach'd the belting wall of  
 Cambalu,  
 And given the Great Khan's palaces  
 to the Moor,  
 Or clutch'd the sacred crown of Pres-  
 ter John,  
 And cast it to the Moor: but *had* I  
 brought  
 From Solomon's now-recover'd Ophir  
 all  
 The gold that Solomon's navies carri-  
 ed home,  
 Would that have gilded *me*? Blue  
 blood of Spain,  
 Tho' quartering your own royal arms  
 of Spain,  
 I have not: blue blood and black  
 blood of Spain,  
 The noble and the convict of Castile,  
 How'd me from Hispaniola; for you  
 know  
 The flies at home, that ever swarm  
 about  
 And cloud the highest heads, and  
 murmur down  
 Truth in the distance—these out-  
 buzz'd me so

That even our prudent king, our righteous queen—  
 I pray'd them being so calumniated  
 They would commission one of weight  
 and worth  
 To judge between my slander'd self  
 and me—  
 Fonseca my main enemy at their  
 court,  
 They sent me out *his* tool, Bovadilla,  
 one  
 As ignorant and impolitic as a beast—  
 Blockish irreverence, brainless greed  
 —who sack'd  
 My dwelling, seized upon my papers,  
 loosed  
 My captives, feed the rebels of the  
 crown,  
 Sold the crown-farms for all but nothing,  
 gave  
 All but free leave for all to work the  
 mines,  
 Drove me and my good brothers  
 home in chains,  
 And gathering ruthless gold—a single  
 piece  
 Weigh'd nigh four thousand Castillanos—  
 so  
 They tell me—weigh'd him down into  
 the abysm—  
 The hurricane of the latitude on him  
 fell,  
 The seas of our discovering over-roll  
 Him and his gold; the frail caravel,  
 With what was mine, came happily  
 to the shore.  
*There* was a glimmering of God's  
 hand.

And God  
 Hath more than glimmer'd on me. O  
 my lord,  
 I swear to you I heard his voice between  
 The thunders in the black Veragua  
 nights,  
 'O soul of little faith, slow to believe!  
 Have I not been about thee from thy  
 birth?  
 Given thee the keys of the great  
 Ocean-sea?  
 Set thee in light till time shall be no  
 more?

Is it I who have deceived thee or the  
 world?  
 Endure! thou hast done so well for  
 men, that men  
 Cry out against thee: was it otherwise  
 With mine own Son?'

And more than once in days  
 Of doubt and cloud and storm, when  
 drowning hope  
 Sank all but out of sight, I heard his  
 voice,  
 'Be not cast down. I lead thee by  
 the hand,  
 Fear not.' And I shall hear his voice  
 again—  
 I know that he has led me all my life,  
 I am not yet too old to work his will—  
 His voice again.

Still for all that, my lord,  
 I lying here bedridden and alone,  
 Cast off, put by, scouted by court and  
 king—  
 The first discoverer starves—his followers,  
 all  
 Flower into fortune—our world's way  
 —and I,  
 Without a roof that I can call mine  
 own,  
 With scarce a coin to buy a meal  
 withal,  
 And seeing what a door for scoundrel  
 scum  
 I open'd to the West, thro' which the  
 lust,  
 Villany, violence, avarice, of your  
 Spain  
 Pour'd in on all those happy naked  
 isles—  
 Their kindly native princes slain or  
 slaved,  
 Their wives and children Spanish  
 concubines,  
 Their innocent hospitalities quench'd  
 in blood,  
 Some dead of hunger, some beneath  
 the scourge,  
 Some over-labor'd, some by their own  
 hands,—  
 Yea, the dear mothers, crazing Nature,  
 kill

Their babies at the breast for hate of  
Spain—  
Ah God, the harmless people whom  
we found  
In Hispaniola's island-Paradise!  
Who took us for the very Gods from  
Heaven,  
And we have sent them very fiends  
from Hell;  
And I myself, myself not blameless, I  
Could sometimes wish I had never  
led the way.

Only the ghost of our great Catholic  
Queen  
Smiles on me, saying, 'Be thou com-  
forted!  
This creedless people will be brought  
to Christ  
And own the holy governance of  
Rome.'

But who could dream that we, who  
bore the Cross  
Thither, were excommunicated there,  
For curbing crimes that scandalized  
the Cross,  
By him, the Catalonian Minorite,  
Rome's Vicar in our Indies? who be-  
lieve  
These hard memorials of our truth to  
Spain  
Clung closer to us for a longer term  
Than any friend of ours at Court?  
and yet  
Pardon—too harsh, unjust. I am  
rack'd with pains.

You see that I have hung them by  
my bed,  
And I will have them buried in my  
grave.

Sir, in that flight of ages which are  
God's  
Own voice to justify the dead—per-  
chance  
Spain once the most chivalric race on  
earth,  
Spain then the mightiest, wealthiest  
realm on earth,  
So made by me, may seek to unbury  
me,

To lay me in some shrine of this old  
Spain,  
Or in that vaster Spain I leave to  
Spain.  
Then some one standing by my grave  
will say,  
'Behold the bones of Christopher  
Colón'—  
'Ay, but the chains, what do *they*  
mean—the chains?'—  
I sorrow for that kindly child of Spain  
Who then will have to answer, 'These  
same chains  
Bound these same bones back thro'  
the Atlantic sea,  
Which he unchain'd for all the world  
to come.'

O Queen of Heaven who seest the  
souls in Hell  
And purgatory, I suffer all as much  
As they do—for the moment. Stay,  
my son  
Is here anon: my son will speak for  
me  
Ablter than I can in these spasms that  
grind  
Bone against bone. You will not.  
One last word.

You move about the Court, I pray  
you tell  
King Ferdinand who plays with me,  
that one,  
Whose life has been no play with him  
and his  
Hidalgos—shipwrecks, famines, fe-  
vers, fights,  
Mutinies, treacheries—wink'd at, and  
condoned—  
That I am loyal to him till the death,  
And ready—tho' our Holy Catholic  
Queen,  
Who fain had pledged her jewels on  
my first voyage,  
Whose hope was mine to spread the  
Catholic faith,  
Who wept with me when I return'd  
in chains,  
Who sits beside the blessed Virgin  
now,  
To whom I send my prayer by night  
and day—

She is gone—but you will tell the  
 King, that I,  
 Rack'd as I am with gout, and  
 wrench'd with pains  
 Gain'd in the service of His High-  
 ness, yet  
 Am ready to sail forth on one last  
 voyage,  
 And readier, if the King would hear,  
 to lead  
 One last crusade against the Saracen,  
 And save the Holy Sepulchre from  
 thrall.

Going? I am old and slighted:  
 you have dared  
 Somewhat perhaps in coming? my  
 poor thanks!  
 I am but an alien and a Genovesc.

#### THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

(FOUNDED ON AN IRISH LEGEND.  
 A. D. 700.)

##### I.

I WAS the chief of the race—he had  
 stricken my father dead—  
 But I gather'd my fellows together, I  
 swore I would strike off his  
 head.  
 Each of them look'd like a king, and  
 was noble in birth as in worth,  
 And each of them boasted he sprang  
 from the oldest race upon  
 earth.  
 Each was as brave in the fight as the  
 bravest hero of song,  
 And each of them liefer had died than  
 have done one another a wrong.  
*He* lived on an isle in the ocean—we  
 sail'd on a Friday morn—  
 He that had slain my father the day  
 before I was born.

##### II.

And we came to the isle in the ocean,  
 and there on the shore was he.  
 But a sudden blast blew us out and  
 away thro' a boundless sea.

##### III.

And we came to the Silent Isle that  
 we never had touch'd at before,  
 Where a silent ocean always broke on  
 a silent shore,  
 And the brooks glitter'd on in the  
 light without sound, and the  
 long waterfalls  
 Pour'd in a thunderless plunge to the  
 base of the mountain walls,  
 And the poplar and cypress unshaken  
 by storm flourish'd up beyond  
 sight,  
 And the pine shot aloft from the crag  
 to an unbelievable height,  
 And high in the heaven above it there  
 flicker'd a songless lark,  
 And the cock couldn't crow, and the  
 bull couldn't low, and the dog  
 couldn't bark.  
 And round it we went, and thro' it,  
 but never a murmur, a breath—  
 It was all of it fair as life, it was all  
 of it quiet as death,  
 And we hated the beautiful Isle, for  
 whenever we strove to speak  
 Our voices were thinner and tainter  
 than any flittermouse-shriek;  
 And the men that were mighty of  
 tongue and could raise such a  
 battle-cry  
 That a hundred who heard it would  
 rush on a thousand lances and  
 die—  
 O they to be dumb'd by the charm!—  
 so fluster'd with anger were  
 they  
 They almost fell on each other; but  
 after we sail'd away.

##### IV.

And we came to the Isle of Shouting,  
 we landed, a score of wild birds  
 Cried from the topmost summit with  
 human voices and words;  
 Once in an hour they cried, and when-  
 ever their voices peal'd  
 The steer fell down at the plow and  
 the harvest died from the field,  
 And the men dropt dead in the val-  
 leys and half of the cattle went  
 lame,

And the roof sank in on the hearth,  
and the dwelling broke into  
flame ;  
And the shouting of these wild birds  
ran into the hearts of my  
crew,  
Till they shouted along with the  
shouting and seized one another  
and slew ;  
But I drew them the one from the  
other ; I saw that we could not  
stay,  
And we left the dead to the birds and  
we sail'd with our wounded  
away.

## v.

And we came to the Isle of Flowers :  
their breath met us out on the  
seas,  
For the Spring and the middle Sum-  
mer sat each on the lap of the  
breeze ;  
And the red passion-flower to the  
cliffs, and the dark-blue clema-  
tis, clung,  
And star'd with a myriad blossom  
the long convolvulus hung ;  
And the topmost spire of the mountain  
was lilies in lieu of snow,  
And the lilies like glaciers winded  
down, running out below  
Thro' the fire of the tulip and poppy,  
the blaze of gorse, and the  
blush  
Of millions of roses that sprang  
without leaf or a thorn from  
the bush ;  
And the whole isle-side flashing down  
from the peak without ever a  
tree  
Swept like a torrent of gems from the  
sky to the blue of the sea ;  
And we roll'd upon capes of crocus  
and vaunted our kith and our  
kin,  
And we wallow'd in beds of lilies, and  
chanted the triumph of Finn,  
Till each like a golden image was  
pollen'd from head to feet  
And each was as dry as a cricket, with  
thirst in the middle-day heat.

Blossom and blossom, and promise of  
blossom, but never a fruit !  
And we hated the Flowering Isle, as  
we hated the isle that was  
mute,  
And we tore up the flowers by the  
million and flung them in bight  
and bay,  
And we left but a naked rock, and in  
anger we sail'd away.

## vi.

And we came to the Isle of Fruits :  
all round from the cliffs and  
the capes,  
Purple or amber, dangled a hundred  
fathom of grapes,  
And the warm melon lay like a little  
sun on the tawny sand,  
And the fig ran up from the beach  
and rioted over the land,  
And the mountain arose like a jewell'd  
throne thro' the fragrant air,  
Glowing with all-color'd plums and  
with golden masses of pear,  
And the crimson and scarlet of berries  
that flamed upon bine and  
vine,  
But in every berry and fruit was the  
poisonous pleasure of wine ;  
And the peak of the mountain was  
apples, the hugest that ever  
were seen,  
And they prest, as they grew, on each  
other, with hardly a leaflet  
between,  
And all of them redder than rosiest  
health or than utterest shame,  
And setting, when Even descended,  
the very sunset aflame ;  
And we stay'd three days, and we  
gorged and we madden'd, till  
every one drew  
His sword on his fellow to slay him,  
and ever they struck and they  
slew ;  
And myself, I had eaten but sparingly,  
and fought till I sunder'd the  
fray,  
Then I bad them remember my fath-  
er's death, and we sail'd  
away.

## VII.

And we came to the Isle of Fire : we  
 were lured by the light from  
 afar,  
 For the peak sent up one league of  
 fire to the Northern Star ;  
 Lured by the glare and the blare, but  
 scarcely could stand upright,  
 For the whole isle shudder'd and  
 shook like a man in a mortal  
 affright ;  
 We were giddy besides with the  
 fruits we had gorged, and so  
 crazed that at last  
 There were some leap'd into the fire ;  
 and away we sail'd, and we  
 past  
 Over that undersea isle, where the  
 water is clearer than air :  
 Down we look'd : what a garden ! O  
 bliss, what a Paradise there !  
 Towers of a happier time, low down  
 in a rainbow deep  
 Silent palaces, quiet fields of eternal  
 sleep !  
 And three of the gentlest and best of  
 my people, whate'er I could  
 say,  
 Plunged head down in the sea, and the  
 Paradise trembled away.

## VIII.

And we came to the Bounteous Isle,  
 where the heavens lean low on  
 the land,  
 And ever at dawn from the cloud  
 glitter'd o'er us a sunbright  
 hand,  
 Then it open'd and dropt at the side  
 of each man, as he rose from  
 his rest,  
 Bread enough for his need till the  
 laborless day dipt under the  
 West ;  
 And we wander'd about it and thro'  
 it. O never was time so good !  
 And we sang of the triumphs of Finn,  
 and the boast of our ancient  
 blood,  
 And we gazed at the wandering wave  
 as we sat by the gurgle of  
 springs,

And we chanted the songs of the  
 Bards and the glories of fairy  
 kings ;  
 But at length we began to be weary,  
 to sigh, and to stretch and  
 yawn,  
 Till we hated the Bounteous Isle and  
 the sunbright hand of the dawn,  
 For there was not an enemy near, but  
 the whole green Isle was our  
 own,  
 And we took to playing at ball, and  
 we took to throwing the stone,  
 And we took to playing at battle, but  
 that was a perilous play,  
 For the passion of battle was in us,  
 we slew and we sail'd away.

## IX.

And we past to the Isle of Witches  
 and heard their musical cry—  
 'Come to us, O come, come' in the  
 stormy red of a sky  
 Dashing the fires and the shadows of  
 dawn on the beautiful shapes,  
 For a wild witch naked as heaven  
 stood on each of the loftiest  
 capes,  
 And a hundred ranged on the rock  
 like white sea-birds in a row,  
 And a hundred gamboll'd and  
 pranced on the wrecks in the  
 sand below,  
 And a hundred spiash'd from the  
 ledges, and bosom'd the burst  
 of the spray,  
 But I knew we should fall on each  
 other, and hastily sail'd away.

## x.

And we came in an evil time to the  
 Isle of the Double Towers,  
 One was of smooth-cut stone, one  
 carved all over with flowers,  
 But an earthquake always moved in  
 the hollows under the dells,  
 And they shock'd on each other and  
 butted each other with clash-  
 ing of bells,  
 And the daws flew out of the Towers  
 and jangled and wrangled in  
 vain,

And the clash and boom of the bells  
rang into the heart and the  
brain,  
Till the passion of battle was on us,  
and all took sides with the  
Towers,  
There were some for the clean-cut  
stone, there were more for the  
carven flowers.  
And the wrathful thunder of God  
peal'd over us all the day,  
For the one half slew the other, and  
after we sail'd away.

## XI.

And we came to the Isle of a Saint  
who had sail'd with St. Bren-  
dan of yore,  
He had lived ever since on the Isle  
and his winters were fifteen  
score,  
And his voice was low as from other  
worlds, and his eyes were  
sweet,  
And his white hair sank to his heels  
and his white beard fell to his  
feet,  
And he spake to me, 'O Macl'dune,  
let be this purpose of thine!  
Remember the words of the Lord  
when he told us "Vengeance is  
mine!"  
His fathers have slain thy fathers in  
war or in single strife,  
Thy fathers have slain his fathers,  
each taken a life for a life,  
Thy father had slain his father, how  
long shall the murder last?  
Go back to the Isle of Finn and suffer  
the Past to be Past.'  
And we kiss'd the fringe of his beard  
and we pray'd as we heard him  
pray,  
And the Holy man he assoil'd us, and  
sadly we sail'd away.

## XII.

And we came to the Isle we were  
blown from, and there on the  
shore was he,  
The man that had slain my father. I  
saw him and let him be.

O weary was I of the travel, the  
trouble, the strife and the sin,  
When I landed again, with a tithe of  
my men, on the Isle of Finn.

## DE PROFUNDIS:

## THE TWO GREETINGS.

## I.

OUT of the deep, my child, out of the  
deep,  
Where all that was to be, in all that  
was,  
Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the  
vast  
Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddy-  
ing light—  
Out of the deep, my child, out of the  
deep,  
Thro' all this changing world of  
changeless law,  
And every phase of ever-heightening  
life,  
And nine long months of antenatal  
gloom,  
With this last moon, this crescent—  
her dark orb  
Touch'd with earth's light—thou  
comest, darling boy;  
Our own; a babe in lineament and  
limb  
Perfect, and prophet of the perfect  
man;  
Whose face and form are hers and  
mine in one,  
Indissolubly married like our love;  
Live, and be happy in thyself, and  
serve  
This mortal race thy kin so well, that  
men  
May bless thee as we bless thee, O  
young life  
Breaking with laughter from the  
dark; and may  
The fated channel where thy motion  
lives  
Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy  
course

Along the years of haste and random  
youth  
Unshatter'd; then full-current thro'  
full man;  
And last in kindly curves, with gen-  
tlest fall,  
By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,  
To that last deep where we and thou  
are still.

## II.

## I.

OUT of the deep, my child, out of the  
deep,  
From that great deep, before our  
world begins,  
Whereon the Spirit of God moves as  
he will—  
Out of the deep, my child, out of the  
deep,  
From that true world within the  
world we see,  
Whereof our world is but the bound-  
ing shore—  
Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the  
deep,  
With this ninth moon, that sends the  
hidden sun  
Down yon dark sea, thou comest, dar-  
ling boy.

## II.

For in the world, which is not ours,  
They said  
'Let us make man' and that which  
should be man,  
From that one light no man can look  
upon,  
Drew to this shore lit by the suns and  
moons  
And all the shadows. O dear Spirit  
half-lost  
In thine own shadow and this fleshly  
sign  
That thou art thou—who wailest  
being born

And banish'd into mystery, and the  
pain  
Of this divisible-indivisible world  
Among the numerable innumerable  
Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite  
space  
In finite-infinite Time—our mortal  
veil  
And shatter'd phantom of that infinite  
One,  
Who made thee unconceivably Thy-  
self  
Out of His whole World-self and all  
in all—  
Live thou! and of the grain and husk,  
the grape  
And ivyberry, choose; and still  
depart  
From death to death thro' life and  
life, and find  
Nearer and ever nearer Him, who  
wrought  
Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,  
But this main-miracle, that thou art  
thou,  
With power on thine own act and on  
the world.

## THE HUMAN CRY.

## I.

HALLOWED be Thy name—Hallelu-  
iah!—  
Infinite Ideality!  
Immeasurable Reality!  
Infinite Personality!  
Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah!

## II.

We feel we are nothing—for all is  
Thou and in Thee;  
We feel we are something—that also  
has come from Thee;  
We know we are nothing—but Thou  
wilt help us to be.  
Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah!





"BUT KEEP THE SECRET FOR YOUR LIFE."—Page 96.



# QUEEN MARY:

A DRAMA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

QUEEN MARY.  
PHILIP, *King of Naples and Sicily, afterwards King of Spain*  
THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH.  
REGINALD POLE, *Cardinal and Papal Legate.*  
SIMON RENARD, *Spanish Ambassador.*  
LE SIEUR DE NOAILLES, *French Ambassador.*  
THOMAS CRANMER, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*  
SIR NICHOLAS HEATH, *Archbishop of York: Lord Chancellor after Gardiner.*  
EDWARD COURTENAY, *Earl of Devon.*  
LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, *afterwards Lord Howard, and Lord High Admiral.*  
LORD WILLIAMS OF THAME.      LORD PAGET.      LORD PETRE.  
STEPHEN GARDINER, *Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor.*  
EDMUND BONNER, *Bishop of London.*      THOMAS THIRLBY, *Bishop of Ely.*  
SIR THOMAS WYATT }  
SIR THOMAS STAFFORD } *Insurrectionary Leaders.*  
SIR RALPH BAGENHALL.      SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.  
SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD.      SIR WILLIAM CECIL.  
SIR THOMAS WHITE, *Lord Mayor of London.*  
THE DUKE OF ALVA }  
THE COUNT DE FERIA } *attending on Philip.*  
PETER MARTYR.      FATHER COLE.      FATHER BOURNE.  
VILLA GARCIA.      SOTO.  
CAPTAIN BRETT }  
ANTHONY KNYVETT } *Adherents of Wyatt.*  
PETERS, *Gentleman of Lord Howard.*  
ROGER, *Servant to Noailles.*      WILLIAM, *Servant to Wyatt.*  
STEWARD OF HOUSEHOLD to the Princess Elizabeth.  
OLD NOKES and NOKES.  
MARCHIONESS OF EXETER, *Mother of Courtenay.*  
LADY CLARENCE  
LADY MAGDALEN DACKES } *Ladies in Waiting to the Queen.*  
ALICE  
MAID OF HONOR to the Princess Elizabeth.  
JOAN }  
TIB } *two Country Wives.*

Lords and other Attendants, Members of the Privy Council, Members of Parliament, Two Gentlemen, Aldermen, Citizens, Peasants, Ushers, Messengers, Guards, Pages, Gospellers, Marshalmen, etc.

## ACT I.

### SCENE I.—ALDGATE RICHLY DECORATED.

CROWD. MARSHALMEN.

*Marshalmen.* Stand back, keep a clear lane! When will her Majesty pass, sayst thou? why now, even now; wherefore draw back your heads

and your horns before I break them, and make what noise you will with your tongues, so it be not treason. Long live Queen Mary, the lawful and legitimate daughter of Harry the Eighth! Shout, knaves!

*Citizens.* Long live Queen Mary!  
*First Citizen.* That's a hard word, legitimate; what does it mean?

*Second Citizen.* It means a bastard.

*Third Citizen.* Nay, it means true-born.

*First Citizen.* Why, didn't the Parliament make her a bastard?

*Second Citizen.* No; it was the Lady Elizabeth.

*Third Citizen.* That was after, man; that was after.

*First Citizen.* Then which is the bastard?

*Second Citizen.* Troth, they be both bastards by Act of Parliament and Council.

*Third Citizen.* Ay, the Parliament can make every true-born man of us a bastard. Old Nokes, can't it make thee a bastard? thou shouldst know, for thou art as white as three Christ-masses.

*Old Nokes (dreamily).* Who's a-passing? King Edward or King Richard?

*Third Citizen.* No, old Nokes.

*Old Nokes.* It's Harry!

*Third Citizen.* It's Queen Mary.

*Old Nokes.* The blessed Mary's a-passing!

[Falls on his knees.]

*Nokes.* Let father alone, my masters! he's past your questioning.

*Third Citizen.* Answer thou for him, then! thou'rt no such cockerel thyself, for thou was born i' the tail end of old Harry the Seventh.

*Nokes.* Eh! that was afore bastard-making began. I was born true man at five in the forenoon i' the tail of old Harry, and so they can't make me a bastard.

*Third Citizen.* But if Parliament can make the Queen a bastard, why, it follows all the more that they can make thee one, who art fray'd i' the knees, and out at elbow, and bald o' the back, and bursten at the toes, and down at heels.

*Nokes.* I was born of a true man and a ring'd wife, and I can't argue upon it; but I and my old woman 'ud burn upon it, that would we.

*Marshalman.* What are you cackling of bastardy under the Queen's own nose? I'll have you flogg'd and burnt too, by the Rood I will.

*First Citizen.* He swears by the Rood. Whew!

*Second Citizen.* Hark! the trumpets.

[The Procession passes, Mary and Elizabeth riding side by side, and disappears under the gate. [Exeunt.]

*Citizens.* Long live Queen Mary! down with all traitors! God save her Grace; and death to Northumberland!

#### Manent TWO GENTLEMEN.

*First Gentleman.* By God's light a noble creature, right royal!

*Second Gentleman.* She looks comelier than ordinary to-day; but to my mind the Lady Elizabeth is the more noble and royal.

*First Gentleman.* I mean the Lady Elizabeth. Did you hear (I have a daughter in her service who reported it) that she met the Queen at Wanstead with five hundred horse, and the Queen (tho' some say they be much divided) took her hand, call'd her sweet sister, and kiss'd not her alone, but all the ladies of her following.

*Second Gentleman.* Ay, that was in her hour of joy; there will be plenty to sunder and unsister them again: this Gardiner for one, who is to be made Lord Chancellor, and will pounce like a wild beast out of his cage to worry Cranmer.

*First Gentleman.* And furthermore, my daughter said that when there rose a talk of the late rebellion, she spoke even of Northumberland pitifully, and of the good Lady Jane as a poor innocent child who had but obeyed her father; and furthermore, she said that no one in her time should be burnt for heresy.

*Second Gentleman.* Well, sir, I look for happy times.

*First Gentleman.* There is but one thing against them. I know not if you know.

*Second Gentleman.* I suppose you

touch upon the rumor that Charles, the master of the world, has offer'd her his son Philip, the Pope and the Devil. I trust it is but a rumor.

*First Gentleman.* She is going now to the Tower to loose the prisoners there, and among them Courtenay, to be made Earl of Devon, of royal blood, of splendid feature, whom the council and all her people wish her to marry. May it be so, for we are many of us Catholics, but few Papists, and the Hot Gospellers will go mad upon it.

*Second Gentleman.* Was she not betroth'd in her babyhood to the Great Emperor himself?

*First Gentleman.* Ay, but he's too old.

*Second Gentleman.* And again to her cousin Reginald Pole, now Cardinal; but I hear that he too is full of aches and broken before his day.

*First Gentleman.* O, the Pope could dispense with his Cardinalate, and his achage, and his breakage, if that were all: will you not follow the procession?

*Second Gentleman.* No; I have seen enough for this day.

*First Gentleman.* Well, I shall follow; if I can get near enough I shall judge with my own eyes whether her Grace incline to this splendid scion of Plantagenet. [Exeunt.]

## SCENE II.

## A ROOM IN LAMBETH PALACE.

*Cranmer.* To Strasburg, Antwerp, Frankfort, Zurich, Worms, Geneva, Basle—our Bishops from their sees  
Or fled, they say, or flying—Point, Barlow,  
Bale, Scory, Coverdale; besides the Deans  
Of Christchurch, Durham, Exeter, and Wells—  
Ailmer and Bullingham, and hundreds more;

So they report: I shall be left alone.  
No: Hooper, Ridley, Latimer will not fly.

*Enter PETER MARTYR.*

*Peter Martyr.* Fly, Cranmer! were there nothing else, your name  
Stands first of those who sign'd the Letters Patent

That gave her royal crown to Lady Jane.

*Cranmer.* Stand first it may, but it was written last:

Those that are now her Privy Council, sign'd

Before me: nay, the Judges had pronounced

That our young Edward might bequeath the crown

Of England, putting by his father's will.

Yet I stood out, till Edward sent for me.

The wan boy-king, with his fast-fading eyes

Fixt hard on mine, his frail transparent hand,

Damp with the sweat of death, and griping mine,

Whisper'd me, if I loved him, not to yield

His Church of England to the Papal wolf

And Mary; then I could no more—I sign'd.

Nay, for bare shame of inconsistency, She cannot pass her traitor council by,

To make me headless.

*Peter Martyr.* That night be forgiven.

I tell you, fly, my Lord. You do not own

The bodily presence in the Eucharist, Their wafer and perpetual sacrifice: Your creed will be your death.

*Cranmer.* Step after step, Thro' many voices crying right and left,

Have I climb'd back into the primal church,

And stand within the porch, and  
Christ with me :

My flight were such a scandal to the  
faith,  
The downfall of so many simple  
souls,

I dare not leave my post.

*Peter Martyr.* But you divorced  
Queen Catharine and her father ;  
hence, her hate

Will burn till you are burn'd.

*Cranmer.* I cannot help it.  
The Canonists and Schoolmen were  
with me.

'Thou shalt not wed thy brother's  
wife.'—'Tis written,

'They shall be childless.' True, Mary  
was born,

But France would not accept her for a  
bride

As being born from incest ; and this  
wrought

Upon the king ; and child by child,  
you know,

Were momentary sparkles out as  
quick

Almost as kindled ; and he brought  
his doubts

And fears to me. Peter, I'll swear for  
him

He *did* believe the bond incestuous.

But wherefore am I trenching on the  
time

That should already have seen your  
steps a mile

From me and Lambeth ? God be with  
you ! Go.

*Peter Martyr.* Ah, but how fierce a  
letter you wrote against

Their superstition when they slander'd  
you

For setting up a mass at Canterbury  
To please the Queen.

*Cranmer.* It was a wheedling  
monk

Set up the mass.

*Peter Martyr.* I know it, my good  
Lord.

But you so bubbled over with hot  
terms

Of Satan, liars, blasphemy, Antichrist,  
She never will forgive you. Fly, my  
Lord, fly !

*Cranmer.* I wrote it, and God grant  
me power to burn !

*Peter Martyr.* They have given me  
a safe conduct : for all that  
I dare not stay. I fear, I fear, I see  
you,

Dear friend, for the last time ; fare-  
well, and fly.

*Cranmer.* Fly and farewell, and  
let me die the death.

[*Exit Peter Martyr.*]

*Enter OLD SERVANT.*

O, kind and gentle master, the  
Queen's Officers

Are here in force to take you to the  
Tower.

*Cranmer.* Ay, gentle friend, admit  
them. I will go.

I thank my God it is too late to fly.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—ST. PAUL'S CROSS.

FATHER BOURNE *in the pulpit.* A  
crowd. MARCHIONESS OF EXETER,  
COURTENAY. The SIEUR DE  
NOAILLES and his man ROGER *in  
front of the stage.* Hubbub.

*Noailles.* Hast thou let fall those  
papers in the palace ?

*Roger.* Ay, sir.

*Noailles.* 'There will be no peace  
for Mary till Elizabeth lose her head.'

*Roger.* Ay, sir.

*Noailles.* And the other, 'Long  
live Elizabeth the Queen !'

*Roger.* Ay, sir ; she needs must  
tread upon them.

*Noailles.* Well.

These beastly swine make such a  
grunting here,

I cannot catch what Father Bourne is  
saying.

*Roger.* Quiet a moment, my mas-  
ters ; hear what the shaveling has to  
say for himself.

*Crowd.* Hush—hear !

*Bourne.* —and so this unhappy  
land, long divided in itself, and sever'd  
from the faith, will return into the one

true fold, seeing that our gracious Virgin Queen hath—

*Crowd.* No pope! no pope!

*Roger* (to those about him, mimicking Bourne). —hath sent for the holy legate of the holy father the Pope, Cardinal Pole, to give us all that holy absolution which—

*First Citizen.* Old Bourne to the life!

*Second Citizen.* Holy absolution! holy Inquisition!

*Third Citizen.* Down with the Papist! [Hubbub.]

*Bourne.* —and now that your good bishop, Bonner, who hath lain so long under bonds for the faith— [Hubbub.]

*Noailles.* Friend Roger, steal thou in among the crowd, And get the swine to shout Elizabeth.

Yon gray old Gospeller, sour as mid-winter,

Begin with him.

*Roger* (goes). By the mass, old friend, we'll have no pope here while the Lady Elizabeth lives.

*Gospeller.* Art thou of the true faith, fellow, that swearest by the mass?

*Roger.* Ay, that am I, new converted, but the old heaven sticks to my tongue yet.

*First Citizen.* He says right; by the mass we'll have no mass here.

*Voices of the crowd.* Peace! hear him; let his own words damn the Papist. From thine own mouth I judge thee—tear him down!

*Bourne.* —and since our Gracious Queen, let me call her our second Virgin Mary, hath begun to re-edify the true temple—

*First Citizen.* Virgin Mary! we'll have no virgins here—we'll have the Lady Elizabeth!

[Swords are drawn, a knife is hurled and sticks in the pulpit. The mob throng to the pulpit stairs.]

*Marchioness of Exeter.* Son Courtenay, wilt thou see the holy father

Murdered before thy face? up, son, and save him!

They love thee, and thou canst not come to harm.

*Courtenay* (in the pulpit). Shame shame, my masters! are you English-born, And set yourselves by hundreds against one?

*Crowd.* A Courtenay! a Courtenay!

[A train of Spanish servants crosses at the back of the stage.]

*Noailles.* These birds of passage come before their time: Stave off the crowd upon the Spaniard there.

*Roger.* My masters, yonder's fatter game for you Than this old gaping gurgoyle: look you there—

The Prince of Spain coming to wed our Queen!

After him, boys! and pelt him from the city.

[They seize stones and follow the Spaniards. Exeunt on the other side Marchioness of Exeter and Attendants.]

*Noailles* (to Roger). Stand from me. If Elizabeth lose her head—

That makes for France.

And if her people, anger'd thereupon, Arise against her and dethrone the Queen—

That makes for France.

And if I breed confusion anyway—

That makes for France.

Good-day, my Lord of Devon; A bold heart yours to beard that raging mob!

*Courtenay.* My mother said, Go up; and up I went.

I knew they would not do me any wrong,

For I am mighty popular with them, Noailles.

*Noailles.* You look'd a king.

*Courtenay.* Why not? I am king's blood.

*Noailles.* And in the whirl of change may come to be one.

*Courtenay.* Ah!

*Noailles.* But does your gracious  
Queen entreat you kinglike?

*Courtenay.* 'Fore God, I think she  
entreats me like a child.

*Noailles.* You've but a dull life in  
this maiden court,

I fear, my Lord?

*Courtenay.* A life of nods and  
yawns.

*Noailles.* So you would honor my  
poor house to-night,

We might enliven you. Divers  
honest fellows,

The Duke of Suffolk lately freed from  
prison,

Sir Peter Carew and Sir Thomas  
Wyatt,

Sir Thomas Stafford, and some more  
—we play.

*Courtenay.* At what?

*Noailles.* The Game of Chess.

*Courtenay.* The Game of Chess!

I can play well, and I shall beat you  
there.

*Noailles.* Ay, but we play with  
Henry, King of France,

And certain of his court.

His Highness makes his moves across  
the Channel,

We answer him with ours, and there  
are messengers

That go between us.

*Courtenay.* Why, such a game, sir,  
were whole years a playing.

*Noailles.* Nay; not so long I trust.  
That all depends

Upon the skill and swiftness of the  
players.

*Courtenay.* The King is skilful at  
it?

*Noailles.* Very, my Lord.

*Courtenay.* And the stakes high?

*Noailles.* But not beyond your  
means.

*Courtenay.* Well, I'm the first of  
players. I shall win.

*Noailles.* With our advice and in  
our company,

And so you well attend to the king's  
moves,

I think you may.

*Courtenay.* When do you meet?

*Noailles.*

To-night.

*Courtenay (aside).* I will be there;  
the fellow's at his tricks—

Deep—I shall fathom him. (*Aloud.*)  
Good morning, *Noailles.*

[*Exit Courtenay.*]

*Noailles.* Good-day, my Lord.  
strange game of chess! a King

That with her own pawns plays against  
a Queen,

Whose play is all to find herself a  
King.

Ay; but this fine blue-blooded Courte-  
nay seems

Too princely for a pawn. Call him a  
Knight,

That, with an ass's, not a horse's  
head,

Skips every way, from levity or from  
fear.

Well, we shall use him somehow, so  
that Gardiner

And Simon Renard spy not out our  
game

Too early. Roger, thinkest thou that  
anyone

Suspected thee to be my man?

*Roger.* Not one, sir.

*Noailles.* No! the disguise was per-  
fect. Let's away. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

ELIZABETH. *Enter COURTENAY.*

*Courtenay.* So yet am I,  
Unless my friends and mirrors lie to  
me,

A goodlier-looking fellow than this  
Philip.

Pah!

The Queen is ill advised: shall I  
turn traitor?

They've almost talked me into it: yet  
the word

Affrights me somewhat: to be such a  
one

As Harry Bolingbroke hath a lure in  
it.

Good now, my Lady Queen, tho' by  
your age,



And by your looks you are not worth  
the having.

Yet by your crown you are.

*Seeing Elizabeth.*  
The Princess there?  
If I tried her and la—she's amorous.  
Have we not heard of her in Edward's  
time,

Her freaks and frolics with the late  
Lord Admiral?

I do believe she'd yield. I should be  
still

A party in the state; and then, who  
knows—

*Elizabeth.* What are you musing  
on, my Lord of Devon?

*Courtenay.* Has not the Queen—

*Elizabeth.* Done what, Sir?

*Courtenay.* —made you follow  
The Lady Suffolk and the Lady Len-  
nox?—

You,

The heir presumptive.

*Elizabeth.* Why do you ask? you  
know it.

*Courtenay.* You needs must bear  
it hardly.

*Elizabeth.* No, indeed!

I am utterly submissive to the Queen.

*Courtenay.* Well, I was musing  
upon that; the Queen

Is both my foe and yours: we should  
be friends.

*Elizabeth.* My Lord, the hatred of  
another to us

Is no true bond of friendship.

*Courtenay.* Might it not  
Be the rough preface of some closer  
bond?

*Elizabeth.* My Lord, you late were  
loosed from out the Tower,  
Where, like a butterfly in a chrysalis,  
You spent your life; that broken, out  
you flutter

Thro' the new world, go zigzag, now  
would settle

Upon this flower, now that; but all  
things here

At court are known; you have solicited  
The Queen, and been rejected.

*Courtenay.* Flower, she!  
Half faded! but you, cousin, are fresh  
and sweet

As the first flower no bee has ever  
tried.

*Elizabeth.* Are you the bee to try  
me? why, but now  
I called you butterfly.

*Courtenay.* You did me wrong,  
I love not to be called a butterfly:  
Why do you call me butterfly?

*Elizabeth.* Why do you go so gay  
then?

*Courtenay.* Velvet and gold.  
This dress was made me as the Earl  
of Devon  
To take my seat in; looks it not right  
royal?

*Elizabeth.* So royal that the Queen  
forbad you wearing it.

*Courtenay.* I wear it then to spite  
her.

*Elizabeth.* My Lord, my Lord;  
I see you in the Tower again. Her  
Majesty

Hears you affect the Prince—prelates  
kneel to you.—

*Courtenay.* I am the noblest blood  
in Europe, Madam,  
A Courtenay of Devon, and her  
cousin.

*Elizabeth.* She hears you make  
your boast that after all  
She means to wed you. Folly, my  
good Lord.

*Courtenay.* How folly? a great  
party in the state  
Wills me to wed her.

*Elizabeth.* Failing her, my Lord,  
Doth not as great a party in the state  
Will you to wed me?

*Courtenay.* Even so, fair lady.

*Elizabeth.* You know to flatter  
ladies.

*Courtenay.* Nay, I meant  
True matters of the heart.

*Elizabeth.* My heart, my Lord,  
Is no great party in the state as yet.

*Courtenay.* Great, said you? nay,  
you shall be great. I love you,  
Lay my life in your hands. Can you  
be close?

*Elizabeth.* Can you, my Lord?

*Courtenay.* Close as a miser's  
casket.

Listen:

The King of France, Noailles the Ambassador,  
The Duke of Suffolk and Sir Peter Carew,  
Sir Thomas Wyatt. I myself, some others,  
Have sworn this Spanish marriage shall not be.  
If Mary will not hear us—well—conjecture—  
Were I in Devon with my wedded bride,  
The people there so worship me—  
Your ear;  
You shall be Queen.

*Elizabeth.* You speak too low, my Lord;  
I cannot hear you.

*Courtenay.* I'll repeat it.  
*Elizabeth.* No! Stand further off, or you may lose your head.

*Courtenay.* I have a head to lose for your sweet sake.

*Elizabeth.* Have you, my Lord? Best keep it for your own.

Nay, pout not, cousin.  
Not many friends are mine, except indeed  
Among the many. I believe you mine;  
And so you may continue mine, farewell,  
And that at once.

*Enter MARY, behind.*

*Mary.* Whispering—leagued together  
To bar me from my Philip.

*Courtenay.* Pray—consider—  
*Elizabeth (seeing the Queen).*  
Well, that's a noble horse of yours, my Lord.

I trust that he will carry you well today,  
And heal your headache.

*Courtenay.* You are wild; what headache?  
Heartache, perchance; not headache.

*Elizabeth (aside to Courtenay).*  
Are you blind?

[*Courtenay sees the Queen and exit. Exit Mary.*]

*Enter LORD WILLIAM HOWARD.*

*Howard.* Was that my Lord of Devon? do not you  
Be seen in corners with my Lord of Devon.  
He hath fallen out of favor with the Queen.

She fears the Lords may side with you and him  
Against her marriage; therefore is he dangerous.

And if this Prince of fluff and feather come  
To woo you, niece, he is dangerous everyway.

*Elizabeth.* Not very dangerous that way, my good uncle.

*Howard.* But your own state is full of danger here.

The disaffected, heretics, reformers,  
Look to you as the one to crown their ends.

Mix not yourself with any plot I pray you;

Nay, if by chance you hear of any such,

Speak not thereof—no, not to your best friend,

Lest you should be confounded with it. Still—

Perinde ac cadaver—as the priest says,

You know your Latin—quiet as a dead body.

What was my Lord of Devon telling you?

*Elizabeth.* Whether he told me anything or not,

I follow your good counsel, gracious uncle.

Quiet as a dead body.

*Howard.* You do right well. I do not care to know; but this I charge you,

Tell Courtenay nothing. The Lord Chancellor

(I count it as a kind of virtue in him,

He hath not many), as a mastiff dog

May love a puppy cur for no more reason  
 Than that the twain have been tied up together,  
 Thus Gardiner—for the two were fellow-prisoners  
 So many years in yon accursed Tower—  
 Hath taken to this Courtenay. Look to it, niece,  
 He hath no fence when Gardiner questions him;  
 All oozes out; yet him—because they know him  
 The last White Rose, the last Plantagenet  
 (Nay, there is Cardinal Pole, too), the people  
 Claim as their natural leader—ay, some say,  
 That you shall marry him, make him King belike.

*Elizabeth.* Do they say so, good uncle?

*Howard.* Ay, good niece!

You should be plain and open with me, niece.

You should not play upon me.

*Elizabeth.* No, good uncle.

*Enter GARDINER.*

*Gardiner.* The Queen would see your Grace upon the moment.

*Elizabeth.* Why, my lord Bishop?

*Gardiner.* I think she means to counsel your withdrawing  
 To Ashridge, or some other country house.

*Elizabeth.* Why, my lord Bishop?

*Gardiner.* I do but bring the message, know no more.

Your Grace will hear her reasons from herself.

*Elizabeth.* 'Tis mine own wish fulfill'd before the word

Was spoken, for in truth I had meant to crave

Permission of her Highness to retire  
 To Ashridge, and pursue my studies there.

*Gardiner.* Madam, to have the wish before the word

Is man's good Fairy—and the Queen is yours.

I left her with rich jewels in her hand,

Whereof 'tis like enough she means to make

A farewell present to your Grace.

*Elizabeth.* My Lord,

I have the jewel of a loyal heart.

*Gardiner.* I doubt it not, Madam, most loyal. [*Bows low and exit.*]

*Howard.* See,

This comes of parleying with my Lord of Devon.

Well, well, you must obey; and I myself

Believe it will be better for your welfare.

Your time will come.

*Elizabeth.* I think my time will come.

Uncle,

I am of sovereign nature, that I know,  
 Not to be quell'd; and I have felt within me

Stirrings of some great doom when God's just hour

Peals—but this fierce old Gardiner—his big baldness,

That irritable forelock which he rubs,

His buzzard beak and deep-incavern'd eyes

Half fright me.

*Howard.* You've a bold heart; keep it so.

He cannot touch you save that you turn traitor;

And so take heed I pray you—you are one

Who love that men should smile upon you, niece.

They'd smile you into treason—some of them.

*Elizabeth.* I spy the rock beneath the smiling sea.

But if this Philip, the proud Catholic prince,

And this bald priest, and she that hates me, seek

In that lone house, to practise on my life,

By poison, fire, shot, stab—

*Howard.* They will not, niece.  
Mine is the fleet and all the power at  
sea—

Or will be in a moment. If they  
dared  
To harm you, I would blow this  
Philip and all  
Your trouble to the dogstar and the  
devil.

*Elizabeth.* To the Pleiads, uncle;  
they have lost a sister.

*Howard.* But why say that? what  
have you done to lose her?  
Come, come, I will go with you to the  
Queen. *[Exeunt.]*

## SCENE V.

A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY *with PHILIP'S miniature.*  
ALICE.

*Mary (kissing the miniature).* Most  
goodly, Kinglike and an Em-  
peror's son,—  
A king to be,—is he not noble, girl?

*Alice.* Goodly enough, your Grace,  
and yet, methinks,  
I have seen goodlier.

*Mary.* Ay; some waxen doll  
Thy baby eyes have rested on, belike;  
All red and white, the fashion of our  
land.

But my good mother came (God rest  
her soul)

Of Spain, and I am Spanish in my-  
self,

And in my likings.

*Alice.* By your Grace's leave  
Your royal mother came of Spain, but  
took

To the English red and white. Your  
royal father  
(For so they say) was all pure lily and  
rose

In his youth, and like a lady.

*Mary.* O, just God!  
Sweet mother, you had time and cause  
enough

To sicken of his lilies and his roses.  
Cast off, betray'd, defamed, divorced,  
forlorn!

And then the King—that traitor past  
forgiveness,

The false archbishop fawning on him,  
married

The mother of Elizabeth—a heretic  
Ev'n as *she* is; but God hath sent me  
here

To take such order with all heretics  
That it shall be, before I die, as tho'  
My father and my brother had not  
lived.

What wast thou saying of this Lady  
Jane,

Now in the Tower?

*Alice.* Why, Madam, she was  
passing  
Some chapel down in Essex, and with  
her

Lady Anne Wharton, and the Lady  
Anne

Bow'd to the Pyx; but Lady Jane  
stood up

Stiff as the very backbone of heresy.  
And wherefore bow ye not, says Lady  
Anne,

To him within there who made  
Heaven and Earth?

I cannot, and I dare not, tell your  
Grace

What Lady Jane replied.

*Mary.* But I will have it.

*Alice.* She said—pray pardon me,  
and pity her—

She hath harken'd evil counsel—ah!  
she said,

The baker made him.

*Mary.* Monstrous! blasphemous!  
She ought to burn. Hence, thou

*(Exit Alice).* No—being trai-  
tor

Her head will fall: shall it? she is  
but a child.

We do not kill the child for doing  
that

His father whipt him into doing—a  
head

So full of grace and beauty! would  
that mine

Were half as gracious! O, my lord  
to be,

My love, for thy sake only.

I am eleven years older than he is.

But will he care for that?

No, by the holy Virgin, being noble,  
But love me only: then the bastard  
sprout,

My sister, is far fairer than myself.  
Will he be drawn to her?

No, being of the true faith with my-  
self.

Paget is for him—for to wed with  
Spain

Would treble England—Gardiner is  
against him;

The Council, people, Parliament  
against him;

But I will have him! My hard father  
hated me;

My brother rather hated me than  
loved;

My sister cowers and hates me. Holy  
Virgin,

Plead with thy blessed Son; grant me  
my prayer:

Give me my Philip; and we two will  
lead

The living waters of the Faith  
again

Back thro' their widow'd channel  
here, and watch

The parch'd banks rolling incense, as  
of old,

To heaven, and kindled with the  
palms of Christ!

*Enter USHER.*

Who waits, sir?

*Usher.* Madam, the Lord Chan-  
cellor.

*Mary.* Bid him come in. (*Enter*  
GARDINER.) Good morning,  
my good Lord. [*Exit Usher.*

*Gardiner.* That every morning of  
your Majesty

May be most good, is every morning's  
prayer

Of your most loyal subject, Stephen  
Gardiner.

*Mary.* Come you to tell me this,  
my Lord?

*Gardiner.* And more.

Your people have begun to learn your  
worth.

Your pious wish to pay King Ed-  
ward's debts,

Your lavish household curb'd, and  
the remission

Of half that subsidy levied on the  
people,

Make all tongues praise and all hearts  
beat for you.

I'd have you yet more loved: the  
realm is poor,

The exchequer at neap-tide: we  
might withdraw

Part of our garrison at Calais.

*Mary.* Calais!

Our one point on the main, the gate  
of France!

I am Queen of England; take mine  
eyes, mine heart,

But do not lose me Calais.

*Gardiner.* Do not fear it.

Of that hereafter. I say your Grace  
is loved.

That I may keep you thus, who am  
your friend

And ever faithful counsellor, might I  
speak?

*Mary.* I can forespeak your speak-  
ing. Would I marry

Prince Philip, if all England hate  
him? That is

Your question, and I front it with  
another:

Is it England, or a party? Now, your  
answer.

*Gardiner.* My answer is, I wear  
beneath my dress

A shirt of mail: my house hath been  
assaulted,

And when I walk abroad, the popu-  
lace,

With fingers pointed like so many  
daggers,

Stab me in fancy, hissing Spain and  
Phillip;

And when I sleep, a hundred men-at-  
arms

Guard my poor dreams for England.  
Men would murder me,

Because they think me favorer of this  
marriage.

*Mary.* And that were hard upon  
you, my Lord Chancellor.

*Gardiner.* But our young Earl of  
Devon—

*Mary.* Earl of Devon?

I freed him from the Tower, placed  
him at Court;

I made him Earl of Devon, and—the  
fool—

He wrecks his health and wealth on  
courtesans,  
And rolls himself in carrion like a  
dog.

*Gardiner.* More like a school-boy  
that hath broken bounds,  
Sickenng himself with sweets.

*Mary.* I will not hear of him.  
Good, then, they will revolt: but I  
am Tudor,  
And shall control them.

*Gardiner.* I will help you, Madam,  
Even to the utmost. All the church  
is grateful.

You have ousted the mock priest, re-  
pulpited

The shepherd of St. Peter, raised the  
rood again,

And brought us back the mass. I am  
all thanks

To God and to your Grace: yet I  
know well,

Your people, and I go with them so  
far,

Will brook nor Pope nor Spaniard  
here to play

The tyrant, or in commonwealth or  
church.

*Mary (showing the picture).* Is this  
the face of one who plays the  
tyrant?

Peruse it; is it not goodly, ay, and  
gentle?

*Gardiner.* Madam, methinks a  
cold face and a haughty.

And when your Highness talks of  
Courtenay—

Ay, true—a goodly one. I would his  
life

Were half as goodly (*aside*).

*Mary.* What is that you mutter?

*Gardiner.* Oh, Madam, take it  
bluntly; marry Philip,

And be stepmother of a score of sons!  
The Prince is known in Spain, in  
Flanders, ha!

For Philip—

*Mary.* You offend us; you may  
leave us.

You see thro' warping glasses.

*Gardiner.* If your Majesty—

*Mary.* I have sworn upon the  
body and blood of Christ  
I'll none but Philip.

*Gardiner.* Hath your Grace so  
sworn?

*Mary.* Ay, Simon Renard knows  
it.

*Gardiner.* News to me!  
It then remains for your poor Gardi-  
ner,

So you still care to trust him some-  
what less

Than Simon Renard, to compose the  
event

In some such form as least may harm  
your Grace.

*Mary.* I'll have the scandal  
sounded to the mud.

I know it a scandal.

*Gardiner.* All my hope is now  
It may be found a scandal.

*Mary.* You offend us.

*Gardiner (aside).* These princes  
are like children, must be  
physick'd,

The bitter in the sweet. I have lost  
mine office,

It may be thro' mine honesty, like a  
fool. [*Exit.*]

*Enter USHER.*

*Mary.* Who waits?

*Usher.* The Ambassador from  
France, your Grace.

*Mary (sits down).* Bid him come  
in. Good morning, Sir de  
Noailles, [*Exit Usher.*]

*Noailles (entering).* A happy morn-  
ing to your Majesty.

*Mary.* And I should some time  
have a happy morning:

I have had none yet. What says the  
King your master?

*Noailles.* Madam, my master hears  
with much alarm.

That you may marry Philip, Prince of  
Spain—

Foreseeing, with whate'er unwilling-  
ness,

That if this Philip be the titular  
king  
Of England, and at war with him,  
your Grace  
And kingdom will be suck'd into the  
war,  
Ay, tho' you long for peace; where-  
fore, my master,  
If but to prove your Majesty's good-  
will,  
Would fain have some fresh treaty  
drawn between you.

*Mary.* Why some fresh treaty?  
wherefore should I do it?

Sir, if we marry, we shall still main-  
tain  
All former treaties with his Majesty.  
Our royal word for that! and your  
good master,  
Pray God he do not be the first to  
break them,  
Must be content with that; and so,  
farewell.

*Noailles (going, returns).* I would  
have you seen Philip ever other,  
Madam,

For I foresee dark days.

*Mary.* And so do I, sir;  
Your master works against me in the  
dark.

I do believe he help Northumberland  
Against me.

*Noailles.* Nay, pure phantasy, your  
Grace.

Why should he move against you?

*Mary.* Will you hear why?  
Mary of Scotland,—for I have not  
own'd

My sister, and I will not,—after  
me

Is heir of England; and my royal  
father,

To make the crown of Scotland one  
with ours,

Had mark'd her for my brother Ed-  
ward's bride;

Ay, but your king stole her a babe  
from Scotland

In order to betroth her to your Dau-  
phin.

See then:

Mary of Scotland, married to your  
Dauphin,

Would make our England, France;  
Mary of England, joining hands with  
Spain,  
Would be too strong for France.

Yea, were there issue born to her,  
Spain and we,  
One crown, might rule the world.  
There lies your fear.

That is your drift. You play at hide  
and seek.

Show me your faces!

*Noailles.* Madam, I am amazed:  
French, I must needs wish all good  
things for France.

That must be pardon'd me; but I  
protest

Your Grace's policy hath a farther  
flight

Than mine into the future. We but  
seek

Some settled ground for peace to  
stand upon.

*Mary.* Well, we will leave all this,  
sir, to our council.

Have you seen Philip ever?

*Noailles.* Only once.

*Mary.* Is this like Philip?

*Noailles.* Ay, but nobler-look-  
ing.

*Mary.* Hath he the large ability  
of the Emperor?

*Noailles.* No, surely.

*Mary.* I can make allowance for  
thee,

Thou speakest of the enemy of thy  
king.

*Noailles.* Make no allowance for  
the naked truth.

He is every way a lesser man than  
Charles;

Stone-hard, ice-cold—no dash of dar-  
ing in him.

*Mary.* If cold, his life is pure.

*Noailles.* Why (smiling), no, in-  
deed.

*Mary.* Sayst thou?

*Noailles.* A very wanton life in-  
deed (smiling).

*Mary.* Your audience is concluded,  
sir. [Exit Noailles.

You cannot  
Learn a man's nature from his nat-  
ural foe.

*Enter USHER.*

Who waits?

*Usher.* The Ambassador of Spain,  
your Grace. [*Exit.*]

*Enter SIMON RENARD.*

*Mary (rising to meet him).* Thou  
art ever welcome, Simon Re-  
nard. Hast thou  
brought me the letter which thine  
Emperor promised  
long since, a formal offer of the hand  
Of Philip?

*Renard.* Nay, your Grace, it hath  
not reach'd me.  
I know not wherefore—some mis-  
chance of flood,  
And broken bridge, or spavin'd horse,  
or wave  
And wind at their old battle: he  
must have written.

*Mary.* But Philip never writes me  
one poor word,  
Which in his absence had been all  
my wealth.  
Strange in a wooer!

*Renard.* Yet I know the  
Prince,  
So your king-parliament suffer him to  
land,  
Yeans to set foot upon your island  
shore.

*Mary.* God change the pebble  
which his kingly foot  
First presses into some more costly  
stone  
Than ever blinded eye. I'll have one  
mark it

And bring it me. I'll have it bur-  
nish'd firelike;  
I'll set it round with gold, with pearl,  
with diamond.

Let the great angel of the church  
come with him;  
Stand on the deck and spread his  
wings for sail!

God lay the waves and strow the  
storms at sea,  
And here at land among the people I  
O Renard,  
I am much beset, I am almost in de-  
spair.

Paget is ours. Gardiner perchance is  
ours;

But for our heretic Parliament—

*Renard.* O Madam,  
You fly your thoughts like kites. My  
master, Charles,  
Bad you go softly with your heretics  
here,  
Until your throne had ceased to  
tremble. Then  
Spit them like larks for aught I care.

Besides,  
When Henry broke the carcase of  
your church

To pieces, there were many wolves  
among you  
Who dragg'd the scatter'd limbs into  
their den.

The Pope would have you make them  
render these;  
So would your cousin, Cardinal Pole;  
ill counsel!

These let them keep at present; stir  
not yet

This matter of the Church lands. At  
his coming  
Your star will rise.

*Mary.* My star! a baleful one.  
I see but the black night, and hear the  
wolf.

What star?

*Renard.* Your star will be your  
princely son,  
Heir of this England and the Nether-  
lands!

And if your wolf the while should  
howl for more,  
We'll dust him from a bag of Spanish  
gold.

I do believe, I have dusted some al-  
ready,  
That, soon or late, your Parliament is  
ours.

*Mary.* Why do they talk so foully  
of your Prince,

Renard?

*Renard.* The lot of Princes. To  
sit high  
Is to be lied about.

*Mary.* They call him cold,  
Haughty, ay, worse.

*Renard.* Why, doubtless, Philip  
shows



Some of the bearing of your blue  
blood—still  
All within measure—nay, it well be-  
comes him.

*Mary.* Hath he the large ability of  
his father?

*Renard.* Nay, some believe that  
he will go beyond him.

*Mary.* Is this like him?

*Renard.* Ay, somewhat; but your  
Philip  
Is the most princelike Prince beneath  
the sun.  
This is a daub to Philip.

*Mary.* Of a pure life?

*Renard.* As an angel among  
angels. Yea, by Heaven,  
The text—Your Highness knows it,  
'Whosoever  
Looketh after a woman,' would not  
graze

The Prince of Spain. You are happy  
in him there,  
Chaste as your Grace!

*Mary.* I am happy in him there.

*Renard.* And would be altogether  
happy, Madam,  
So that your sister were but look'd to  
closer.

You have sent her from the court,  
but then she goes,  
I warrant, not to hear the nightin-  
gales,

But hatch you some new treason in  
the woods.

*Mary.* We have our spies abroad  
to catch her tripping,  
And then if caught, to the tower.

*Renard.* The Tower! the block!  
The word has turn'd your Highness  
pale; the thing

Was no such scarecrow in your  
father's time.

I have heard, the tongue yet quiver'd  
with the jest

When the head leapt—so common! I  
do think

To save your crown that it must come  
to this.

*Mary.* No, Renard; it must  
never come to this.

*Renard.* Not yet; but your old  
Traitors of the Tower—

Why, when you put Northumberland  
to death,  
The sentence having past upon them  
all,

Spared you the Duke of Suffolk,  
Guildford Dudley,  
Ev'n that young girl who dared to  
wear your crown?

*Mary.* Dared? nay, not so; the  
child obey'd her father.  
Spite of her tears her father forced it  
on her.

*Renard.* Good Madam, when the  
Roman wish'd to reign,  
He slew not him alone who wore the  
purple,

But his assessor in the throne, per-  
chance  
A child more innocent than Lady  
Jane.

*Mary.* I am English Queen, not  
Roman Emperor.

*Renard.* Yet too much mercy is a  
want of mercy,  
And wastes more life. Stamp out the  
fire, or this

Will smoulder and re-flame, and burn  
the throne  
Where you should sit with Philip: he  
will not come

Till she be gone.

*Mary.* Indeed, if that were true—  
For Philip comes, one hand in mine,  
and one  
Steadying the tremulous pillars of the  
Church—

But no, no, no. Farewell. I am  
somewhat faint  
With our long talk. Tho' Queen, I  
am not Queen

Of mine own heart, which every now  
and then  
Beats me half dead: yet stay, this  
golden chain—

My father on a birthday gave it  
me,  
And I have broken with my father—  
take

And wear it as memorial of a morn-  
ing

Which found me full of foolish doubts,  
and leaves me  
As hopeful.

*Renard (aside).* Whew—the folly of all follies  
Is to be love-sick for a shadow.  
(*Aloud*) Madam,  
This chains me to your service, not  
with gold,  
But dearest links of love. Farewell,  
and trust me,  
Philip is yours. [*Exit.*]

*Mary.* Mine—but not yet all mine.

*Enter USHER.*

*Usher.* Your Council is in Session,  
please your Majesty.

*Mary.* Sir, let them sit. I must have time to breathe.  
*No, say I come. (Exit Usher.)* I won by boldness once.  
The Emperor counsell'd me to fly to Flanders.  
I would not; but a hundred miles I rode,  
Sent out my letters, call'd my friends together,  
Struck home and won.  
And when the Council would not crown me—thought  
To bind me first by oaths I could not keep,  
And keep with Christ and conscience—was it boldness  
Or weakness that won there? when I, their Queen,  
Cast myself down upon my knees before them,  
And those hard men brake into woman-tears,  
Ev'n Gardiner, all amazed, and in that passion  
Gave me my Crown.

*Enter ALICE.*

Girl; hast thou ever heard Slanders against Prince Philip in our Court?

*Alice.* What slanders? I, your Grace; no, never.

*Mary.* Nothing?

*Alice.* Never, your Grace.

*Mary.* See that you neither hear them nor repeat!

*Alice (aside).* Good Lord! but I have heard a thousand such.  
Ay, and repeated them as often—mum!  
Why comes that old fox-Fleming back again?

*Enter RENARD.*

*Renard.* Madam, I scarce had left your Grace's presence  
Before I chanced upon the messenger  
Who brings that letter which we waited for—

The formal offer of Prince Philip's hand.

It craves an instant answer, Ay or No.

*Mary.* An instant Ay or No! the Council sits.  
Give it me quick.

*Alice (stepping before her).* Your Highness is all trembling.

*Mary.* Make way.

[*Exit into the Council Chamber.*]

*Alice.* O, Master Renard, Master Renard,  
If you have falsely painted your fine Prince;

Praised, where you should have blamed him, I pray God

No woman ever love you, Master Renard.

It breaks my heart to hear her moan at night

As tho' the nightmare never left her bed.

*Renard.* My pretty maiden, tell me, did you ever Sigh for a beard?

*Alice.* That's not a pretty question.

*Renard.* Not prettily put? I mean, my pretty maiden,

A pretty man for such a pretty maiden.

*Alice.* My Lord of Devon is a pretty man.

I hate him. Well, but if I have, what then?

*Renard.* Then, pretty maiden, you should know that whether

A wind be warm or cold, it serves to fan

A kindled fire.

*Alice.* According to the song.

His friends would praise him, I believed  
'em,

His foes would blame him, and I scorn'd  
'em.

His friends—as Angels I received 'em,  
His foes—the Devil had suborn'd 'em.

*Renard.* Peace, pretty maiden.  
I hear them stirring in the Council  
Chamber.

Lord Paget's 'Ay' is sure—who else?  
and yet,

They are all too much at odds to close  
at once

In one full-throated No! Her High-  
ness comes.

*Enter MARY.*

*Alice.* How deathly pale!—a chair,  
your Highness.

[*Bringing one to the Queen.*

*Renard.* Madam,  
The Council?

*Mary.* Ay! My Philip is all  
mine.

[*Sinks into chair, half fainting.*

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.—ALINGTON CASTLE.

*Sir Thomas Wyatt.* I do not hear  
from Carew or the Duke  
Of Suffolk, and till then I should not  
move.

The Duke hath gone to Leicester;  
Carew stirs

In Devon: that fine porcelain Courte-  
nay,

Save that he fears he might be crack'd  
in using,

(I have known a semi-madman in my  
time

So fancy-ridd'n) should be in Devon  
too.

*Enter WILLIAM.*

News abroad, William?

*William.* None so new, Sir  
Thomas, and none so old, Sir Thomas.  
No new news that Philip comes to  
wed Mary, no old news that all men  
hate it. Old Sir Thomas would have  
hated it. The bells are ringing at  
Maidstone. Doesn't your worship  
hear?

*Wyatt.* Ay, for the Saints are  
come to reign agáin,  
Most like it is a Saint's-day. There's  
no call

As yet for me; so in this pause,  
before

The mine be fired, it were a pious  
work

To string my father's sonnets, left  
about

Like loosely-scatter'd jewels, in fair  
order,

And head them with a lamer rhyme of  
mine,

To grace his memory.

*William.* Ay, why not, Sir Thomas?  
He was a fine courtier, he; Queen  
Anne loved him. All the women  
loved him. I loved him; I was in  
Spain with him. I couldn't eat in  
Spain, I couldn't sleep in Spain. I  
hate Spain, Sir Thomas.

*Wyatt.* But thou could'st drink in  
Spain if I remember.

*William.* Sir Thomas, we may  
grant the wine. Old Sir Thomas  
always granted the wine.

*Wyatt.* Hand me the casket with  
my father's sonnets.

*William.* Ay—sonnets—a fine  
courtier of the old Court, old Sir  
Thomas. [*Exit.*

*Wyatt.* Courtier of many courts, he  
loved the more

His own gray towers, plain life and  
letter'd peace,

To read and rhyme in solitary fields,  
The lark above, the nightingale be-  
low,

And answer them in song. The sire  
begets

Not half his likeness in the son. I  
fail

Where he was fullest: yet—to write  
it down. [*He writes.*

Re-enter WILLIAM.

*William.* There is news, there is news, and no call for sonnet-sorting now, nor for sonnet-making either, but ten thousand men on Penenden Heath all calling after your worship, and your worship's name heard into Maidstone Market, and your worship the first man in Kent and Christendom, for the Queen's down, and the world's up, and your worship a-top of it.

*Wyatt.* Inverted Æsop—mountain out of mouse.  
Say for ten thousand ten—and pot-house knaves,  
Brain-dizzied with a draught of morning ale.

Enter ANTONY KNYVETT.

*William.* Here's Antony Knyvett.

*Knyvett.* Look you, Master Wyatt, Tear up that woman's work there.

*Wyatt.* No; not these,  
Dumb children of my father, that will speak  
When I and thou and all rebellions lie  
Dead bodies without voice. Song flies you know  
For ages.

*Knyvett.* Tut, your sonnet's a flying ant,  
Wing'd for a moment.

*Wyatt.* Well, for mine own work,  
[Tearing the paper.]  
It lies there in six pieces at your feet;  
For all that I can carry it in my head.

*Knyvett.* If you can carry your head upon your shoulders.

*Wyatt.* I fear you come to carry it off my shoulders,  
And sonnet-making's safer.

*Knyvett.* Why, good Lord,  
Write you as many sonnets as you will.

Ay, but not now; what, have you eyes, ears, brains?

This Philip and the black-faced swarms of Spain,  
The hardest, cruellest people in the world,

Come locusting upon us, eat us up,

Confiscate lands, goods, money—  
Wyatt, Wyatt,  
Wake, or the stout old island will become

A rotten limb of Spain. They roar for you

On Penenden Heath, a thousand of them—more—

All arm'd, waiting a leader; there's no glory

Like his who saves his country; and you sit

Sing-singing here; but, if I'm any judge,

By God, you are as poor a poet, Wyatt,

As a good soldier.

*Wyatt.* You as poor a critic  
As an honest friend: you stroke me on one cheek,

Buffet the other: Come, you bluster, Antony!

You know I know all this. I must not move

Until I hear from Carew and the Duke.

I fear the mine is fired before the time.

*Knyvett (showing a paper).* But here's some Hebrew. Faith, I half forgot it.

Look; can you make it English? A strange youth

Suddenly thrust it on me, whisper'd, 'Wyatt,'

And whisking round a corner, show'd his back

Before I read his face.

*Wyatt.* Ha! Courtenay's cipher.

[Reads.]  
'Sir Peter Carew fled to France: it is thought the Duke will be taken. I am with you still; but, for appearance sake, stay with the Queen. Gardiner knows, but the Council are all at odds, and the Queen hath no force for resistance. Move, if you move, at once.'

Is Peter Carew fled? Is the Duke taken?  
Down scabbard, and out sword! and let Rebellion

Roar till throne rock, and crown fall.

No; not that;

But we will teach Queen Mary how to reign.

Who are those that shout below there?

*Knyvett.* Why, some fifty  
That follow'd me from Penenden  
Heath in hope

To hear you speak.

*Wyatt.* Open the window, Knyvett;  
The mine is fired, and I will speak to them.

Men of Kent; England of England; you that have kept your old customs upright, while all the rest of England bow'd theirs to the Norman, the cause that hath brought us together is not the cause of a county or a shire, but of this England, in whose crown our Kent is the fairest jewel. Philip shall not wed Mary; and ye have called me to be your leader. I know Spain. I have been there with my father; I have seen them in their own land; have marked the haughtiness of their nobles; the cruelty of their priests. If this man marry our Queen, however the Council and the Commons may fence round his power with restriction, he will be King, King of England, my masters; and the Queen, and the laws, and the people, his slaves. What? shall we have Spain on the throne and in the parliament; Spain in the pulpit and on the law-bench; Spain in all the great offices of state; Spain in our ships, in our forts, in our houses, in our beds?

*Crowd.* No! no! no Spain!

*William.* No Spain in our beds—that were worse than all. I have been there with old Sir Thomas, and the beds I know. I hate Spain.

*A Peasant.* But, Sir Thomas, must we levy war against the Queen's Grace?

*Wyatt.* No, my friend; war for the Queen's Grace—to save her from herself and Philip—war against Spain. And think not we shall be alone—thousands will flock to us. The Coun-

cil, the Court itself, is on our side. The Lord Chancellor himself is on our side. The King of France is with us; the King of Denmark is with us; the world is with us—war against Spain! And if we move not now, yet it will be known that we have moved; and if Philip come to be King, O, my God! the rope, the rack, the thumbscrew, the stake, the fire. If we move not now, Spain moves, bribes our nobles with her gold, and creeps, creeps snake-like about our legs till we cannot move at all; and ye know, my masters, that wherever Spain hath ruled she hath wither'd all beneath her. Look at the New World—a paradise made hell; the red man, that good helpless creature, starved, maim'd, flogg'd, flay'd, burn'd, boil'd, buried alive, worried by dogs; and here, nearer home, the Netherlands, Sicily, Naples, Lombardy. I say no more—only this, their lot is yours. Forward to London with me! forward to London! If ye love your liberties or your skins, forward to London!

*Crowd.* Forward to London! A

Wyatt! a Wyatt!

*Wyatt.* But first to Rochester, to take the guns

From out the vessels lying in the river.

Then on.

*A Peasant.* Ay, but I fear we be too few, Sir Thomas.

*Wyatt.* Not many yet. The world as yet, my friend, is not half-waked; but every parish tower

Shall clang and clash alarum as we pass,

And pour along the land, and swell'n and fed

With indraughts and side-currents, in full force

Roll upon London.

*Crowd.* A Wyatt! a Wyatt! Forward!

*Knyvett.* Wyatt, shall we proclaim Elizabeth?

*Wyatt.* I'll think upon it, Knyvett.

*Knyvett.* Or Lady Jane?

*Wyatt.* No, poor soul; no.  
Ah, gray old castle of Alington,  
green field  
Beside the brimming Medway, it may  
chance  
That I shall never look upon you  
more.

*Knyvett.* Come, now, you're sonnet-  
ting again.

*Wyatt.* Not I.  
I'll have my head set higher in the  
state;

Or—the Lord God will it—on the  
stake. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—GUILDHALL.

SIR THOMAS WHITE (The Lord  
Mayor), LORD WILLIAM HOWARD,  
SIR RALPH BAGENHALL, ALDER-  
MEN and CITIZENS.

*White.* I trust the Queen comes  
hither with her guards.

*Howard.* Ay, all in arms.  
*[Several of the citizens move hastily  
out of the hall.]*

Why do they hurry out there?

*White.* My Lord, cut out the rotten  
from your apple,  
Your apple eats the better. Let  
them go.

They go like those old Pharisees in  
John

Convicted by their conscience, arrant  
cowards,  
Or tamperers with that treason out of  
Kent.

When will her Grace be here?

*Howard.* In some few minutes.  
She will address your guilds and com-  
panies.

I have striven in vain to raise a man  
for her,

But help her in this exigency, make  
Your city loyal, and be the mightiest  
man

This day in England.

*White.* I am Thomas White.  
Few things have fail'd to which I set  
my will.

I do my most and best.

*Howard.* You know that after  
The Captain Brett, who went with  
your train bands

To fight with Wyatt, had gone over  
to him

With all his men, the Queen in that  
distress

Sent Cornwallis and Hastings to the  
traitor,

Feigning to treat with him about her  
marriage—

Know too what Wyatt said.

*White.* He'd sooner be,  
While this same marriage question  
was being argued,

Trusted than trust—the scoundrel—  
and demanded

Possession of her person and the  
Tower.

*Howard.* And four of her poor  
Council too, my Lord,

As hostages.

*White.* I know it. What do and  
Say your Council at this hour?

*Howard.* I will trust you.  
We fling ourselves on you, my Lord.

The Council,  
The Parliament as well, are troubled  
waters;

And yet like waters of the fen they  
know not

Which way to flow. All hangs on  
her address,

And upon you, Lord Mayor.

*White.* How look'd the city  
When now you past it? Quiet?

*Howard.* Like our Council,  
Your city is divided. As we past,  
Some hail'd, some hiss'd us. There  
were citizens

Stood each before his shut-up booth,  
and look'd

As grim and grave as from a funeral.  
And here a knot of ruffians all in  
rags,

With execrating execrable eyes,  
Glared at the citizen. Here was a  
young mother,

Her face on flame, her red hair all  
blown back,

She shrilling 'Wyatt,' while the boy  
she held

Mimick'd and piped her 'Wyatt,' as  
red as she

In hair and cheek; and almost elbow-  
ing her,

So close they stood, another, mute as  
death,

And white as her own milk; her babe  
in arms

Had felt the faltering of his mother's  
heart,

And look'd as bloodless. Here a  
pious Catholic,

Mumbling and mixing up in his  
scared prayers

Heaven and earth's Maries; over his  
bow'd shoulder

Scowl'd that world-hated and world-  
hating beast,

A haggard Anabaptist. Many such  
groups.

The names of Wyatt, Elizabeth, Cour-  
tenay,

Nay the Queen's right to reign—'fore  
God, the rogues—

Were freely buzzed among them. So  
I say

Your city is divided, and I fear  
One scruple, this or that way, of suc-  
cess

Would turn it thither. Wherefore  
now the Queen

In this low pulse and palsy of the  
state,

Bad me to tell you that she counts  
on you

And on myself as her two hands; on  
you,

In your own city, as her right, my  
Lord,

For you are loyal.

*White.* Am I Thomas White?  
One word before she comes. Eliza-  
beth—

Her name is much abused among  
these traitors.

Where is she? She is loved by all of  
us.

I scarce have heart to mingle in this  
matter,

If she should be mishar dled.

*Howard.* No; she shall not.  
The Queen had written her word to  
come to court:

Methought I smelt out Renard in the  
letter,

And fearing for her, sent a secret  
missive,

Which told her to be sick. Happily  
or not,

It found her sick indeed.

*White.* God send her well;

Here comes her Royal Grace.

*Enter Guards, MARY, and GARDINER. SIR THOMAS WHITE leads her to a raised seat on the dais.*

*White.* I, the Lord Mayor, and  
these our companies

And guilds of London, gathered here,  
beseech

Your Highness to accept our lowliest  
thanks

For your most princely presence;  
and we pray

That we, your true and loyal citi-  
zens,

From your own royal lips, at once  
may know

The wherefore of this coming, and so  
learn

Your royal will, and do it.—I, Lord  
Mayor

Of London, and our guilds and com-  
panies.

*Mary.* In mine own person am I  
come to you,

To tell you what indeed ye see and  
know,

How traitorously these rebels out of  
Kent

Have made strong head against our-  
selves and you.

They would not have me wed the  
Prince of Spain;

That was their pretext—so they spake  
at first—

But we sent divers of our Council to  
them,

And by their answers to the question  
ask'd,

It doth appear this marriage is the  
least

Of all their quarrel.

They have betrayed the treason of  
their hearts:

Seek to possess our person, hold our  
 Tower,  
 Place and displace our councillors,  
 and use  
 Both us and them according as they  
 will.  
 Now what I am ye know right well—  
 your Queen;  
 To whom, when I was wedded to the  
 realm  
 And the realm's laws (the spousal  
 ring whereof,  
 Not ever to be laid aside, I wear  
 Upon this finger), ye did promise full  
 Allegiance and obedience to the  
 death.  
 Ye know my father was the rightful  
 heir  
 Of England, and his right came down  
 to me,  
 Corroborate by your acts of Parlia-  
 ment:  
 And as ye were most loving unto him,  
 So doubtless will ye show yourselves  
 to me.  
 Wherefore, ye will not brook that  
 anyone  
 Should seize our person, occupy our  
 state,  
 More specially a traitor so presump-  
 tuous  
 As this same Wyatt, who hath tam-  
 per'd with  
 A public ignorance, and, under color  
 Of such a cause as hath no color,  
 seeks  
 To bend the laws to his own will, and  
 yield  
 Full scope to persons rascal and for-  
 lorn,  
 To make free spoil and havoc of  
 your goods.  
 Now as your Prince, I say,  
 I, that was never mother, cannot tell  
 How mothers love their children; yet,  
 methinks,  
 A prince as naturally may love his  
 people  
 As these their children; and be sure  
 your Queen  
 So loves you, and so loving, needs  
 must deem  
 This love by you return'd as heartily;

And thro' this common knot and bond  
 of love,  
 Doubt not they will be speedily over-  
 thrown.  
 As to this marriage, ye shall under-  
 stand  
 We made thereto no treaty of our-  
 selves,  
 And set no foot theretoward unadvised  
 Of all our Privy Council; further-  
 more,  
 This marriage had the assent of those  
 to whom  
 The king, my father, did commit his  
 trust;  
 Who not alone esteen'd it honorable,  
 But for the wealth and glory of our  
 realm,  
 And all our loving subjects, most ex-  
 pedient.  
 As to myself,  
 I am not so set on wedlock as to  
 choose  
 But where I list, nor yet so amorous  
 That I must needs be husbanded; I  
 thank God,  
 I have lived a virgin, and I noway  
 doubt  
 But that with God's grace, I can live  
 so still.  
 Yet if it might please God that I should  
 leave  
 Some fruit of mine own body after  
 me,  
 To be your king, ye would rejoice  
 thereat,  
 And it would be your comfort, as I  
 trust;  
 And truly, if I either thought or knew  
 This marriage should bring loss or  
 danger to you,  
 My subjects, or impair in any way  
 This royal state of England, I would  
 never  
 Consent thereto, nor marry while I  
 live;  
 Moreover, if this marriage should not  
 seem,  
 Before our own High Court of Parlia-  
 ment,  
 To be of rich advantage to our realm,  
 We will refrain, and not alone from  
 this,



Likewise from any other, out of which  
Looms the least chance of peril to our realm.  
Wherefore be bold, and with your lawful Prince  
Stand fast against our enemies and yours,  
And fear them not. I fear them not.  
My Lord,  
I leave Lord William Howard in your city,  
To guard and keep you whole and safe from all  
The spoil and sackage aim'd at by these rebels,  
Who mouth and foam against the Prince of Spain.

*Voices.* Long live Queen Mary!  
Down with Wyatt!  
The Queen!

*White.* Three voices from our guilds and companies!  
You are shy and proud like Englishmen, my masters,  
And will not trust your voices. Understand:  
Your lawful Prince hath come to cast herself  
On loyal hearts and bosoms, hoped to fall  
Into the wide-spread arms of fealty,  
And finds you statues. Speak at once—and all!  
For whom?  
Our sovereign Lady by King Harry's will;  
The Queen of England—or the Kentish Squire?  
I know you loyal. Speak! in the name of God!  
The Queen of England or the rabble of Kent?  
The reeking dungfork master of the mace!  
Your havings wasted by the scythe and spade—  
Your rights and charters hobnail'd into slush—  
Your houses fired—your gutters bubbling blood—  
*Acclamation.* No! No! The Queen! the Queen!

*White.* Your Highness hears  
This burst and bass of loyal harmony,  
And how we each and all of us abhor  
The venomous, bestial, devilish revolt  
Of Thomas Wyatt. Hear us now  
make oath

To raise your Highness thirty thousand men,  
And arm and strike as with one hand,  
and brush

This Wyatt from our shoulders, like a flea  
That might have leapt upon us unawares.

Swear with me, noble fellow-citizens,  
all,

With all your trades, and guilds, and companies.

*Citizens.* We swear!

*Mary.* We thank your Lordship  
and your loyal city.

[*Exit Mary attended.*]

*White.* I trust this day, thro' God,  
I have saved the crown.

*First Alderman.* Ay, so my Lord  
of Pembroke in command  
Of all her force be safe; but there are doubts.

*Second Alderman.* I hear that Gardiner,  
coming with the Queen,  
And meeting Pembroke, bent to his saddle-bow,

As if to win the man by flattering him.  
*Is he so safe to fight upon her side?*

*First Alderman.* If not, there's no man safe.

*White.* Yes, Thomas White.  
I am safe enough; no man need flatter me.

*Second Alderman.* Nay, no man need; but did you mark our Queen?

The color freely play'd into her face,  
And the half sight which makes her look so stern,  
Seem'd thro' that dim dilated world of hers,

To read our faces; I have never seen her

So keenly or so goodly.

*White.* Courage, sir,  
That makes our man or woman look  
their goodliest.

Die like the torn fox dumb, but never  
whine  
Like that poor heart, Northumberland,  
at the block.

*Bagenhall.* The man had children,  
and he whined for those.  
Methinks most men are but poor-  
hearted, else  
Should we so doat on courage, were it  
commoner?

The Queen stands up, and speaks for  
her own self;  
And all men cry, She is queenly, she  
is goodly.

Yet she's no goodlier; tho' my Lord  
Mayor here,  
By his own rule, he hath been so bold  
to-day,  
Should look more goodly than the  
rest of us.

*White.* Goodly? I feel most  
goodly heart and hand,  
And strong to throw ten Wyatts and  
all Kent.

Ha! ha! sir; but you jest; I love it:  
a jest  
In time of danger shows the pulses  
even.

Be merry! yet, Sir Ralph, you look  
but sad.

I dare avouch you'd stand up for  
yourself,  
Tho' all the world should bay like  
winter wolves.

*Bagenhall.* Who knows? the man  
is proven by the hour.

*White.* The man should make the  
hour, not this the man;  
And Thomas White will prove this  
Thomas Wyatt.

And he will prove an Iden to this Cade,  
And he will play the Walworth to  
this Wat;

Come, sirs, we prate; hence all—  
gather your men—

Myself must bustle. Wyatt comes to  
Southwark;

I'll have the drawbridge hewn into the  
Thames,

And see the citizens arm'd. Good  
day; good day. [*Exit White.*]

*Bagenhall.* One of much outdoor  
bluster.

*Howard.* For all that,  
Most honest, brave, and skilful; and  
his wealth  
A fountain of perennial alms—his  
fault

So thoroughly to believe in his own  
self.

*Bagenhall.* Yet thoroughly to be-  
lieve in one's own self,  
So one's own self be thorough, were  
to do

Great things, my Lord.

*Howard.* It may be.

*Bagenhall.* I have heard  
One of your Council flier and jeer at  
him.

*Howard.* The nursery-cocker'd  
child will jeer at aught  
That may seem strange beyond his  
nursery.

The statesman that shall jeer and  
flier at men,

Makes enemies for himself and for  
his king;

And if he jeer not seeing the true  
man

Behind his folly, he is thrice the fool;  
And if he see the man and still will  
jeer,

He is child and fool, and traitor to  
the State.

Who is he? let me shun him.

*Bagenhall.* Nay, my Lord,  
He is damn'd enough already.

*Howard.* I must set  
The guard at Ludgate. Fare you well,  
Sir Ralph.

*Bagenhall.* 'Who knows?' I am  
for England. But who knows,  
That knows the Queen, the Spaniard,  
and the Pope,

Whether I be for Wyatt, or the  
Queen? [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—LONDON BRIDGE.

*Enter SIR THOMAS WYATT and  
BRETT.*

*Wyatt.* Brett, when the Duke of  
Norfolk moved against us



"BY THAT OLD BRIDGE WHICH, HALF IN RUINS THEN."—Page 125.



Thou cried'st 'A Wyatt!' and flying  
to our side  
Left his all bare, for which I love  
thee, Brett.

Have for thine asking aught that I  
can give,  
For thro' thine help we are come to  
London Bridge;

But how to cross it balks me. I fear  
we cannot.

*Brett.* Nay, hardly, save by boat,  
swimming, or wings.

*Wyatt.* Last night I climb'd into  
the gate-house, Brett,  
And scared the gray old porter and  
his wife.

And then I crept along the gloom and  
saw

They had hewn the drawbridge down  
into the river.

It roll'd as black as death; and that  
same tide

Which, coming with our coming,  
seem'd to smile

And sparkle like our fortune as thou  
saidest,

Ran sunless down, and moan'd  
against the piers.

But o'er the chasm I saw Lord Wil-  
liam Howard

By torchlight, and his guard; four  
guns gaped at me,

Black, silent mouths: had Howard  
spied me there

And made them speak, as well he  
might have done,

Their voice had left me none to tell  
you this.

What shall we do?

*Brett.* On somehow. To go back  
were to lose all.

*Wyatt.* On, over London Bridge  
We cannot: stay we cannot; there is  
ordnance

On the White Tower and on the  
Devi's Tower,

And pointed full at Southwark; we  
must round

By Kingston Bridge.

*Brett.* Ten miles about.

*Wyatt.* Ev'n so.

But I have notice from our parti-  
sans

Within the city that they will stand  
by us  
If Ludgate can be reach'd by dawn to-  
morrow.

*Enter one of WYATT'S men.*

*Man.* Sir Thomas, I've found this  
paper; pray your worship read it; I  
know not my letters; the old priests  
taught me nothing.

*Wyatt (reads).* 'Whosoever will  
apprehend the traitor Thomas Wyatt  
shall have a hundred pounds for re-  
ward.'

*Man.* Is that it? That's a big lot  
of money.

*Wyatt.* Ay, ay, my friend; not read  
it? 'tis not written

Half plain enough. Give me a piece  
of paper!

[*Writes* 'THOMAS WYATT' large.  
There, any man can read that.

[*Sticks it in his cap.*

*Brett.* But that's foolhardy.

*Wyatt.* No! boldness, which will  
give my followers boldness.

*Enter MAN with a prisoner.*

*Man.* We found him, your wor-  
ship, a plundering o' Bishop Winches-  
ter's house; he say's he's a poor  
gentleman.

*Wyatt.* Gentleman! a thief! Go  
hang him. Shall we make  
Those that we come to serve our  
sharpest foes?

*Brett.* Sir Thomas—

*Wyatt.* Hang him, I say.

*Brett.* Wyatt, but now you prom-  
ised me a boon.

*Wyatt.* Ay, and I warrant this fine  
fellow's life,

*Brett.* Ev'n so; he was my neigh-  
bor once in Kent,

He's poor enough, has drunk and  
gambled out

All that he had, and gentleman he  
was.

We have been glad together; let him  
live.

*Wyatt.* He has gambled for his  
life, and lost, he hangs.

No, no, my word's my word. Take  
thy poor gentleman!  
Gamble thyself at once out of my  
sight,  
Or I will dig thee with my dagger.  
Away!  
Women and children!

*Enter a Crowd of WOMEN and Children.*

*First Woman.* O Sir Thomas, Sir Thomas, pray you go away, Sir Thomas, or you'll make the White Tower a black 'un for us this blessed day. He'll be the death on us; and you'll set the Devil's Tower a-spitting, and he'll smash all our bits o' things worse than Philip o' Spain.

*Second Woman.* Don't ye now go to think that we be for Philip o' Spain.

*Third Woman.* No, we know that ye be come to kill the Queen, and we'll pray for you all on our bended knees. But o' God's mercy don't ye kill the Queen here, Sir Thomas; look ye, here's little Dickon, and little Robin, and little Jenny—though she's but a side-cousin—and all on our knees, we pray you to kill the Queen further off, Sir Thomas.

*Wyatt.* My friends, I have not come to kill the Queen  
Or here or there: I come to save you  
all,

And I'll go further off.

*Crowd.* Thanks, Sir Thomas, we be beholden to you, and we'll pray for you on our bended knees till our lives' end.

*Wyatt.* Be happy, I am your friend. To Kingston, forward!  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—ROOM IN THE GATEHOUSE OF WESTMINSTER PALACE.

MARY, ALICE, GARDINER, RENARD, LADIES.

*Gardiner.* Their cry is, Philip never shall be king.

*Mary.* Lord Pembroke in command of all our force

Will front their cry and shatter them into dust.

*Alice.* Was not Lord Pembroke with Northumberland?  
O madam, if this Pembroke should be false?

*Mary.* No, girl; most brave and loyal, brave and loyal.  
His breaking with Northumberland broke Northumberland.  
At the park gate he hovers with our guards.  
These Kentish ploughmen cannot break the guards.

*Enter MESSENGER.*

*Messenger.* Wyatt, your Grace, hath broken thro' the guards  
And gone to Ludgate.

*Gardiner.* Madam, I much fear  
That all is lost; but we can save your Grace.  
The river still is free. I do beseech you,

There yet is time, take boat and pass to Windsor.

*Mary.* I pass to Windsor and I lose my crown.

*Gardiner.* Pass, then, I pray your Highness, to the Tower.

*Mary.* I shall but be their prisoner in the Tower.

*Cries without.* The traitor! treason! Pembroke!

*Ladies.* Treason! treason!

*Mary.* Peace.

False to Northumberland, is he false to me?

Bear witness, Renard, that I live and die

The true and faithful bride of Philip—  
—A sound

Of feet and voices thickening hither—  
blows—

Hark, there is battle at the palace gates,

And I will out upon the gallery.

*Ladies.* No, no, your Grace; see there the arrows flying.

*Mary.* I am Harry's daughter, Tudor, and not Fear.

[*Goes out on the gallery.*]

The guards are all driven in, skulk  
into corners  
Like rabbits to their holes. A gra-  
cious guard  
Truly; shame on them! they have  
shut the gates!

*Enter* SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

*Southwell.* The porter, please your  
Grace, hath shut the gates  
On friend and foe. Your gentlemen-  
at-arms,  
If this be not your Grace's order, cry  
To have the gates set wide again, and  
they  
With their good battleaxes will do  
you right  
Against all traitors.

*Mary.* They are the flower of Eng-  
land; set the gates wide.  
[*Exit* Southwell.]

*Enter* COURTENAY.

*Courtenay.* All lost, all lost, all  
yielded! A barge, a barge!  
The Queen must to the Tower.

*Mary.* Whence come you, sir?

*Courtenay.* From Charing Cross;  
the rebels broke us there,  
And I sped hither with what haste I  
might

To save my royal cousin.

*Mary.* Where is Pembroke?

*Courtenay.* I left him somewhere  
in the thick of it.

*Mary.* Left him and fled; and  
thou that wouldst be King,  
And hast nor heart nor honor. I my-  
self

Will down into the battle and there bide  
The upshot of my quarrel, or die with  
those

That are no cowards and no Courte-  
nays.

*Courtenay.* I do not love your  
Grace should call me coward.

*Enter another* MESSENGER.

*Messenger.* Over, your Grace, all  
crush'd; the brave Lord Wil-  
liam

Thrust him from Ludgate, and the  
traitor flying  
To Temple Bar, there by Sir Maurice  
Berkeley  
Was taken prisoner.

*Mary.* To the Tower with him!

*Messenger.* 'Tis said he told Sir  
Maurice there was one  
Cognizant of this, and party there-  
unto,  
My Lord of Devon.

*Mary.* To the Tower with him!

*Courtenay.* O la, the Tower, the  
Tower, always the Tower,  
I shall grow into it—I shall be the  
Tower.

*Mary.* Your Lordship may not  
have so long to wait.

Remove him!

*Courtenay.* La, to whistle out my  
life,  
And carve my coat upon the walls  
again!

[*Exit* Courtenay guarded.]

*Messenger.* Also this Wyatt did  
confess the Princess  
Cognizant thereof, and party there-  
unto.

*Mary.* What? whom—whom did  
you say?

*Messenger.* Elizabeth,  
Your Royal sister.

*Mary.* To the Tower with her!  
My foes are at my feet and I am  
Queen.

[*Gardiner and her Ladies kneel to  
her.*

*Gardiner (rising).* There let them  
lie, your footstool! (*Aside.*)  
Can I strike

Elizabeth?—not now and save the life  
Of Devon: if I save him, he and his  
Are bound to me—may strike here-  
after.

(*Aloud.*) Madam,  
What Wyatt said, or what they said  
he said,

Cries of the moment and the street—  
*Mary.* He said it.

*Gardiner.* Your courts of justice  
will determine that.

*Renard (advancing).* I trust by this  
your Highness will allow

Some spice of wisdom in my telling  
 you,  
 When last we talk'd, that Philip would  
 not come  
 Till Guildford Dudley and the Duke  
 of Suffolk,  
 And Lady Jane had left us.  
*Mary.* They shall die.  
*Renard.* And your so loving sister?  
*Mary.* She shall die.  
 My foes are at my feet, and Philip  
 King. [Exeunt.]

*Bagenhall.* Sir, this dead fruit was  
 ripening overmuch,  
 And had to be removed lest living  
 Spain  
 Should sicken at dead England.  
*Stafford.* Not so dead,  
 But that a shock may rouse her.  
*Bagenhall.* I believe  
 Sir Thomas Stafford?  
*Stafford.* I am ill disguised.  
*Bagenhall.* Well, are you not in  
 peril here?  
*Stafford.* I think so.

I came to feel the pulse of England,  
 whether  
 It beats hard at this marriage. Did  
 you see it?  
*Bagenhall.* Stafford, I am a sad  
 man and a serious.  
 Far liefer had I in my country hall  
 Been reading some old book, with  
 mine old hound  
 Couch'd at my hearth, and mine old  
 flask of wine  
 Beside me, than have seen it: yet I  
 saw it.

*Stafford.* Good, was it splendid?  
*Bagenhall.* Ay, if Dukes, and  
 Earls,  
 And Counts, and sixty Spanish cava-  
 liers,  
 Some six or seven Bishops, diamonds,  
 pearls,  
 That royal commonplace too, cloth of  
 gold,  
 Could make it so.

*Stafford.* And what was Mary's  
 dress?

*Bagenhall.* Good faith, I was too  
 sorry for the woman  
 To mark the dress. She wore red  
 shoes!

*Stafford.* Red shoes!  
*Bagenhall.* Scarlet, as if her feet  
 were wash'd in blood,  
 As if she had waded in it.

*Stafford.* Were your eyes  
 So bashful that you look'd no higher?

*Bagenhall.* A diamond,  
 And Philip's gift, as proof of Philip's  
 love,  
 Who hath not any for any,—tho' a  
 true one,

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE CONDUIT IN  
GRACE-CHURCH,

*I visited with the Nine Worthies, among  
 them King Henry VIII. holding a  
 book, on it inscribed 'Verbum Dei.'*

*Enter SIR RALPH BAGENHALL and  
 SIR THOMAS STAFFORD.*

*Bagenhall.* A hundred here and  
 hundreds hang'd in Kent.  
 The tigress had unsheath'd her nails  
 at last,  
 And Renard and the Chancellor  
 sharpen'd them.  
 In every London street a gibbet stood.  
 They are down to-day. Here by this  
 house was one;  
 The traitor husband dangled at the  
 door,  
 And when the traitor wife came out  
 for bread  
 To still the petty treason therewithin,  
 Her cap would brush his heels.

*Stafford.* It is Sir Ralph,  
 And muttering to himself as hereto-  
 fore.

Sir, see you aught up yonder?  
*Bagenhall.* I miss something.  
 The tree that only bears dead fruit is  
 gone.

*Stafford.* What tree, sir?  
*Bagenhall.* Well, the tree in  
 Virgil, sir,  
 That bears not its own apples.

*Stafford.* What! the gallows?



Blazed false upon her heart.

*Stafford.* But this proud Prince—

*Bagenhall.* Nay, he is King, you know, the King of Naples.

The father ceded Naples, that the son

Being a King, might wed a Queen,—  
O he

Flamed in brocade—white satin his trunk-hose,

Inwrought with silver,—on his neck a collar,

Gold, thick with diamonds; hanging down from this

The Golden Fleece—and round his knee, misplaced,

Our English Garter, studded with great emeralds,

Rubies, I know not what. Have you had enough

Of all this gear?

*Stafford.* Ay, since you hate the telling it.

How look'd the Queen?

*Bagenhall.* No fairer for her jewels.

And I could see that as the new-made couple

Came from the Minster, moving side by side

Beneath one canopy, ever and anon

She cast on him a vassal smile of love, Which Philip with a glance of some distaste,

Or so methought, return'd. I may be wrong, sir.

This marriage will not hold.

*Stafford.* I think with you. The King of France will help to break it.

*Bagenhall.* France!

We once had half of France, and hurl'd our battles

Into the heart of Spain; but England now

Is but a ball chuck'd between France and Spain,

His in whose hand she drops; Harry of Bolingbroke

Had holpen Richard's tottering throne to stand,

Could Harry have foreseen that all our nobles

Would perish on the civil slaughter-field,

And leave the people naked to the crown,

And the crown naked to the people; the crown

Female, too! Sir, no woman's regimen

Can save us. We are fallen, and as I think,

Never to rise again.

*Stafford.* You are too black-blooded.

I'd make a move myself to hinder that:

I know some lusty fellows there in France.

*Bagenhall.* You would but make us weaker, Thomas Stafford.

Wyatt was a good soldier, yet he fail'd,

And strengthen'd Philip.

*Stafford.* Did not his last breath Clear Courtenay and the Princess

from the charge

Of being his co-rebels?

*Bagenhall.* Ay, but then

What such a one as Wyatt says is nothing:

We have no men among us. The new Lords

Are quieted with their sop of Abbey-lands,

And ev'n before the Queen's face Gardiner buys them

With Philip's gold. All greed, no faith, no courage!

Why, ev'n the haughty prince, North-umberland,

The leader of our Reformation, knelt

And blubber'd like a lad, and on the scaffold

Recanted, and resold himself to Rome.

*Stafford.* I swear you do your country wrong, Sir Ralph.

I know a set of exiles over there, Dare-devils, that would eat fire and spit it out

At Philip's beard: they pillage Spain already.

The French King winks at it. An hour will come

When they will sweep her from the seas. No men?  
 Did not Lord Suffolk die like a true man?  
 Is not Lord William Howard a true man?  
 Yea, you yourself, altho' you are black-blooded:  
 And I, by God, believe myself a man.

Ay, even in the church there is a man—Cranmer.

Fly would he not, when all men bad him fly.

And what a letter he wrote against the Pope!

There's a brave man, if any.

*Bagenhall.* Ay; if it hold.

*Crowd (coming on).* God save their Graces!

*Stafford.* Bagenhall, I see The Tudor green and white. (*Trumpets.*) They are coming now. And here's a crowd as thick as her-ring-shoals.

*Bagenhall.* Be limpets to this pillar, or we are torn

Down the strong wave of brawlers.

*Crowd.* God save their Graces!

[*Procession of Trumpeters, javelinmen, etc.; then Spanish and Flemish Nobles intermingled.*

*Stafford.* Worth seeing, Bagenhall! These black dog-Dons

Garb themselves bravely. Who's the long-face there,

Looks very Spain of very Spain?

*Bagenhall.* The Duke

Of Alva, an iron soldier.

*Stafford.* And the Dutchman, Now laughing at some jest?

*Bagenhall.* William of Orange, William the Silent.

*Stafford.* Why do they call him so?

*Bagenhall.* He keeps, they say, some secret that may cost

Philip his life.

*Stafford.* But then he looks so merry.

*Bagenhall.* I cannot tell you why they call him so.

[*The King and Queen pass, attended by Peers of the Realm,*

*Officers of State, etc., Cannon shot off.*

*Crowd.* Philip and Mary, Philip and Mary!

Long live the King and Queen, Philip and Mary!

*Stafford.* They smile as if content with one another.

*Bagenhall.* A smile abroad is oft a scowl at home.

[*King and Queen pass on. Procession.*

*First Citizen.* I thought this Philip had been one of those black devils of Spain, but he hath a yellow beard.

*Second Citizen.* Not red like Iscariot's.

*First Citizen.* Like a carrot's, as thou say'st, and English carrot's better than Spanish licorice; but I thought he was a beast.

*Third Citizen.* Certain I had heard that every Spaniard carries a tail like a devil under his trunk-hose.

*Tailor.* Ay, but see what trunk-hoses! Lord! they be fine; I never stich'd none such. They make amends for the tails.

*Fourth Citizen.* Tut! every Spanish priest will tell you that all English heretics have tails.

*Fifth Citizen.* Death and the Devil—if he find I have one—

*Fourth Citizen.* Lo! thou hast call'd them up! here they come—a pale horse for Death and Gardiner for the Devil.

*Enter GARDINER (turning back from the procession).*

*Gardiner.* Knave, wilt thou wear thy cap before the Queen.

*Man.* My Lord, I stand so squeezed among the crowd.

I cannot lift my hands unto my head.

*Gardiner.* Knock off his cap there, some of you about him!

See there be others that can use their hands.

Thou art one of Wyatt's men?

*Man.* No, my Lord, no.

*Gardiner.* Thy name, thou knave?

*Man.* I am nobody, my Lord.  
*Gardiner* (*shouting*). God's passion! knave, thy name?  
*Man.* I have ears to hear.  
*Gardiner.* Ay, rascal, if I leave thee ears to hear.  
 Find out his name and bring it me (*to Attendant*).  
*Attendant.* Ay, my Lord.  
*Gardiner.* Knave, thou shalt lose thine ears and find thy tongue, And shalt be thankful if I leave thee that.  
 [*Coming before the Conduit.* The conduit painted—the nine worthies—ay!  
 But then what's here? King Harry with a scroll.  
 Ha—*Verbum Dei—verbum—word of God!*  
 God's passion! do you know the knave that painted it?  
*Attendant.* I do, my Lord.  
*Gardiner.* Tell him to paint it out, And put some fresh device in lieu of it—  
 A pair of gloves, a pair of gloves, sir; ha?  
 There is no heresy there.  
*Attendant.* I will, my Lord; The man shall paint a pair of gloves.  
 I am sure  
 (*Knowing the man*) he wrought it ignorantly,  
 And not from any malice.  
*Gardiner.* Word of God In English! over this the brainless loons  
 That cannot spell *Esaias* from St. Paul,  
 Make themselves drunk and mad, fly out and flare  
 Into rebellions. I'll have their bibles burnt.  
 The bible is the priest's. Ay! fellow, what!  
 Stand staring at me! shout, you gaping rogue!  
*Man.* I have, my Lord, shouted till I am hoarse.  
*Gardiner.* What hast thou shouted, knave?  
*Man.* Long live Queen Mary!

*Gardiner.* Knave, there be two. There be both King and Queen, Philip and Mary. Shout!  
*Man.* Nay, but, my Lord, The Queen comes first, Mary and Philip.  
*Gardiner.* Shout, then, Mary and Philip!  
*Man.* Mary and Philip!  
*Gardiner.* Now, Thou hast shouted for thy pleasure, shout for mine!  
 Philip and Mary!  
*Man.* Must it be so, my Lord?  
*Gardiner.* Ay, knave.  
*Man.* Philip and Mary!  
*Gardiner.* I distrust thee. Thine is a half voice and a lean assent. What is thy name?  
*Man.* Sanders.  
*Gardiner.* What else?  
*Man.* Zerubbabel.  
*Gardiner.* Where dost thou live?  
*Man.* In Cornhill.  
*Gardiner.* Where, knave, where?  
*Man.* Sign of the Talbot.  
*Gardiner.* Come to me to-morrow.—  
 Rascal!—this land is like a hill of fire, One crater opens when another shuts. But so I get the laws against the heretic,  
 Spite of Lord Paget and Lord William Howard,  
 And others of our Parliament, revived, I will show fire on my side—stake and fire—  
 Sharp work and short. The knaves are easily cow'd.  
 Follow their Majesties.  
 [*Exit. The crowd following.*  
*Bagenhall.* As proud as Becket.  
*Stafford.* You would not have him murder'd as Becket was?  
*Bagenhall.* No—murder fathers murder: but I say  
 There is no man—there was one woman with us—  
 It was a sin to love her married, dead I cannot choose but love her.  
*Stafford.* Lady Jane?  
*Crowd* (*going off*). God save their Graces!

*Stafford.* Did you see her die?

*Bagenhall.* No, no; her innocent blood had blinded me.

You call me too black-blooded—true enough

Her dark dead blood is in my heart with mine.

If ever I cry out against the Pope  
Her dark dead blood that ever moves  
with mine

Will stir the living tongue and make  
the cry.

*Stafford.* Yet doubtless you can tell  
me how she died?

*Bagenhall.* Seventeen—and knew  
eight languages—in music  
Peerless—her needle perfect, and her  
learning

Beyond the churchmen; yet so meek,  
so modest,

So wife-like humble to the trivial boy  
Mismatch'd with her for policy! I  
have heard

She would not take a last farewell of  
him,

She fear'd it might unman him for  
his end.

She could not be unmann'd—no, nor  
outwoman'd—

Seventeen—a rose of grace!

Girl never breathed to rival such a  
rose;

Rose never blew that equal'd such a  
bud.

*Stafford.* Pray you go on.

*Bagenhall.* She came upon the  
scaffold,

And said she was condemn'd to die  
for treason;

She had but follow'd the device of  
those

Her nearest kin: she thought they  
knew the laws.

But for herself, she knew but little  
law,

And nothing of the titles to the  
crown;

She had no desire for that, and wrung  
her hands,

And trusted God would save her thro'  
the blood

Of Jesus Christ alone.

*Stafford.* Pray you go on.

*Bagenhall.* Then knelt and said  
the Miserere Mei—

But all in English, mark you; rose  
again,

And, when the headsman pray'd to be  
forgiven,

Said 'You will give me my true  
crown at last,

But do it quickly;' then all wept but  
she,

Who changed not color when she  
saw the block,

But ask'd him, childlike: 'Will you  
take it off

Before I lay me down?' 'No, madam,'  
he said,

Gasping; and when her innocent eyes  
were bound,

She, with her poor blind hands feeling  
—'where is it?

Where is it?—You must fancy that  
which follow'd,

If you have heart to do it!

*Crowd (in the distance).* God save  
their Graces!

*Stafford.* Their Graces, our dis-  
graces! God confound them!

Why, she's grown bloodier! when I  
last was here,

This was against her conscience—  
would be murder!

*Bagenhall.* The 'Thou shalt do no  
murder,' which God's hand

Wrote on her conscience, Mary rubb'd  
out pale—

She could not make it white—and  
over that,

Traced in the blackest text of Hell—  
'Thou shalt!'

And sign'd it—Mary!

*Stafford.* Philip and the Pope  
Must have sign'd too. I hear this

Legate's coming  
To bring us absolution from the

Pope.

The Lords and Commons will bow  
down before him—

You are of the house? what will you  
do, Sir Ralph?

*Bagenhall.* And why should I be  
bolder than the rest,

Or honestier than all?

*Stafford.* But, sir, if I—

And oversea they say this state of  
yours

Hath no more mortice than a tower  
of cards;

And that a puff would do it—then if I  
And others made that move I touch'd  
upon,

Back'd by the power of France, and  
landing here,

Came with a sudden splendor, shout,  
and show,

And dazzled men and deafen'd by  
some bright

Loud venture, and the people so  
unquiet—

And I the race of murder'd Bucking-  
ham—

Not for myself, but for the king-  
dom—Sir,

I trust that you would fight along  
with us.

*Bagenhall.* No; you would fling  
your lives into the gulf.

*Stafford.* But if this Philip, as he's  
like to do,

Left Mary a wife-widow here alone,  
Set up a viceroy, sent his myriads  
hither

To seize upon the forts and fleet, and  
make us

A Spanish province; would you not  
fight then?

*Bagenhall.* I think I should fight  
then.

*Stafford.* I am sure of it.

Hist! there's the face coming on here  
of one

Who knows me. I must leave you.

Fare you well,

You'll hear of me again.

*Bagenhall.* Upon the scaffold.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—ROOM IN WHITEHALL  
PALACE.

MARY. *Enter PHILIP and  
CARDINAL POLE.*

*Pole.* Ave Maria, gratia plena,  
Benedicta tu in mulieribus.

*Mary.* Loyal and royal cousin,  
humblest thanks.

Had you a pleasant voyage up the  
river?

*Pole.* We had your royal barge,  
and that same chair,  
Or rather throne of purple, on the  
deck.

Our silver cross sparkled before the  
prow,

The ripples twinkled at their diamond-  
dance,

The boats that follow'd, were as  
glowing-gay

As regal gardens; and your flocks of  
swans,

As fair and white as angels; and  
your shores

Wore in mine eyes the green of Par-  
adise.

My foreign friends, who dream'd us  
blanketed

In ever-closing fog, were much  
amazed

To find as fair a sun as might have  
flash'd

Upon their lake of Garda, fire the  
Thames;

Our voyage by sea was all but miracle;  
And here the river flowing from the  
sea,

Not toward it (for they thought not  
of our tides),

Seem'd as a happy miracle to make  
glide—

In quiet—home your banish'd coun-  
tryman.

*Mary.* We heard that you were  
sick in Flanders, cousin.

*Pole.* A dizziness.

*Mary.* And how came you  
round again?

*Pole.* The scarlet thread of Rahab  
saved her life;

And mine, a little letting of the  
blood.

*Mary.* Well? now?

*Pole.* Ay, cousin, as the  
heathen giant

Had but to touch the ground, his  
force return'd—

Thus, after twenty years of banish-  
ment,

Feeling my native land beneath my  
foot,

I said thereto: 'Ah, native land of mine,  
Thou art much beholden to this foot of mine,  
That hastes with full commission from the Pope  
To absolve thee from thy guilt of heresy.  
Thou hast disgraced me and attained me,  
And mark'd me ev'n as Cain, and I return  
As Peter, but to bless thee: make me well.'

Methinks the good land heard me, for to-day  
My heart beats twenty, when I see you, cousin.

Ah, gentle cousin, since your Herod's death,

How oft hath Peter knock'd at Mary's gate!

And Mary would have risen and let him in,

But, Mary, there were those within the house

Who would not have it.

*Mary.* True, good cousin Pole; And there were also those without the house

Who would not have it.

*Pole.* I believe so, cousin. State-policy and church-policy are conjoint,

But Janus-faces looking diverse ways. I fear the Emperor much misvalued me.

But all is well; 'twas ev'n the will of God,

Who, waiting till the time had ripen'd, now,

Makes me his mouth of holy greeting. 'Hail,

Daughter of God, and saver of the faith.

Sit benedictus fructus ventris tui!'

*Mary.* Ah, heaven!

*Pole.* Unwell, your Grace?

*Mary.* No, cousin, happy—Happy to see you; never yet so happy

Since I was crown'd.

*Pole.* Sweet cousin, you forget

That long low minster where you gave your hand  
To this great Catholic King.

*Philip.* Well said, Lord Legate.

*Mary.* Nay, not well said; I thought of you, my liege, Ev'n as I spoke.

*Philip.* Ay, Madam; my Lord Paget

Waits to present our Council to the Legate.

Sit down here, all; Madam, between us you.

*Pole.* Lo, now you are enclosed with boards of cedar,  
Our little sister of the Song of Songs!

You are doubly fenced and shielded sitting here

Between the two most high-set thrones on earth,

The Emperor's highness happily symbol'd by

The King your husband, the Pope's Holiness

By mine own self.

*Mary.* True, cousin, I am happy. When will you that we summon both our houses

To take this absolution from your lips,

And be regather'd to the Papal fold?

*Pole.* In Britain's calendar the brightest day

Beheld our rough forefathers break their Gods,

And clasp the faith in Christ; but after that

Might not St. Andrew's be her happiest day?

*Mary.* Then these shall meet upon St. Andrew's day.

*Enter PAGET, who presents the Council. Dumb show.*

*Pole.* I am an old man wearied with my journey.

Ev'n with my joy. Permit me to withdraw.

To Lambeth?

*Philip.* Ay, Lambeth has ousted Cranmer.

It was not meet the heretic swine  
should live  
In Lambeth.

*Mary.* There or anywhere, or at all.

*Philip.* We have had it swept and  
garnish'd after him.

*Pole.* Not for the seven devils to  
enter in?

*Philip.* No, for we trust they  
parted in the swine.

*Pole.* True, and I am the Angel of  
the Pope.

Farewell, your Graces.

*Philip.* Nay, not here—to me;  
I will go with you to the waterside.

*Pole.* Not be my Charon to the  
counterside?

*Philip.* No, my Lord Legate, the  
Lord Chancellor goes.

*Pole.* And unto no dead world;  
but Lambeth palace,

Henceforth a centre of the living  
faith.

[*Exeunt Philip, Pole, Paget, etc.*

*Manet Mary.*

*Mary.* He hath awaked! he hath  
awaked!

He stirs within the darkness!

Oh, Philip, husband! now thy love  
to mine

Will cling more close, and those bleak  
manners thaw,

That make me shamed and tongued  
in my love.

The second Prince of Peace—

The great unborn defender of the  
Faith,

Who will avenge me of mine enemies—

He comes, and my star rises,

The stormy Wyatts and Northumber-  
lands,

The proud ambitions of Elizabeth,  
And all her fieriest partisans—are pale

Before my star!

The light of this new learning wanes  
and dies:

The ghost of Luther and Zuinglius  
fade

Into the deathless hell which is their  
doom

Before my star!

His sceptre shall go forth from Ind to  
Ind!

His sword shall hew the heretic peo-  
ples down!

His faith shall clothe the world that  
will be his,

Like universal air and sunshine!  
Open,

Ye everlasting gates! The King is  
here!—

My star, my son!

*Enter PHILIP, DUKE OF ALVA, etc.*

Oh, Philip, come with me;  
Good news have I to tell you, news to  
make

Both of us happy—ay, the Kingdom  
too.

Nay come with me—one moment!

*Philip (to Alva).* More than  
that:

There was one here of late—William  
the Silent

They call him—he is free enough in  
talk,

But tells me nothing. You will be,  
we trust,

Sometime the viceroy of those prov-  
inces—

He must deserve his surname better.

*Alva.* Ay, sir;

Inherit the Great Silence.

*Philip.* True; the provinces  
Are hard to rule and must be hardly

ruled;

Most fruitful, yet, indeed, an empty  
rind,

All hollow'd out with stinging here-  
sies;

And for their heresies, Alva, they  
will fight;

You must break them or they break  
you.

*Alva (proudly).* The first.

*Philip.* Good!

Well, Madam, this new happiness of  
mine? [*Exeunt.*

*Enter THREE PAGES.*

*First Page.* News, mates! a mira-  
cle, a miracle! news!

The bells must ring; Te Deums must  
be sung;  
The Queen hath felt the motion of her  
babe!

*Second Page.* Ay; but see here!

*First Page.* See what?

*Second Page.* This paper, Dickon.  
I found it fluttering at the palace  
gates:—

'The Queen of England is delivered  
of a dead dog!'

*Third Page.* These are the things  
that madden her. Fie upon it!

*First Page.* Ay; but I hear she  
hath a dropsy, lad,

Or a high-dropsy, as the doctors call it.

*Third Page.* Fie on her dropsy, so  
she have a dropsy!

I know that she was ever sweet to me.

*First Page.* For thou and thine are  
Roman to the core.

*Third Page.* So thou and thine  
must be. Take heed!

*First Page.* Not I,

And whether this flash of news be  
false or true,

So the wine run, and there be revelry,  
Content am I. Let all the steeples  
clash,

Till the sun dance, as upon Easter  
Day. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—GREAT HALL IN  
WHITEHALL.

*At the far end a dias. On this three  
chairs, two under one canopy for  
MARY and PHILIP, another on the  
right of these for POLE. Under  
the dias on POLE'S side, ranged  
along the wall, sit all the Spirit-  
ual Peers, and along the wall  
opposite, all the Temporal. The  
Commons on cross benches in front,  
a line of approach to the dias be-  
tween them. In the foreground,  
SIR RALPH BAGENHALL and other  
Members of the Commons.*

*First Member.* St. Andrew's day;  
sit close, sit close, we are  
friends.

Is reconciled the word? the Pope  
again?

It must be thus; and yet, cocksbody!  
how strange

That Gardiner, once so one with all of  
us

Against this foreign marriage, should  
have yielded

So utterly!—strange! but stranger  
still that he,

So fierce against the Headship of the  
Pope,

Should play the second actor in this  
pageant

That brings him in; such a cameleon  
he!

*Second Member.* This Gardiner  
turn'd his coat in Henry's time;  
The serpent that hath slough'd will  
slough again.

*Third Member.* Tut, then we all  
are serpents.

*Second Member.* Speak for your-  
self.

*Third Member.* Ay, and for Gardi-  
ner! being English citizen,  
How should he bear a bridegroom  
out of Spain?

The Queen would have him! being  
English churchman

How should he bear the headship of  
the Pope?

The Queen would have it! States-  
men that are wise

Shape a necessity, as a sculptor clay,  
To their own model.

*Second Member.* Statesmen that  
are wise

Take truth herself for model. What  
say you?

[To Sir Ralph Bagenhall.

*Bagenhall.* We talk and talk.

*First Member.* Ay, and what use  
to talk?

Philip's no sudden alien—the Queen's  
husband,

He's here, and king, or will be—yet  
cocksbody!

So hated here! I watch'd a hive of late;  
My seven-years' friend was with me,

my young boy;  
Out crept a wasp, with half the swarm  
behind.



'Philip!' says he. I had to cuff the  
rogue  
For infant treason.

*Third Member.* But they say that  
bees,

If any creeping life invade their hive  
Too gross to be thrust out, will build  
him round,

And bind him in from harming of  
their combs.

And Philip by these articles is bound  
From stirring hand or foot to wrong  
the realm.

*Second Member.* By bonds of bees-  
wax, like your creeping thing;  
But your wise bees had stung him  
first to death.

*Third Member.* Hush, hush!  
You wrong the Chancellor: the  
clauses added

To that same treaty which the em-  
peror sent us

Were mainly Gardiner's: that no  
foreigner

Hold office in the household, fleet,  
forts, army;

That if the Queen should die without  
a child,

The bond between the kingdoms be  
dissolved;

That Philip should not mix us any way  
With his French wars—

*Second Member.* Ay, ay, but  
what security,

Good sir, for this, if Philip—

*Third Member.* Peace—the Queen,  
Phillip, and Pole. [*All rise, and stand.*]

*Enter MARY, PHILIP, and POLE.*

[*Gardiner conducts them to the  
three chairs of state. Philip sits  
on the Queen's left, Pole on her  
right.*]

*Gardiner.* Our short-lived sun, be-  
fore his winter plunge,  
Laughs at the last red leaf, and  
Andrew's Day.

*Mary.* Should not this day be  
held in after years

More solemn than of old?

*Phillip.* Madam, my wish  
Echoes your Majesty's.

*Pole.* It shall be so.

*Gardiner.* Mine echoes both your  
Grace's; (*aside:*) but the  
Pope—

Can we not have the Catholic church  
as well

Without as with the Italian? if we  
cannot,

Why then the Pope.

My lords of the upper house,  
And ye, my masters, of the lower  
house,

Do ye stand fast by that which ye re-  
solved?

*Voices.* We do.

*Gardiner.* And be you all one  
mind to supplicate

The Legate here for pardon, and ac-  
knowledge

The primacy of the Pope?

*Voices.* We are all one mind.

*Gardiner.* Then must I play the  
vassal to this Pole. [*Aside.*]

[*He draws a paper from under his  
robes and presents it to the King  
and Queen, who look through it  
and return it to him; then as-  
cends a tribune, and reads.*]

We, the Lords Spiritual and Tem-  
poral,

And Commons here in Parliament as-  
sembled,

Presenting the whole body of this  
realm

Of England, and dominions of the  
same,

Do make most humble suit unto your  
Majesties,

In our own name and that of all the  
state,

That by your gracious means and in-  
tercession

Our supplication be exhibited

To the Lord Cardinal Pole, sent here  
as Legate

From our most Holy Father Julius,  
Pope,

And from the Apostolic see of Rome;  
And do declare our penitence and  
grief

For our long schism and disobedi-  
ence.

Either in making laws and ordinances

Against the Holy Father's primacy,  
Or else by doing or by speaking  
    aught  
Which might impugn or prejudice the  
    same;

By this our supplication promising,  
As well for our own selves as all the  
    realm,  
That now we be and ever shall be  
    quick,  
Under and with your Majesties' au-  
    thorities,

To do to the utmost all that in us lies  
Towards the abrogation and repeal  
Of all such laws and ordinances  
    made;

Whereon we humbly pray your Maj-  
    esties,  
As persons undefiled with our offence,  
So to set forth this humble suit of  
    ours

That we the rather by your interces-  
    sion

May from the Apostolic see obtain,  
Thro' this most reverend Father, ab-  
    solution,

And full release from danger of all  
    censures

Of Holy Church that we be fall'n into,  
So that we may, as children penitent,  
Be once again received into the  
    bosom

And unity of Universal Church;  
And that this noble realm thro' after  
    years

May in this unity and obedience  
Unto the holy see and reigning Pope  
Serve God and both your Majesties.

*Voices.* Amen. [*All sit.*

*[He again presents the petition to  
the King and Queen, who hand  
it reverentially to Pole.*

*Pole (sitting).* This is the loveliest  
day that ever smiled

On England. All her breath should,  
incenselike,

Rise to the heavens in grateful praise  
of Him

Who now recalls her to His ancient  
fold.

Lo! once again God to this realm  
hath given

A token of His more especial Grace;

For as this people were the first of all  
The islands call'd into the dawning  
    church

Out of the dead, deep night of hea-  
    thendom,

So now are these the first whom God  
hath given

Grace to repent and sorrow for their  
    schism;

And if your penitence be not mockery,  
Oh how the blessed angels who re-  
    joice

Over one saved do triumph at this  
    hour

In the reborn salvation of a land  
So noble. [*A pause.*

For ourselves we do protest  
That our commission is to heal, not  
    harm;

We come not to condemn, but recon-  
    cile;

We come not to compel, but call  
    again;

We come not to destroy, but edify;  
Nor yet to question things already  
    done;

These are forgiven—matters of the  
    past—

And range with jetsam and with offal  
    thrown

Into the blind sea of forgetfulness.  
[*A pause.*

Ye have reversed the attainder laid  
    on us

By him who sack'd the house of  
    God; and we,

Amplier than any field on our poor  
    earth

Can render thanks in fruit for being  
    sown,

Do here and now repay you sixty-fold,  
A hundred, yea, a thousand thousand-  
    fold,

With heaven for earth.

*[Rising and stretching forth his  
hands. All kneel but Sir Ralph  
Bagenhall, who rises and re-  
mains standing.]*

The Lord who hath redeem'd us  
With His own blood, and wash'd us  
    from our sins,

To purchase for Himself a stainless  
    bride;

He, whom the Father hath appointed  
Head  
Of all his church, He by His mercy  
absolve you! [A pause.

And we by that authority Apostolic  
Given unto us, his Legate, by the  
Pope,

Our Lord and Holy Father, Julius,  
God's Vicar and Vicegerent upon  
earth,

Do here absolve you and deliver you  
And every one of you, and all the  
realm

And its dominions from all heresy,  
All schism, and from all and every  
censure,

Judgment, and pain accruing there-  
upon;

And also we restore you to the bosom  
And unity of Universal Church.

[Turning to Gardiner.  
Our letters of commission will declare  
this plainleir.

[Queen heard sobbing. Cries of  
Amen! Amen! Some of the  
Members embrace one another.  
All but Sir Ralph Bagenhall  
pass out into the neighboring  
chapel whence is heard the Te  
Deum.

Bagenhall. We strove against the  
papacy from the first,

In William's time, in our first Ed-  
ward's time,

And in my master Henry's time; but  
now,

The unity of Universal Church,  
Mary would have it; and this Gardi-  
ner follows;

The unity of Universal Hell,  
Philip would have it; and this Gardi-  
ner follows!

A Parliament of imitative apes!  
Sheep at the gap which Gardiner  
takes, who not  
Believes the Pope, nor any of them  
believe—

These spaniel-Spaniard English of the  
time,  
Who rub their fawning noses in the  
dust,

For that is Philip's gold-dust, and  
adore

This Vicar of their Vicar. Would I  
had been  
Born Spaniard! I had held my head  
up then.  
I am ashamed that I am Bagenhall,  
English.

Enter OFFICER.

Officer. Sir Ralph Bagenhall!

Bagenhall. What of that?

Officer. You were the one sole man  
in either house  
Who stood upright when both the  
houses fell.

Bagenhall. The houses fell!

Officer. I mean the houses knelt  
Before the Legate.

Bagenhall. Do not scrimp  
your phrase,  
But stretch it wider; say when Eng-  
land fell.

Officer. I say you were the one  
sole man who stood.

Bagenhall. I am the one sole man  
in either house,  
Perchance in England, loves her like  
a son.

Officer. Well, you one man, be-  
cause you stood upright,  
Her Grace the Queen commands you  
to the Tower.

Bagenhall. As traitor, or as here-  
tic, or for what?

Officer. If any man in any way  
would be  
The one man, he shall be so to his cost.  
Bagenhall. What! will she have  
my head?

Officer. A round fine likelier.  
Your pardon. [Calling to Attendant.  
By the river to the Tower.

[Exit.

SCENE IV.—WHITEHALL. A  
ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY, GARDINER, POLE, PAGET,  
BONNER, etc.

Mary. The King and I, my Lords,  
now that all traitors

Against our royal state have lost the heads  
 Wherewith they plotted in their treasonous malice,  
 Have talk'd together, and are well agreed  
 That those old statutes touching Lollardism  
 To bring the heretic to the stake, should be  
 No longer a dead letter, but requicken'd.

*One of the Council.* Why, what hath fluster'd Gardiner? how he rubs His forelock!

*Paget.* I have changed a word with him  
 In coming, and may change a word again.

*Gardiner.* Madam, your Highness is our sun, the King  
 And you together our two suns in one;  
 And so the beams of both may shine upon us,

The faith that seem'd to droop will feel your light,  
 Lift head, and flourish; yet not light alone,  
 There must be heat—there must be heat enough

To scorch and wither heresy to the root.

For what saith Christ? 'Compel them to come in.'

And what saith Paul? 'I would they were cut off  
 That trouble you.' Let the dead letter live!

Trace it in fire, that all the louts to whom

Their A B C is darkness, clowns and grooms

May read it! so you quash rebellion too,

For heretic and traitor are all one:  
 Two vipers of one breed—an amphibaena,

Each end a sting: Let the dead letter burn!

*Paget.* Yet there be some disloyal Catholics,  
 And many heretics loyal; heretic throats

Cried no God-bless-her to the Lady Jane,  
 But shouted in Queen Mary. So there be  
 Some traitor-heretic, there is axe and cord.

To take the lives of others that are loyal,  
 And by the churchman's pitiless doom of fire,

Were but a thankless policy in the crown,

Ay, and against itself; for there are many.

*Mary.* If we could burn out heresy,  
 my Lord Paget,  
 We need not tho' we lost this crown of England—

Ay! tho' it were ten Englands!

*Gardiner.* Right, your Grace.  
 Paget, you are all for this poor life of ours,

And care but little for the life to be.

*Paget.* I have some time, for curiousness, my Lord,  
 Watch'd children playing at their life to be,

And cruel at it, killing helpless flies;  
 Such is our time—all times for aught I know.

*Gardiner.* We kill the heretics that sting the soul—

They, with right reason, flies that prick the flesh.

*Paget.* They had not reach'd right reason; little children!

They kill'd but for their pleasure and the power

They felt in killing.

*Gardiner.* A spice of Satan, ha! Why, good! what then? granted!—we are fallen creatures;

Look to your Bible, Paget! we are fallen.

*Paget.* I am but of the laity, my Lord Bishop,

And may not read your Bible, yet I found

One day, a wholesome scripture,  
 'Little children,

Love one another.'

*Gardiner.* Did you find a scripture,  
 'I come not to bring peace but a sword'? The sword

Is in her Grace's hand to smite with.  
*Paget,*  
 You stand up here to fight for heresy,  
 You are more than guess'd at as a  
 heretic,  
 And on the steep-up track of the true  
 faith

Your lapses are far seen.

*Paget.* The faultless Gardiner!

*Mary.* You brawl beyond the ques-  
 tion; speak, Lord Legate!

*Pole.* Indeed, I cannot follow with  
 your Grace:

Rather would say—the shepherd doth  
 not kill

The sheep that wander from his flock,  
 but sends

His careful dog to bring them to the  
 fold.

Look to the Netherlands, wherein  
 have been

Such holocausts of heresy! to what  
 end?

For yet the faith is not established  
 there.

*Gardiner.* The end's not come.

*Pole.* No—nor this way  
 will come,

Seeing there lie two ways to every end,  
 A better and a worse—the worse is  
 here

To persecute, because to persecute  
 Makes a faith hated, and is further-  
 more

No perfect witness of a perfect faith  
 In him who persecutes: when men  
 are tost

On tides of strange opinion, and not  
 sure

Of their own selves, they are wroth  
 with their own selves,

And thence with others; then, who  
 lights the faggot?

Not the full faith, no, but the lurking  
 doubt.

Old Rome, that first made martyrs in  
 the Church,

Trembled for her own gods, for these  
 were trembling—

But when did our Rome tremble?

*Paget.* Did she not

In Henry's time and Edward's?

*Pole.* What, my Lord!

The Church on Peter's rock? never!

I have seen

A pine in Italy that cast its shadow  
 Athwart a cataract; firm stood the  
 pine—

The cataract shook the shadow. To  
 my mind,

The cataract typed the headlong  
 plunge and fall

Of heresy to the pit: the pine was  
 Rome.

You see, my Lords,

It was the shadow of the Church that  
 trembled;

Your church was but the shadow of a  
 church,

Wanting the Papal mitre.

*Gardiner (muttering).* Here be  
 tropes.

*Pole.* And tropes are good to clothe  
 a naked truth,

And make it look more seemly.

*Gardiner.*

Tropes again!

*Pole.* You are hard to please.

Then without tropes, my Lord,  
 An overmuch severeness, I repeat,

When faith is wavering makes the  
 waverer pass

Into more settled hatred of the doc-  
 trines

Of those who rule, which hatred by  
 and by

Involves the ruler (thus there springs  
 to light

That Centaur of a monstrous Com-  
 mon-weal,

The traitor-heretic) then tho' some  
 may quail,

Yet others are that dare the stake and  
 fire,

And their strong torment bravely  
 borne, begets

An admiration and an indignation,  
 And hot desire to imitate; so the

plague

Of schism spreads; were there but  
 three or four

Of these misleaders, yet I would not  
 say

Burn! and we cannot burn whole  
 towns; they are many,

As my Lord Paget says.

*Gardiner.* Yet my Lord Cardinal—

*Pole.* I am your Legate; please  
you let me finish.  
Methinks that under our Queen's  
regimen

We might go softlier than with crim-  
son rowel

And streaming lash. When Herod-  
Henry first

Began to batter at your English  
Church,

This was the cause, and hence the  
judgment on her.

She seethed with such adulteries, and  
the lives

Of many among your churchmen  
were so foul

That heaven wept and earth blush'd.  
I would advise

That we should thoroughly cleanse  
the Church within

Before these bitter statutes be re-  
quicken'd.

So after that when she once more is  
seen

White as the light, the spotless bride  
of Christ,

Like Christ himself on Tabor, possi-  
bly

The Lutheran may be won to her  
again;

Till when, my Lords, I counsel toler-  
ance.

*Gardiner.* What, if a mad dog bit  
your hand, my Lord,

Would you not chop the bitten finger  
off,

Lest your whole body should madden  
with the poison?

I would not, were I Queen, tolerate  
the heretic,

No, not an hour. The ruler of a land  
Is bounden by his power and place to  
see

His people be not poison'd. Tolerate  
them!

Why? do they tolerate you? Nay,  
many of them

Would burn—have burnt each other;  
call they not

The one true faith, a loathsome idol-  
worship?

Beware, Lord Legate, of a heavier  
crime

Than heresy is itself; beware, I say,  
Lest men accuse you of indifference  
To all faiths, all religion; for you  
know

Right well that you yourself have  
been supposed

Tainted with Lutheranism in Italy.

*Pole (angered).* But you, my Lord,  
beyond all supposition,

In clear and open day were congruent  
With that vile Cranmer in the ac-  
cursed lie

Of good Queen Catharine's divorce—  
the spring

Of all those evils that have flow'd  
upon us;

For you yourself have truckled to the  
tyrant,

And done your best to bastardize our  
Queen,

For which God's righteous judgment  
fell upon you

In your five years of imprisonment,  
my Lord,

Under young Edward. Who so bol-  
ster'd up

The gross King's headship of the  
Church, or more

Denied the Holy Father!

*Gardiner.* Ha! what! eh?  
But you, my Lord, a polish'd gentle-  
man,

A bookman, flying from the heat and  
tussle,

You lived among your vines and  
oranges,

In your soft Italy yonder! You were  
sent for,

You were appeal'd to, but you still  
prefer'd

Your learned leisure. As for what I  
did

I suffer'd and repented. You, Lord  
Legate

And Cardinal-Deacon, have not now  
to learn

That ev'n St. Peter in his time of fear  
Denied his Master, ay, and thrice, my  
Lord.

*Pole.* But not for five-and-twenty  
years, my Lord.

*Gardiner.* Ha! good! it seems  
then I was summon'd hither

But to be mock'd and baited. Speak,  
friend Bonner,  
And tell this learned Legate he lacks  
zeal.

The Church's evil is not as the King's,  
Cannot be heal'd by stroking. The  
mad bite

Must have the cautery—tell him—and  
at once.

What would'st thou do hadst thou his  
power, thou

That layest so long in heretic bonds  
with me;

Would'st thou not burn and blast  
them root and branch?

*Bonner.* Ay, after you, my Lord.

*Gardiner.* Nay, God's passion, be-  
fore me! speak!

*Bonner.* I am on fire until I see  
them flame.

*Gardiner.* Ay, the psalm-singing  
weavers, cobblers, scum—

But this most noble prince Plantage-  
net,

Our good Queen's cousin—dallying  
over seas

Even when his brother's, nay, his  
noble mother's,

Head fell—

*Pole.* Peace, madman!

Thou stirrest up a grief thou canst  
not fathom.

Thou Christian Bishop, thou Lord  
Chancellor

Of England! I am no more rein upon thine  
anger

Than any child! Thou mak'st me  
much ashamed

That I was for a moment wroth at  
thee.

*Mary.* I come for counsel and ye  
give me feuds,

Like dogs that set to watch their mas-  
ter's gate,

Fall, when the thief is ev'n within the  
walls,

To worrying one another. My Lord  
Chancellor,

You have an old trick of offending us;  
And but that you are art and part  
with us

In purging heresy, well we might, for  
this

Your violence and much roughness to  
the Legate,

Have shut you from our counsels.  
Cousin Pole,

You are fresh from brighter lands.  
Retire with me.

His Highness and myself (so you al-  
low us)

Will let you learn in peace and pri-  
vacy

What power this cooler sun of Eng-  
land hath

In breeding godless vermin. And  
pray Heaven

That you may see according to our  
sight.

Come, cousin.

[*Exeunt Queen and Pole, etc.*

*Gardiner.* Pole has the Plantage-  
net face,

But not the force made them our  
mightiest kings.

Fine eyes—but melancholy, irreso-  
lute—

A fine beard, Bonner, a very full fine  
beard.

But a weak mouth, an indeterminate  
—ha?

*Bonner.* Well, a weak mouth, per-  
chance.

*Gardiner.* And not like thine  
To gorge a heretic whole, roasted or  
raw.

*Bonner.* I'd do my best, my Lord;  
but yet the Legate

Is here as Pope and Master of the  
Church,

And if he go not with you—

*Gardiner.* Tut, Master Bishop,  
Our bashful Legate, saw'st not how

he flush'd?

Touch him upon his old heretical  
talk,

He'll burn a diocese to prove his or-  
thodoxy.

And let him call me truckler. In  
those times,

Thou knowest we had to dodge, or  
duck, or die;

I kept my head for use of Holy  
Church;

And see you, we shall have to dodge  
again,

And let the Pope trample our rights,  
and plunge  
His foreign fist into our island Church  
To plump the leaner pouch of Italy.  
For a time, for a time.

Why? that these statutes may be put  
in force,  
And that his fan may thoroughly  
purge his floor.

*Bonner.* So then you hold the  
Pope—

*Gardiner.* I hold the Pope!  
What do I hold him? what do I hold  
the Pope?

Come, come, the morsel stuck—this  
Cardinal's fault—

I have gulpt it down. I am wholly  
for the Pope,

Utterly and altogether for the Pope,  
The Eternal Peter of the changeless  
chair,

Crown'd slave of slaves, and mitred  
king of kings,

God upon earth! what more? what  
would you have?

Hence, let's be gone.

*Enter USHER.*

*Usher.* Well that you be not gone,  
My Lord. The Queen, most wroth  
at first with you,

Is now content to grant you full for-  
giveness,

So that you crave full pardon of the  
Legate.

I am sent to fetch you.

*Gardiner.* Doth Pole yield, sir, ha!  
Did you hear 'em? were you by?

*Usher.* I cannot tell you,  
His bearing is so courtly-delicate;

And yet methinks he falters: their two  
Graces

Do so dear-cousin and royal-cousin  
him,

So press on him the duty which as  
Legate

He owes himself, and with such royal  
smiles—

*Gardiner.* Smiles that burn men.  
Bonner, it will be carried.

He falters, ha? 'fore God, we change  
and change:

Men now are bow'd and old, the doc-  
tors tell you,

At three-score years; then if we  
change at all

We needs must do it quickly; it is an  
age

Of brief life, and brief purpose, and  
brief patience,

As I have shown to-day. I am sorry  
for it

If Pole be like to turn. Our old  
friend Cranmer,

Your more especial love, hath turn'd  
so often,

He knows not where he stands, which,  
if this pass,

We two shall have to teach him; let  
'em look to it,

Cranmer and Hooper, Ridley and  
Latimer,

Rogers and Ferrar, for their time is  
come,

Their hour is hard at hand, their 'dies  
Irae,'

Their 'dies Illa,' which will test their  
sect.

I feel it but a duty—you will find in it  
Pleasure as well as duty, worthy Bon-  
ner,—

To test their sect. Sir, I attend the  
Queen

To crave most humble pardon—of her  
most

Royal, Infallible, Papal Legate-cousin.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—WOODSTOCK.

ELIZABETH, LADY IN WAITING.

*Elizabeth.* So they have sent poor  
Courtenay over sea.

*Lady.* And banish'd us to Wood-  
stock, and the fields.

The colors of our Queen are green  
and white,

These fields are only green, they  
make me gape.

*Elizabeth.* There's whitethorn, girl.

*Lady.* Ay, for an hour in May.  
But court is always May, buds out in  
masques,



Breaks into feather'd merriments, and  
flowers  
In silken pageants. Why do they  
keep us here?

Why still suspect your Grace?

*Elizabeth.* Hard upon both.  
[Writes on the window with a diamond.

Much suspected, of me  
Nothing proven can be.  
Quoth Elizabeth, prisoner.

*Lady.* What hath your Highness  
written?

*Elizabeth.* A true rhyme.

*Lady.* Cut with a diamond; so to  
last like truth.

*Elizabeth.* Ay, if truth last.

*Lady.* But truth, they say, will out,  
So it must last. It is not like a word,  
That comes and goes in uttering.

*Elizabeth.* Truth, a word!  
The very Truth and very Word are  
one.

But truth of story, which I glanced at  
girl,

Is like a word that comes from olden  
days,  
And passes thro' the peoples: every  
tongue

Alters it passing, till it spells and  
speaks  
Quite other than at first.

*Lady.* I do not follow.

*Elizabeth.* How many names in the  
long sweep of time  
That so foreshortens greatness, may  
but hang

On the chance mention of some fool  
that once

Brake bread with us, perhaps: and my  
poor chronicle

Is but of glass. Sir Henry Beding-  
field

May split it for a spite.

*Lady.* God grant it last,  
And witness to your Grace's inno-  
cence,  
Till doomsday melt it.

*Elizabeth.* Or a second fire,  
Like that which lately crackled under-  
foot

And in this very chamber, fuse the glass,  
And char us back again into the dust  
We spring from. Never peacock  
against rain

Scream'd as you did for water.

*Lady.* And I got it.  
I woke Sir Henry—and he's true to  
you—

I read his honest horror in his eyes.

*Elizabeth.* Or true to you?

*Lady.* Sir Henry Bedingfield!  
I will have no man true to me, your  
Grace,

But one that pares his nails; to me?  
the clown!

*Elizabeth.* Out, girl! you wrong a  
noble gentleman.

*Lady.* For, like his cloak, his man-  
ners want the nap  
And gloss of court; but of this fire he  
says,

Nay swears, it was no wicked wilful-  
ness,

Only a natural chance.

*Elizabeth.* A chance—perchance  
One of those wicked wilfuls that men  
make,

Nor shame to call it nature. Nay, I  
know

They hunt my blood. Save for my  
daily range

Among the pleasant fields of Holy  
Writ

I might despair. But there hath some  
one come;

The house is all in movement. Hence,  
and see. [Exit Lady.

*Milkmaid (singing without).*

Shame upon you, Robin,

Shame upon you now!

Kiss me would you? with my hands

Milking the cow?

Daisies grow again,

Kingcups blow again,

And you came and kiss'd me milking the  
cow.

Robin came behind me,

Kiss'd me well I vow;

Cuff him could I? with my hands

Milking the cow?

Swallows fly again,

Cuckoos cry again,  
And you came and kiss'd me milking the  
cow.

Come, Robin, Robin,  
Come and kiss me now ;  
Help it can I ? with my hands  
Milking the cow ?  
Ringdoves coo again,  
All things woo again.  
Come behind and kiss me milking the  
cow !

*Elizabeth.* Right honest and red-  
cheek'd ; Robin was violent,  
And she was crafty—a sweet violence,  
And a sweet craft. I would I were a  
milkmaid,  
To sing, love, marry, churn, brew,  
bake, and die,  
Then have my simple headstone by  
the church,  
And all things lived and ended hon-  
estly.  
I could not if I would. I am Harry's  
daughter :  
Gardiner would have my head. They  
are not sweet,  
The violence and the craft that do  
divide  
The world of nature ; what is weak  
must lie ;  
The lion needs but roar to guard his  
young ;  
The lapwing lies, says ' here ' when  
they are there.  
Threaten the child ; ' I'll scourge you  
if you did it : '  
What weapon hath the child, save his  
soft tongue,  
To say ' I did not ? ' and my rod's the  
block.  
I never lay my head upon the pillow  
But that I think, ' Wilt thou lie there  
to-morrow ? '  
How oft the falling axe, that never fell,  
Hath shock'd me back into the day-  
light truth  
That it may fall to-day ! Those damp,  
black, dead  
Nights in the Tower ; dead—with the  
fear of death  
Too dead ev'n for a death-watch ! Toll  
of a bell,

Stroke of a clock, the scurrying of a  
rat  
Affrighted me, and then delighted  
me,  
For there was life—And there was life  
in death—  
The little murder'd princes, in a pale  
light,  
Rose hand in hand, and whisper'd,  
' come away !  
The civil wars are gone for evermore :  
Thou last of all the Tudors, come  
away !  
With us is peace ! ' The last ? It  
was a dream ;  
I must not dream, not wink, but  
watch. She has gone,  
Maid Marian to her Robin—by and  
by  
Both happy ! a fox may filch a hen by  
night,  
And make a morning outcry in the  
yard ;  
But there's no Renard here to ' catch  
her tripping. '  
Catch me who can ; yet, sometime I  
have wish'd  
That I were caught, and kill'd away  
at once  
Out of the flutter. The gray rogue,  
Gardiner,  
Went on his knees, and pray'd me  
to confess  
In Wyatt's business, and to cast my-  
self  
Upon the good Queen's mercy ; ay,  
when, my Lord ?  
God save the Queen ! My jailor—

*Enter SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD.*

*Bedingfield.* One, whose bolts,  
That jail you from free life, bar you  
from death.  
There haunt some Papist ruffians here-  
about  
Would murder you.

*Elizabeth.* I thank you heartily, sir,  
But I am royal, tho' your prisoner,  
And God hath blest or cursed me with  
a nose—  
Your boots are from the horses.

*Bedingfield.* Ay, my Lady.

When next there comes a missive  
from the Queen

It shall be all my study for one hour  
To rose and lavender my horsiness,  
Before I dare to glance upon your  
Grace.

*Elizabeth.* A missive from the  
Queen: last time she wrote,  
I had like to have lost my life: it  
takes my breath:

O God, sir, do you look upon your  
boots,

Are you so small a man? Help me:  
what think you,  
Is it life or death?

*Bedingfield.* I thought not on my  
boots;  
The devil take all boots were ever  
made

Since man went barefoot. See, I lay  
it here,

For I will come no nearer to your  
Grace;

And, whether <sup>[Laying down the letter.</sup> it bring you bitter news  
or sweet,

And God hath given your Grace a  
nose, or not,  
I'll help you, if I may.

*Elizabeth.* Your pardon, then;  
It is the heat and narrowness of the  
cage

That makes the captive testy; with  
free wing  
The world were all one Araby.

Leave me now,  
Will you, companion to myself, sir?

*Bedingfield.* Will I?  
With most exceeding willingness, I  
will;

You know I never come till I be  
call'd. <sup>[Exit.</sup>

*Elizabeth.* It lies there folded: is  
there venom in it?

A snake—and if I touch it, it may  
sting.

Come, come, the worst!  
Best wisdom is to know the worst at  
once. <sup>[Keads:</sup>

'It is the King's wish, that you  
should wed Prince Philibert of Savoy.  
You are to come to Court on the in-

stant; and think of this in your com-  
ing.

'MARY THE QUEEN.'

Think! I have many thoughts;  
I think there may be birdlime here  
for me;

I think they fain would have me from  
the realm;

I think the Queen may never bear a  
child;

I think that I may be some time the  
Queen,

Then, Queen indeed: no foreign  
prince or priest

Should fill my throne, myself upon  
the steps.

I think I will not marry anyone,  
Specially not this landless Philibert  
Of Savoy; but, if Philip menace me,

I think that I will play with Phil-  
ibert,—

As once the Holy Father did with  
mine,

Before my father married my good  
mother,—

For fear of Spain.

*Enter LADY.*

*Lady.* O Lord! your Grace, your  
Grace,

I feel so happy: it seems that we  
shall fly

These bald, blank fields, and dance  
into the sun

That shines on princes.

*Elizabeth.* Yet, a moment since,  
I wish'd myself the milkmaid singing  
here,

To kiss and cuff among the birds and  
flowers—

A right rough life and healthful.

*Lady.* But the wench  
Hath her own troubles; she is weep-  
ing now;

For the wrong Robin took her at her  
word.

Then the cow kick'd, and all her milk  
was spilt.

Your Highness such a milkmaid?

*Elizabeth.* I had kept  
My Robins and my cows in sweeter  
order

Had I been such.

*Lady (stily).* And had your Grace  
a Robin?

*Elizabeth.* Come, come, you are  
chill here; you want the sun  
That shines at court; make ready for  
the journey.

Pray God, we 'scape the sunstroke.  
Ready at once. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—LONDON. A ROOM  
IN THE PALACE.

LORD PETRE and LORD WILLIAM  
HOWARD.

*Petre.* You cannot see the Queen.  
Renard denied her,  
Ev'n now to me.

*Howard.* Their Flemish go-be-  
tween  
And all-in-all. I came to thank her  
Majesty  
For freeing my friend Bagenhall from  
the Tower;  
A grace to me! Mercy, that herb-of-  
grace,  
Flowers now but seldom.

*Petre.* Only now perhaps.  
Because the Queen hath been three  
days in tears  
For Philip's going—like the wild  
hedge-rose

Of a soft winter, possible, not probable,  
However you have prov'n it.

*Howard.* I must see her.

*Enter RENARD.*

*Renard.* My Lords, you cannot see  
her Majesty.

*Howard.* Why then the King! for  
I would have him bring it  
Home to the leisure wisdom of his  
Queen,  
Before he go, that since these statutes  
past,

Gardiner out-Gardiners Gardiner in  
his heat,  
Bonner cannot out-Bonner his own  
self—

Beast!—but they play with fire as  
children do,

And burn the house. I know that  
these are breeding  
A fierce resolve and fixt heart-hate in  
men

Against the King, the Queen, the  
Holy Father,

The faith itself. Can I not see him?  
*Renard.* Not now.

And in all this, my Lord, her Majesty  
Is flint of flint, you may strike fire  
from her,  
Not hope to melt her. I will give  
your message.

[*Exeunt Petre and Howard.*]

*Enter PHILIP (musing).*

*Philip.* She will not have Prince  
Philibert of Savoy,

I talk'd with her in vain—says she  
will live

And die true maid—a goodly creature  
too.

Would *she* had been the Queen! yet  
she must have him;

She troubles England: that she  
breathes in England

Is life and lungs to every rebel birth  
That passes out of embryo.

*Simon Renard!*—  
This Howard, whom they fear, what  
was he saying?

*Renard.* What your imperial  
father said, my liege,

To deal with heresy gentlier. Gardi-  
ner burns,

And Bonner burns; and it would  
seem this people

Care more for our brief life in their  
wet land,

Than yours in happier Spain. I told  
my Lord

He should not vex her Highness; she  
would say

These are the means God works with,  
that His church

May flourish.

*Philip.* Ay, sir, but in statesman-  
ship

To strike too soon is oft to miss the  
blow.

Thou knowest I bad my chaplain,  
Castro, preach



"THE GIRL AND BOY, SIR, KNOW THEIR DIFFERENCES!" Page 130.



Against these burnings.

*Renard.* And the Emperor  
Approved you, and when last he  
wrote, declared  
His comfort in your Grace that you  
were bland

And affable to men of all estates,  
In hope to charm them from their  
hate of Spain.

*Philip.* In hope to crush all  
heresy under Spain.

But, Renard, I am sicker staying here  
Than any sea could make me passing  
hence,

Tho' I be ever deadly sick at sea.  
So sick am I with biding for this child.  
Is it the fashion in this clime for  
women

To go twelve months in bearing of a  
child?

The nurses yawn'd, the cradle gaped,  
they led

Processions, chanted litanies, clash'd  
their bells,  
Shot off their lying cannon, and her  
priests

Have preach'd, the fools, of this fair  
prince to come;

Till, by St. James, I find myself the  
fool.

Why do you lift your eyebrow at me  
thus?

*Renard.* I never saw your High-  
ness moved till now.

*Philip.* So weary am I of this wet  
land of theirs,

And every soul of man that breathes  
therein.

*Renard.* My liege, we must not  
drop the mask before  
The masquerade is over—

*Philip.* —Have I dropt it?  
I have but shown a loathing face to  
you,

Who knew it from the first.

*Enter MARY.*

*Mary (aside).* With Renard. Still  
Parleying with Renard, all the day  
with Renard,  
And scarce a greeting all the day for  
me—

And goes to-morrow. [*Exit Mary.*

*Philip (to Renard, who advances to  
him).* Well, sir, is there more?

*Renard (who has perceived the  
Queen).* May Simon Renard  
speak a single word?

*Philip.* Ay.

*Renard.* And be forgiven for it?

*Philip.* Simon Renard  
Knows me too well to speak a single  
word

That could not be forgiven.

*Renard.* Well, my liege,  
Your Grace hath a most chaste and  
loving wife.

*Philip.* Why not? The Queen of  
Philip should be chaste.

*Renard.* Ay, but, my Lord, you  
know what Virgil sings,  
Woman is various and most mutable.

*Philip.* She play the harlot!  
never.

*Renard.* No, sire, no,  
Not dream'd of by the rabidest gos-  
peller.

There was a paper thrown into the  
palace,

'The King hath wearied of his barren  
bride.'

She came upon it, read it, and then  
rent it,

With all the rage of one who hates a  
truth

He cannot but allow. Sire, I would  
have you—

What should I say, I cannot pick my  
words—

Be somewhat less—majestic to your  
Queen.

*Philip.* Am I to change my man-  
ners, Simon Renard,

Because these islanders are brutal  
beasts?

Or would you have me turn a sonnet-  
eer,

And warble those brief-sighted eyes of  
hers?

*Renard.* Brief-sighted tho' they be,  
'I have seen them, sire,

When you perchance were trifling  
royally

With some fair dame of court, sud-  
denly fill

With such fierce fire—had it been fire indeed

It would have burnt both speakers.

*Philip.* Ay, and then?

*Renard.* Sire, might it not be policy in some matter Of small importance now and then to cede

A point to her demand?

*Philip.* Well, I am going.

*Renard.* For should her love when you are gone, my liege, Witness these papers, there will not be wanting

Those that will urge her injury— should her love—

And I have known such women more than one—

Veer to the counterpoint, and jealous

Hath in it an alchemic force to fuse Almost into one metal love and hate,—

And she impress her wrongs upon her Council,

And these again upon her Parliament—

We are not loved here, and would be then perhaps

Not so well holpen in our wars with France,

As else we might be—here she comes.

*Enter MARY.*

*Mary.* O Philip! Nay, must you go indeed?

*Philip.* Madam, I must.

*Mary.* The parting of a husband and a wife

Is like the cleaving of a heart; one half

Will flutter here, one there.

*Philip.* You say true, Madam.

*Mary.* The Holy Virgin will not have me yet

Lose the sweet hope that I may bear a prince.

If such a prince were born and you not here!

*Philip.* I should be here if such a prince were born.

*Mary.* But must you go?

*Philip.* Madam, you know my father,

Retiring into cloistral solitude

To yield the remnant of his years to heaven,

Will shift the yoke and weight of all the world

From off his neck to mine. We meet at Brussels.

But since mine absence will not be for long,

Your Majesty shall go to Dover with me,

And wait my coming back.

*Mary.* To Dover? no, I am too feeble. I will go to Green-

wich, So you will have me with you; and there watch

All that is gracious in the breath of heaven

Draw with your sails from our poor land, and pass

And leave me, Philip, with my prayers for you.

*Philip.* And doubtless I shall profit by your prayers.

*Mary.* Methinks that would you tarry one day more

(The news was sudden) I could mould myself

To bear your going better; will you do it?

*Philip.* Madam, a day may sink or save a realm.

*Mary.* A day may save a heart from breaking too.

*Philip.* Well, Simon Renard, shall we stop a day?

*Renard.* Your Grace's business will not suffer, sire,

For one day more, so far as I can tell.

*Philip.* Then one day more to please her Majesty.

*Mary.* The sunshine sweeps across my life again.

O if I knew you felt this parting, Philip,

As I do.

*Philip.* By St. James I do protest, Upon the faith and honor of a Span-

iard,



I am vastly grieved to leave your Majesty.  
Simon, is supper ready?  
*Renard.* Ay, my liege,  
I saw the covers laying.  
*Philip.* Let us have it. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT IV.

## SCENE I.—A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY, CARDINAL POLE.

*Mary.* What have you there?  
*Pole.* So please your Majesty,  
A long petition from the foreign exiles  
To spare the life of Cranmer.  
Bishop Thirlby,  
And my Lord Paget and Lord William Howard,  
Crave in the same cause, hearing of your Grace.  
Hath he not written himself—infatuated—  
To sue you for his life?  
*Mary.* His life? Oh, no;  
Not sued for that—he knows it were in vain.  
But so much of the anti-papal leaven  
Works in him yet, he hath pray'd me  
not to sully  
Mine own prerogative, and degrade the realm  
By seeking justice at a stranger's hand  
Against my natural subject. King and Queen,  
To whom he owes his loyalty after God,  
Shall these accuse him to a foreign prince?  
Death would not grieve him more. I cannot be  
True to this realm of England and the Pope  
Together, says the heretic.  
*Pole.* And there errs;  
As he hath ever err'd thro' vanity.  
A secular kingdom is but as the beast  
Lacking a soul; and in itself a beast.

The Holy Father in a Secular kingdom  
Is as the soul descending out of heaven  
Into a body generate.  
*Mary.* Write to him, then.  
*Pole.* I will.  
*Mary.* And sharply, Pole.  
*Pole.* Here come the Cranmerites!

Enter THIRLBY, LORD PAGET, LORD WILLIAM HOWARD

*Howard.* Health to your Grace!  
Good morrow, my Lord Cardinal;  
We make our humble prayer unto your Grace  
That Cranmer may withdraw to foreign parts,  
Or into private life within the realm.  
In several bills and declarations,  
Madam,  
He hath recanted all his heresies.  
*Paget.* Ay, ay; if Bonner have not forged the bills. [*Aside.*]  
*Mary.* Did not More die, and Fisher? he must burn.  
*Howard.* He hath recanted, Madam.  
*Mary.* The better for him.  
He burns in Purgatory, not in Hell.  
*Howard.* Ay, ay, your Grace; but it was never seen  
That any one recanting thus at full,  
As Cranmer hath, came to the fire on earth.  
*Mary.* It will be seen now, then.  
*Thirlby.* O Madam, Madam!  
I thus implore you, low upon my knees,  
To reach the hand of mercy to my friend.  
I have err'd with him; with him I have recanted.  
What human reason is there why my friend  
Should meet with lesser mercy than myself?  
*Mary.* My Lord of Ely, this. After a riot  
We hang the leaders, let their following go.

Cranmer is head and father of these  
heresies,  
New learning as they call it; yea,  
may God  
Forget me at most need when I forget  
Her foul divorce—my sainted mother  
—No!

*Howard.* Ay, ay, but mighty doctors  
doubted there.  
The Pope himself waver'd; and more  
than one  
Row'd in that galley—Gardiner to  
wit,  
Whom truly I deny not to have been  
Your faithful friend and trusty coun-  
cillor.

Hath not your Highness ever read  
his book,  
His tractate upon True Obedience,  
Writ by himself and Bonner?

*Mary.* I will take  
Such order with all bad, heretical  
books  
That none shall hold them in his  
house and live,  
Henceforward. No, my Lord.

*Howard.* Then never read it.  
The truth is here. Your father was a  
man  
Of such colossal kinghood, yet so  
courteous,  
Except when wroth, you scarce could  
meet his eye  
And hold your own; and were he  
wroth indeed,  
You held it less, or not at all. I say,  
Your father had a will that beat men  
down;  
Your father had a brain that beat men  
down—

*Pole.* Not me, my Lord.

*Howard.* No, for you were not  
here;  
You sit upon this fallen Cranmer's  
throne;  
And it would more become you, my  
Lord Legate,  
To join a voice, so potent with her  
Highness,  
To ours in plea for Cranmer than to  
stand  
On naked self-assertion.

*Mary.* All your voices  
Are waves on flint. The heretic must  
burn.

*Howard.* Yet once he saved your  
Majesty's own life;  
Stood out against the King in your  
behalf,  
At his own peril.

*Mary.* I know not if he did;  
And if he did I care not, my Lord  
Howard.

My life is not so happy, no such boon,  
That I should spare to take a heretic  
priest's,  
Who saved it or not saved. Why do  
you vex me?

*Paget.* Yet to save Cranmer were  
to serve the Church,  
Your Majesty's I mean; he is effaced,  
Self-blotted out; so wounded in his  
honor,

He can but creep down into some  
dark hole  
Like a hurt beast, and hide himself  
and die;  
But if you burn him,—well, your High-  
ness knows

The saying, 'Martyr's blood—seed of  
the Church.'

*Mary.* Of the true Church; but  
his is none, nor will be.

You are too politic for me, my Lord  
Paget.

And if he have to live so loath'd a life,  
It were more merciful to burn him  
now.

*Thirly.* O yet relent. O, Madam,  
if you knew him  
As I do, ever gentle, and so gracious,  
With all his learning—

*Mary.* Yet a heretic still.  
His learning makes his burning the  
more just.

*Thirly.* So worship't of all those  
that came across him;  
The stranger at his hearth, and all his  
house—

*Mary.* His children and his concu-  
bine, belike.

*Thirly.* To do him any wrong  
was to beget

A kindness from him, for his heart  
was rich,

Of such fine mould, that if you sow'd  
therein  
The seed of Hate, it blossom'd Char-  
ity.

*Pole.* 'After his kind it costs him  
nothing,' there's  
An old world English adage to the  
point.  
These are but natural graces, my good  
Bishop,  
Which in the Catholic garden are as  
flowers,  
But on the heretic dunghill only  
weeds.

*Howard.* Such weeds make dung-  
hills gracious.

*Mary.* Enough, my Lords.  
It is God's will, the Holy Father's will,  
And Philip's will, and mine, that he  
should burn.

He is pronounced anathema.  
*Howard.* Farewell, Madam,  
God grant you ampler mercy at your  
call  
Than you have shown to Cranmer.

*Pole.* [Exeunt Lords.]  
After this,  
Your Grace will hardly care to over-  
look  
This same petition of the foreign ex-  
iles  
For Cranmer's life.

*Mary.* Make out the writ to-night.  
[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—OXFORD. CRANMER  
IN PRISON.

*Cranmer.* Last night, I dream'd  
the faggots were alight,  
And that myself was fasten'd to the  
stake,  
And found it all a visionary flame,  
Cool as the light in old decaying  
wood;  
And then King Harry look'd from  
out a cloud,  
And bad me have good courage; and  
I heard  
An angel cry 'There is more joy in  
Heaven,'—  
And after that, the trumpet of the  
dead. [Trumpets without.]

Why, there are trumpets blowing  
now: what is it?

*Enter FATHER COLE.*

*Cole.* Cranmer, I come to question  
you again;  
Have you remain'd in the true Catho-  
lic faith  
I left you in?

*Cranmer.* In the true Catholic faith,  
By Heaven's grace, I am more and  
more confirm'd.

Why are the trumpets blowing,  
Father Cole?

*Cole.* Cranmer, it is decided by the  
Council  
That you to-day should read your re-  
cantation

Before the people in St. Mary's  
Church.

And there be many heretics in the  
town,  
Who loathe you for your late return  
to Rome,

And might assail you passing through  
the street.  
And tear you piecemeal: so you have  
a guard.

*Cranmer.* Or seek to rescue me.  
I thank the Council.

*Cole.* Do you lack any money?  
*Cranmer.* Nay, why should I?  
The prison fare is good enough for  
me.

*Cole.* Ay, but to give the poor.  
*Cranmer.* Hand it me, then  
I thank you.

*Cole.* For a little space, farewell;  
Until I see you in St. Mary's Church.  
[Exit Cole.]

*Cranmer.* It is against all prece-  
dent to burn  
One who recants; they mean to par-  
don me.

To give the poor—they give the poor  
who die.  
Well, burn me or not burn me I am  
fixt;

It is but a communion, not a mass:  
A holy supper, not a sacrifice;  
No man can make his Maker—Villa  
Garcia.

Enter VILLA GARCIA.

*Villa Garcia.* Pray you write out this paper for me, Cranmer.

*Cranmer.* Have I not writ enough to satisfy you?

*Villa Garcia.* It is the last.

*Cranmer.* Give it me, then.

[*He writes.*

Now sign.

*Cranmer.* I have sign'd enough, and I will sign no more.

*Villa Garcia.* It is no more than what you have sign'd already, The public form thereof.

*Cranmer.* It may be so; I sign it with my presence, if I read it.

*Villa Garcia.* But this is idle of you. Well, sir, well,

You are to beg the people to pray for you;

Exhort them to a pure and virtuous life;

Declare the Queen's right to the throne; confess

Your faith before all hearers; and retract

That Eucharistic doctrine in your book.

Will you not sign it now?

*Cranmer.* No, Villa Garcia, I sign no more. Will they have mercy on me?

*Villa Garcia.* Have you good hopes of mercy! So, farewell.

[*Exit.*

*Cranmer.* Good hopes, not theirs, have I that I am fixt, Fixt beyond fall; however, in strange hours,

After the long brain-dazing colloquies, And thousand-times recurring argument

Of those two friars ever in my prison, When left alone in my despondency, Without a friend, a book, my faith would seem

Dead or half-drown'd, or else swam heavily

Against the huge corruptions of the Church,

Monsters of mistradition, old enough To scare me into dreaming, 'what am I,

Cranmer, against whole ages?' was it so,

Or am I slandering my most inward friend,

To veil the fault of my most outward foe—

The soft and tremulous coward in the flesh?

O higher, holier, earlier, purer church, I have found thee and not leave thee any more.

It is but a communion, not a mass— No sacrifice, but a life-giving feast!

(*Writes.*) So, so; this will I say— thus will I pray. [*Puts up the paper.*

Enter BONNER.

*Bonner.* Good day, old friend; what, you look somewhat worn;

And yet it is a day to test your health

Ev'n at the best: I scarce have spoken with you

Since when?—your degradation. At your trial

Never stood up a bolder man than you;

You would not cap the Pope's commissioner—

Your learning, and your stoutness, and your heresy,

Dumbfounded half of us. So, after that,

We had to dis-archbishop and unlord, And make you simple Cranmer once again.

The common barber clipt your hair, and I

Scraped from your finger-points the holy oil;

And worse than all, you had to kneel to me;

Which was not pleasant for you, Master Cranmer.

Now you, that would not recognize the Pope,

And you, that would not own the Real Presence,

I have found a real presence in the stake,

Which frights you back into the ancient faith;  
And so you have recanted to the Pope.

How are the mighty fallen, Master Cranmer!

*Cranmer.* You have been more fierce against the Pope than I; But why fling back the stone he strikes me with? [*Aside.* O Bonner, if I ever did you kindness—

Power hath been given you to try faith by fire—

Pray you, remembering how yourself have changed,

Be somewhat pitiful, after I have gone,

To the poor flock—to women and to children—

That when I was archbishop held with me.

*Bonner.* Ay—gentle as they call you—live or die!

Pitiful to this pitiful heresy?

I must obey the Queen and Council, man.

Win thro' this day with honor to yourself,

And I'll say something for you—so—good-bye. [*Exit.*]

*Cranmer.* This hard coarse man of old hath crouch'd to me

Till I myself was half ashamed for him.

*Enter THIRLBY.*

Weep not, good Thirlby.

*Thirlby.* Oh, my Lord, my Lord! My heart is no such block as Bonner's is:

Who would not weep?

*Cranmer.* Why do you so my-lord me,

Who am disgraced?

*Thirlby.* On earth; but saved in heaven

By your recanting.

*Cranmer.* Will they burn me, Thirlby?

*Thirlby.* Alas, they will; these burnings will not help

The purpose of the faith; but my poor voice Against them is a whisper to the roar Of a spring-tide.

*Cranmer.* And they will surely burn me?

*Thirlby.* Ay; and besides, will have you in the church

Repeat your recantation in the ears Of all men, to the saving of their souls, Before your execution. May God help you

Thro' that hard hour!

*Cranmer.* And may God bless you, Thirlby!

Well, they shall hear my recantation there. [*Exit Thirlby.*]

Disgraced, dishonor'd!—not by them, indeed,

By mine own self—by mine own hand!

O thin-skinn'd hand and jutting veins, 'twas you

That sign'd the burning of poor Joan of Kent;

But then she was a witch. You have written much,

But you were never raised to plead for Frith,

Whose dogmas I have reach'd: he was deliver'd

To the secular arm to burn; and there was Lambert;

Who can foresee himself? truly these burnings,

As Thirlby says, are profitless to the burners,

And help the other side. You shall burn too,

Burn first when I am burnt.

Fire—inch by inch to die in agony! Latimer

Had a brief end—not Ridley. Hooper burn'd

Three-quarters of an hour. Will my faggots

Be wet as his were? It is a day of rain.

I will not muse upon it.

My fancy takes the burner's part, and makes

The fire seem even crueller than it is.

No, I not doubt that God will give me strength,  
Albeit I have denied him.

*Enter SOTO and VILLA GARCIA.*

*Villa Garcia.* We are ready  
To take you to St. Mary's, Master  
Cranmer.

*Cranmer.* And I: lead on; ye  
loose me from my bonds.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

COLE in the Pulpit, LORD WILLIAMS OF THAME presiding. LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, LORD PAGET, and others. CRANMER enters between SOTO and VILLA GARCIA, and the whole Choir strike up 'Nunc Dimittis.' CRANMER is set upon a Scaffold before the people.

*Cole.* Behold him—

[*A pause: people in the foreground.*]

*People.* Oh, unhappy sight!

*First Protestant.* See how the tears  
run down his fatherly face.

*Second Protestant.* James, didst  
thou ever see a carrion crow  
Stand watching a sick beast before he  
dies?

*First Protestant.* Him perch'd up  
there? I wish some thunder-  
bolt

Would make this Cole a cinder, pulpit  
and all.

*Cole.* Behold him, brethren: he  
hath cause to weep!—

So have we all: weep with him if ye  
will,

Yet—

It is expedient for one man to die,  
Yea, for the people, lest the people  
die.

Yet wherefore should he die that hath  
return'd

To the one Catholic Universal Church,  
Repentant of his errors?

*Protestant murmurs.* Ay, tell us  
that.

*Cole.* Those of the wrong side will  
despise the man,  
Deeming him one that thro' the fear  
of death  
Gave up his cause, except he seal his  
faith  
In sight of all with flaming martyr-  
dom.

*Cranmer.* Ay.

*Cole.* Ye hear him, and albeit there  
may seem  
According to the canons pardon due  
To him that so repents, yet are there  
causes

Wherefore our Queen and Council at  
this time

Adjudge him to the death. He hath  
been a traitor,

A shaker and confounder of the realm;  
And when the King's divorce was sued  
at Rome,

He here, this heretic metropolitan,  
As if he had been the Holy Father,  
sat

And judg'd it. Did I call him here-  
tic?

A huge heresiarch! never was it  
known

That any man so writing, preaching  
so,

So poisoning the Church, so long con-  
tinuing,

Hath found his pardon; therefore he  
must die,

For warning and example.

Other reasons

There be for this man's ending, which  
our Queen

And Council at this present deem it  
not

Expedient to be known.

*Protestant murmurs.* I warrant  
you.

*Cole.* Take therefore, all, example  
by this man,

For if our Holy Queen not pardon  
him,

Much less shall others in like cause  
escape,

That all of you, the highest as the  
lowest,

May learn there is no power against:  
the Lord.

There stands a man, once of so high degree,  
 Chief prelate of our Church, arch-bishop, first  
 In Council, second person in the realm,  
 Friend for so long time of a mighty King;  
 And now ye see downfallen and debased  
 From councillor to caitiff—fallen so low,  
 The leprous flutterings of the byway,  
 And offal of the city would not change  
 Estates with him; in brief, so miserable,  
 There is no hope of better left for him,  
 No place for worse.

Yet, Cranmer, be thou glad.  
 This is the work of God. He is glorified  
 In thy conversion: lo! thou art reclaim'd;  
 He brings thee home: nor fear but that to-day  
 Thou shalt receive the penitent thief's award,  
 And be with Christ the Lord in Paradise.  
 Remember how God made the fierce fire seem  
 To those three children like a pleasant dew.  
 Remember, too,  
 The triumph of St. Andrew on his cross,  
 The patience of St. Lawrence in the fire.  
 Thus, if thou call on God and all the saints,  
 God will beat down the fury of the flame,  
 Or give thee saintly strength to undergo.  
 And for thy soul shall masses here be sung  
 By every priest in Oxford. Pray for him.

*Cranmer.* Ay, one and all, dear brothers, pray for me;

Pray with one breath, one heart, one soul for me.

*Chor.* And now, lest anyone among you doubt  
 The man's conversion and remorse of heart,  
 Yourselves shall hear him speak.  
 Speak, Master Cranmer,  
 Fulfil your promise made me, and proclaim  
 Your true undoubted faith, that all may hear.

*Cranmer.* And that I will. O God, Father of Heaven!  
 O Son of God, Redeemer of the world!  
 O Holy Ghost! proceeding from them both,  
 Three persons and one God, have mercy on me,  
 Most miserable sinner, wretched man.  
 I have offended against heaven and earth  
 More grievously than any tongue can tell.  
 Then whither should I flee for any help?  
 I am ashamed to lift my eyes to heaven,  
 And I can find no refuge upon earth.  
 Shall I despair then?—God forbid!  
 O God,  
 For thou art merciful, refusing none  
 That come to Thee for succor, unto Thee,  
 Therefore, I come; humble myself to Thee;  
 Saying, O Lord God, although my sins be great,  
 For thy great mercy have mercy! O God the Son,  
 Not for slight faults alone, when thou becamest  
 Man in the Flesh, was the great mystery wrought;  
 O God the Father, not for little sins  
 Didst thou yield up thy Son to human death;  
 But for the greatest sin that can be sinn'd,  
 Yea, even such as mine, incalculable,  
 Unpardonable,—sin against the light.

The truth of God, which I had proven  
and known.  
Thy mercy must be greater than all  
sin.  
Forgive me, Father, for no merit of  
mine,  
But that Thy name by man be glori-  
fied,  
And Thy most blessed Son's, who  
died for man.  
Good people, every man at time of  
death  
Would fain set forth some saying that  
may live  
After his death and better human-  
kind;  
For death gives life's last word a  
power to live,  
And, like the stone-cut epitaph, re-  
main  
After the vanish'd voice, and speak to  
men.  
God grant me grace to glorify my  
God!  
And first I say it is a grievous case,  
Many so dote upon this bubble  
world,  
Whose colors in a moment break and  
fly,  
They care for nothing else. What  
saith St. John :—  
'Love of this world is hatred against  
God.'  
Again, I pray you all that, next to  
God,  
You do unmurmuringly and willingly  
Obey your King and Queen, and not  
for 'dread  
Of these alone, but from the fear of  
Him  
Whose ministers they be to govern  
you.  
Thirdly, I pray you all to live together  
Like brethren; yet what hatred Chris-  
tian men  
Bear to each other, seeming not as  
brethren,  
But mortal foes! But do you good  
to all  
As much as in you lieth. Hurt no  
man more  
Than you would harm your loving  
natural brother

Of the same roof, same breast. If  
any do,  
Albeit he think himself at home with  
God,  
Of this be sure, he is whole worlds  
away.

*Protestant murmurs.* What sort of  
brothers then be those that lust  
To burn each other?

*Williams.* Peace among you,  
there!

*Cranmer.* Fourthly, to those that  
own exceeding wealth,  
Remember that sore saying spoken  
once  
By Him that was the truth, 'How  
hard it is  
For the rich man to enter into  
Heaven;'  
Let all rich men remember that hard  
word.

I have not time for more: if ever,  
now  
Let them flow forth in charity, seeing  
now  
The poor so many, and all food so  
dear,  
Long have I lain in prison, yet have  
heard  
Of all their wretchedness. Give to  
the poor,  
Ye give to God. He is with us in the  
poor.

And now, and forasmuch as I have  
come  
To the last end of life, and thereupon  
Hangs all my past, and all my life to  
be,  
Either to live with Christ in Heaven  
with joy,  
Or to be still in pain with devils in  
hell;

And, seeing in a moment, I shall find  
*[Pointing upwards.]*  
Heaven or else hell ready to swallow  
me,

*[Pointing downwards.]*  
I shall declare to you my very faith  
Without all color.

*Cole.* Hear him, my good brethren.  
*Cranmer.* I do believe in God,  
Father of all;  
In every article of the Catholic faith,



And every syllable taught us by our  
Lord,  
His prophets, and apostles, in the  
Testaments,  
Both Old and New.

*Cole.* Be plainer, Master Cranmer.

*Cranmer.* And now I come to the  
great cause that weighs  
Upon my conscience more than any-  
thing  
Or said or done in all my life by  
me;

For there be writings I have set  
abroad

Against the truth I knew within my  
heart,

Written for fear of death, to save my  
life,

If that might be; the papers by my  
hand

Sign'd since my degradation—by this  
hand

*[Holding out his right hand.*

Written and sign'd—I here renounce  
them all;

And, since my hand offended, having  
written

Against my heart, my hand shall first  
be burnt,

So I may come to the fire.

*[Dead silence.*

*Protestant murmurs.*

*First Protestant.* I knew it would  
be so.

*Second Protestant.* Our prayers are  
heard!

*Third Protestant.* God bless him!

*Catholic murmurs.* Out upon him!  
out upon him!

Liar! dissembler! traitor! to the  
fire!

*Williams (raising his voice).* You  
know that you recanted all you  
said

Touching the sacrament in that same  
book

You wrote against my Lord of Win-  
chester;

Dissemble not; play the plain Chris-  
tian man.

*Cranmer.* Alas, my Lord,

I have been a man loved plainness all  
my life;

I *did* dissemble. but the hour has  
come

For utter truth and plainness; where-  
fore, I say,

I hold by all I wrote within that book.

Moreover,

As for the Pope I count him Anti-  
christ,

With all his devil's doctrines; and  
refuse,

Reject him, and abhor him. I have  
said.

*[Cries on all sides, 'Pull him  
down! Away with him!']*

*Cole.* Ay, stop the heretic's mouth!  
Hale him away!

*Williams.* Harm him not, harm  
him not! have him to the fire!

*[CRANMER goes out between Two*

*Friars, smiling; hands are  
reached to him from the crowd.*

LORD WILLIAM HOWARD and  
LORD PAGET are left alone in  
the church.

*Paget.* The nave and aisles all  
empty as a fool's jest!

No, here's Lord William Howard.  
What, my Lord,

You have not gone to see the burn-  
ing?

*Howard.* *Fie!*

To stand at ease, and stare as at a  
show,

And watch a good man burn. Never  
again.

I saw the deaths of Latimer and Rid-  
ley.

Moreover, tho' a Catholic, I would  
not,

For the pure honor of our common  
nature

Hear what I might—another recan-  
tation

Of Cranmer at the stake.

*Paget.* You'd not hear that.

He pass'd out smiling, and he walk'd  
upright;

His eye was like a soldier's, whom  
the general

He looks to and he leans on as his  
God,

Hath rated for some backwardness  
and bidd'n him

Charge one against a thousand, and  
the man  
Hurls his soil'd life against the pikes  
and dies.

*Howard.* Yet that he might not  
after all those papers  
Of recantation yield again, who  
knows?

*Paget.* Papers of recantation!  
Think you then  
That Cranmer read all papers that he  
sign'd?

Or sign'd all those they tell us that he  
sign'd?

Nay, I trow not: and you shall see,  
my Lord,

That howsoever hero-like the man  
Dies in the fire, this Bonner or  
another

Will in some lying fashion misreport  
His ending to the glory of their  
church.

And you saw Latimer and Ridley die?  
Latimer was eighty, was he not? his  
best

Of life was over then.

*Howard.* His eighty years  
Look'd somewhat crooked on him in  
his frieze;

But after they had stript him to his  
shroud,

He stood upright, a lad of twenty-  
one,

And gather'd with his hands the start-  
ing flame,

And wash'd his hands and all his face  
therein,

Until the powder suddenly blew him  
dead.

Ridley was longer burning; but he  
died

As manfully and boldly, and, 'fore  
God,

I know them heretics, but right Eng-  
lish ones.

If ever, as heaven grant, we clash  
with Spain,

Our Ridley-soldiers and our Latimer-  
soldiers

Will teach her something.

*Paget.* Your mild Legate Pole  
Will tell you that the devil helpt them  
thro' it.

[*A murmur of the Crowd in the  
distance.*]

Hark, how those Roman wolfdogs  
howl and bay him!

*Howard.* Might it not be the other  
side rejoicing

In his brave end?

*Paget.* They are too crush'd, too  
broken,

They can but weep in silence.

*Howard.* Ay, ay, Paget,  
They have brought it in large meas-  
ure on themselves.

Have I not heard them mock the  
blessed Host

In songs so lewd, the beast might  
roar his claim

To being in God's image, more than  
they?

Have I not seen the gamekeeper, the  
groom,

Gardener, and huntsman, in the par-  
son's place,

The parson from his own spire swung  
out dead,

And Ignorance crying in the streets,  
and all men

Regarding her? I say they have  
drawn the fire

On their own heads: yet, Paget, I do  
hold

The Catholic, if he have the greater  
right,

It hath been the crueller.

*Paget.* Action and re-action.  
The miserable see-saw of our child-  
world,

Make us despise it at odd hours, my  
Lord.

Heaven help that this re-action not  
re-act

Yet fiercelier under Queen Eliza-  
beth,

So that she come to rule us.

*Howard.* The world's mad.

*Paget.* My Lord, the world is like  
a drunken man,

Who cannot move straight to his end  
—but reels

Now to the right, then as far to the  
left,

Push'd by the crowd beside—and  
underfoot

An earthquake; for since Henry for  
a doubt—  
Which a young lust had clapt upon  
the back,  
Crying, 'Forward!'—set our old  
church rocking, men  
Have hardly known what to believe,  
or whether  
They should believe in anything; the  
currents  
So shift and change, they see not  
how they are borne,  
Nor whither. I conclude the King a  
beast;

Verily a lion if you will—the world  
A most obedient beast and fool—my-  
self  
Half beast and fool as appertaining  
to it  
Altho' your Lordship hath as little of  
each  
Cleaving to your original Adam-clay,  
As may be consonant with mortality.

*Howard.* We talk and Cranmer  
suffers.  
The kindest man I ever knew; see,  
see,  
I speak of him in the past. Unhappy  
land!

Hard-natured Queen, half-Spanish in  
herself,  
And grafted on the hard-grain'd stock  
of Spain—  
Her life, since Philip left her, and she  
lost  
Her fierce desire of bearing him a  
child,  
Hath, like a brief and bitter winter's  
day,  
Gone narrowing down and darkening  
to a close.  
There will be more conspiracies, I  
fear.

*Paget.* Ay, ay, beware of France.

*Howard.* O Paget, Paget!  
I have seen heretics of the poorer  
sort,  
Expectant of the rack from day to  
day,  
To whom the fire were welcome, lying  
chain'd  
In breathless dungeons over steaming  
sewers,

Fed with rank bread that crawl'd  
upon the tongue,  
And putrid water, every drop a worm.  
Until they died of rotted limbs; and  
then  
Cast on the dunghill naked, and be-  
come  
Hideously alive again from head to  
heel,  
Made even the carrion-nosing mon-  
grel vomit  
With hate and horror.

*Paget.* Nay, you sicken *me*  
To hear you.

*Howard.* Fancy-sick; these things  
are done,  
Done right against the promise of this  
Queen

Twice given.  
*Paget.* No faith with heretics, my  
Lord!

Hist! there be two old gossips—  
gospellers,  
I take it; stand behind the pillar  
here;  
I warrant you they talk about the  
burning.

*Enter TWO OLD WOMEN. JOAN,  
and after her TIB.*

*Jean.* Why, it be Tib!  
*Tib.* I cum behind tha, gall, and  
couldn't make tha hear. Eh, the  
wind and the wet! What a day, what  
a day! nigh upo' judgement daay loike.  
Pwoaps be pretty things, Joan, but  
they wunt set i' the Lord's cheer o'  
that daay.

*Jean.* I must set down myself,  
Tib; it be a var waay vor my owld  
legs up vro' Islip. Eh, my rheuma-  
tize be that bad howiver be I to win to  
the burnin'.

*Tib.* I should saay 'twur ower by  
now. I'd ha' been here avore, but  
Dumble wur blow'd wi' the wind, and  
Dumble's the best milcher in Islip.

*Jean.* Our Daisy's as good 'z her  
*Tib.* Noa, Joan.

*Jean.* Our Daisy's butter's as good  
'z hern.

*Tib.* Noa, Joan.

*Joan.* Our Daisy's cheeses be better.

*Tib.* Noa, Joan.

*Joan.* Eh, then ha' thy waay wi' me, Tib; ez thou hast wi' thy owld man.

*Tib.* Ay, Joan, and my owld man wur up and awaay betimes wi' dree hard eggs for a good plect at the burnin'; and barrin' the wet, Hodge 'ud ha' been a-barrowin' o' white peasen i' the outfield—and barrin' the wind, Dumble wur blow'd wi' the wind, so 'z we was forced to stick her, but we fetched her round at last. Thank the Lord therevore. Dumble's the best milcher in Islip.

*Joan.* Thou's thy way wi' man and beast, Tib. I wonder at tha', it beats me! Eh, but I do know ez Pwoaps and vires be bad things; tell 'ee now, I heerd summat as summun towld summun o' owld Bishop Gardiner's end; there wur an owld lord a-cum to dine wi' un, and a wur so owld a couldn't bide vor his dinner, but a had to bide howsomiver, vor 'I wunt dine,' says my Lord Bishop, says he, 'not till I hears ez Latimer and Ridley be a-vire;' and so they bided on and on till vour o' the clock, till his man cum in post vro' here and tells un ez the vire has tuk holt. 'Now,' says the Bishop, says he, 'we'll gwo to dinner;' and the owld lord fell to 's meat wi' a will, God bless un! but Gardiner wur struck down like by the hand o' God avore a could taste a mossel, and a set un all a-vire, so 'z the tongue on un cum a-lolluping out o' 'is mouth as black as a rat. Thank the Lord, therevore.

*Paget.* The fools!

*Tib.* Ay, Joan; and Queen Mary gwoes on a-burnin' and a-burnin', to get her baaby born: but all her burnin's 'ill never burn out the hypocrisy that makes the water in her. There's nought but the vire of God's hell ez can burn out that.

*Joan.* Thank the Lord, therevore.

*Paget.* The fools!

*Tib.* A-burnin', and a-burnin', and

a-makin' 'o volk madder and madder; but tek thou my word vor't, Joan,—and I bean't wrong not twice i' ten year—the burnin' o' the owld arch-bishop 'll burn the Pwoap out o' this 'ere land vor iver and iver.

*Howard.* Out of the church, you brace of cursed crones, Or I will have you duck'd! (*Women hurry out.*) Said I not right? For how should reverend prelate or throned prince Brook for an hour such brute malignity?

Ah, what an acrid wine has Luther brew'd!

*Paget.* Pooh, pooh, my Lord! poor garrulous country-wives.

Buy you their cheeses, and they'll side with you; You cannot judge the liquor from the lees.

*Howard.* I think that in some sort we may. But see,

*Enter PETERS.*

Peters, my gentleman, an honest Catholic, Who follow'd with the crowd to Cranmer's fire.

One that would neither misreport nor lie,

Not to gain paradise: no, nor if the Pope,

Charged him to do it—he is white as death.

Peters, how pale you look! you bring the smoke

Of Cranmer's burning with you.

*Peters.* Twice or thrice The smoke of Cranmer's burning wrapt me round.

*Howard.* Peters, you know me Catholic, but English.

Did he die bravely? Tell me that, or leave

All else untold.

*Peters.* My Lord, he died most bravely.

*Howard.* Then tell me all.

*Paget.* Ay, Master Peters, tell us.

*Peters.* You saw him how he past  
among the crowd;  
And ever as he walk'd the Spanish  
friars  
Still plied him with entreaty and re-  
proach:  
But Cranmer, as the helmsman at the  
helm  
Steers, ever looking to the happy  
haven  
Where he shall rest at night, moved to  
his death;  
And I could see that many silent  
hands  
Came from the crowd and met his  
own; and thus,  
When we had come where Ridley  
burnt with Latimer,  
He, with a cheerful smile, as one  
whose mind  
Is all made up, in haste put off the  
rags  
They had mock'd his misery with, and  
all in white,  
His long white beard, which he had  
never shaven  
Since Henry's death, down-sweeping  
to the chain,  
Wherewith they bound him to the  
stake, he stood  
More like an ancient father of the  
Church,  
Than heretic of these times; and still  
the friars  
Plied him, but Cranmer only shook  
his head,  
Or answer'd them in smiling nega-  
tives;  
Whereat Lord Williams gave a sud-  
den cry:—  
'Make short! make short!' and so  
they lit the wood.  
Then Cranmer lifted his left hand to  
heaven,  
And thrust his right into the bitter  
flame;  
And crying, in his deep voice, more  
than once,  
'This hath offended—this unworthy  
hand!'  
So held it till it all was burn'd, before  
The flame had reach'd his body; I  
stood near—

Mark'd him—he never uttered moan  
of pain:  
He never stir'd or writhed, but, like  
a statue,  
Unmoving in the greatness of the  
flame,  
Gave up the ghost; and so past mar-  
tyr-like—  
Martyr I may not call him—past—  
but whither?  
*Paget.* To purgatory, man, to pur-  
gatory.  
*Peters.* Nay, but, my Lord, he  
denied purgatory.  
*Paget.* Why then to Heaven, and  
God ha' mercy on him.  
*Howard.* Paget, despite his fearful  
heresies,  
I loved the man, and needs must  
moan for him;  
O Cranmer!  
*Paget.* But your moan is useless  
now:  
Come out, my Lord, it is a world of  
fools. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—LONDON. HALL IN THE  
PALACE.

QUEEN, SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.

*Heath.* Madam,  
I do assure you, that it must be look'd  
to:  
Calais is but ill-garrison'd, in Guisnes  
Are scarce two hundred men, and the  
French fleet  
Rule in the narrow seas. It must be  
look'd to,  
If war should fall between yourself  
and France;  
Or you will lose your Calais.  
*Mary.* It shall be look'd to;  
I wish you a good morning, good Sir  
Nicholas:  
Here is the King. [*Exit Heath.*]

*Enter PHILIP.**Philip.* Sir Nicholas tells you true,

And you must look to *Castile* when I go.

*Mary.* Go? must you go, indeed—again—so soon?

Why, nature's licensed vagabond, the swallow,

That might live always in the sun's warm heart.

Stays longer here in our poor north than you:—

Knows where he nested—ever comes again.

*Philip.* And, Madam, so shall I.

*Mary.* O, will you? will you? I am faint with fear that you will come no more.

*Philip.* Ay, ay; but many voices call me hence.

*Mary.* Voices—I hear unhappy rumors—nay, I say not, I believe. What voices call you

Dearer than mine that should be dearest to you?

Alas, my Lord! what voices and how many?

*Philip.* The voices of Castille and Aragon,

Granada, Naples, Sicily, and Milan,—The voices of Franche-Comté, and the Netherlands,

The voices of Peru and Mexico, Tunis, and Oran, and the Philippines, And all the fair spice-islands of the East.

*Mary (admiringly).* You are the mightiest monarch upon earth, I but a little Queen: and, so indeed,

Need you the more.

*Philip.* A little Queen! but when I came to wed your majesty, Lord Howard,

Sending an insolent shot that dash'd the seas

Upon us, made us lower our kingly flag

To yours of England.

*Mary.* Howard is all English! There is no king, not were he ten times king,

Ten times our husband, but must lower his flag

To that of England in the seas of England.

*Philip.* Is that your answer?

*Mary.* Being Queen of England, I have none other.

*Philip.* So.

*Mary.* But wherefore not Helm the huge vessel of your state, my liege, Here by the side of her who loves you most?

*Philip.* No, Madam, no! a candle in the sun

Is all but smoke—a star beside the moon

Is all but lost; your people will not crown me—

Your people are as cheerless as your clime;

I hate me and mine: witness the brawls, the gibbets.

Here swings a Spaniard—there an Englishman;

The peoples are unlike as their complexion;

Yet will I be your swallow and return—

But now I cannot bide.

*Mary.* Not to help me?

They hate me also for my love to you, My Philip; and these judgments on the land—

Harvestless autumns, horrible agues, plague—

*Philip.* The blood and sweat of heretics at the stake

Is God's best dew upon the barren field.

Burn more!

*Mary.* I will, I will; and you will stay?

*Philip.* Have I not said? Madam, I came to sue

Your Council and yourself to declare war.

*Mary.* Sir, there are many English in your ranks

To help your battle.

*Philip.* So far, good. I say I came to sue your Council and yourself

To declare war against the King of France.

*Mary.* Not to see me?

*Philip.* Ay, Madam, to see you.  
Unalterably and pesteringly fond!

[*Aside.*]

But, soon or late you must have war  
with France;

King Henry warms your traitors at  
his hearth.

Carew is there, and Thomas Stafford  
there.

Courtenay, belike—

*Mary.* A fool and featherhead!

*Philip.* Ay, but they use his name.

In brief, this Henry  
Stirs up your land against you to the  
intent

That you may lose your English heri-  
tage.

And then, your Scottish namesake  
marrying

The Dauphin, he would weld France,  
England, Scotland,

Into one sword to hack at Spain and  
me.

*Mary.* And yet the Pope is now  
colleagu'd with France;

You make your wars upon him down  
in Italy:—

Philip, can that be well?

*Philip.* Content you, Madam;  
You must abide my judgment, and  
my father's,

Who deems it a most just and holy  
war.

The Pope would cast the Spaniard  
out of Naples:

He calls us worse than Jews, Moors,  
Saracens.

The Pope has pushed his horns be-  
yond his mitre—

Beyond his province. Now,  
Duke Alva will but touch him on the  
horns,

And he withdraws; and of his holy  
head—

For Alva is true son of the true  
church—

No hair is harm'd. Will you not help  
me here?

*Mary.* Alas! the Council will not  
hear of war.

They say your wars are not the wars  
of England.

They will not lay more taxes on a land  
So hunger-nipt and wretched; and  
you know

The crown is poor. We have given  
the church-lands back:

The nobles would not; nay, they  
clapt their hands

Upon their swords when ask'd; and  
therefore God

Is hard upon the people. What's to  
be done?

Sir, I will move them in your cause  
again.

And we will raise us loans and subsi-  
dies

Among the merchants; and Sir  
Thomas Gresham

Will aid us. There is Antwerp and  
the Jews.

*Philip.* Madam, my thanks.

*Mary.* And you will stay your  
going?

*Philip.* And further to discourage  
and lay lame

The plots of France, altho' you love  
her not.

You must proclaim Elizabeth your  
heir.

She stands between you and the  
Queen of Scots.

*Mary.* The Queen of Scots at  
least is Catholic.

*Philip.* Ay, Madam, Catholic; but  
I will not have

The King of France the King of  
England too.

*Mary.* But she's a heretic, and,  
when I am gone,

Brings the new learning back.

*Philip.* It must be done.  
You must proclaim Elizabeth your  
heir.

*Mary.* Then it is done; but you  
will stay your going

Somewhat beyond your settled pur-  
pose?

*Philip.* No!

*Mary.* What, not one day?

*Philip.* You beat upon the rock.  
*Mary.* And I am broken there.

*Philip.* Is this a place  
To wait in, Madam? what! a public  
hall.

Go in, I pray you.

*Mary.* Do not seem so changed.  
Say go; but only say it lovingly.

*Philip.* You do mistake. I am  
not one to change.  
I never loved you more.

*Mary.* Sire, I obey you.  
Come quickly.

*Philip.* Ay. [Exit Mary.]

*Enter COUNT DE FERIA.*

*Feria (aside).* The Queen in tears!  
*Philip.* Feria!

Hast thou not mark'd—come closer  
to mine ear—

How doubly aged this Queen of ours  
hath grown

Since she lost hope of bearing us a  
child?

*Feria.* Sire, if your Grace hath  
mark'd it, so have I.

*Philip.* Hast thou not likewise  
mark'd Elizabeth,  
How fair and royal—like a Queen, in-  
deed?

*Feria.* Allow me the same answer  
as before—

That if your Grace hath mark'd her,  
so have I.

*Philip.* Good, now; methinks my  
Queen is like enough  
To leave me by and by.

*Feria.* To leave you, sire?

*Philip.* I mean not like to live.  
Elizabeth—

To Philibert of Savoy, as you know,  
We meant to wed her; but I am not  
sure

She will not serve me better—so my  
Queen

Would leave me—as—my wife.

*Feria.* Sire, even so.

*Philip.* She will not have Prince  
Philibert of Savoy.

*Feria.* No, sire.

*Philip.* I have to pray you, some  
odd time,

To sound the Princess carelessly on  
this;

Not as from me, but as your phan-  
tasy;

And tell me how she takes it.

*Feria.* Sire, I will.

*Philip.* I am not certain but that  
Philibert

Shall be the man; and I shall urge  
his suit

Upon the Queen, because I am not  
certain:

You understand, Feria.

*Feria.* Sire, I do.

*Philip.* And if you be not secret in  
this matter,

You understand me there, too?

*Feria.* Sire, I do.

*Philip.* You must be sweet and  
supple, like a Frenchman.

She is none of those who loathe the  
honeycomb. [Exit Feria.]

*Enter RENARD.*

*Renard.* My liege, I bring you  
goodly tidings.

*Philip.* Well?

*Renard.* There will be war with  
France, at last, my liege;

Sir Thomas Stafford, a bull-headed  
ass,

Sailing from France, with thirty Eng-  
lishmen,

Hath taken Scarboro' Castle, north of  
York;

Proclaims himself protector, and  
affirms

The Queen has forfeited her right to  
reign

By marriage with an alien—other  
things

As idle; a weak Wyatt! Little  
doubt

This buzz will soon be silenced; but  
the Council

(I have talk'd with some already) are  
for war.

This is the fifth conspiracy hatch'd in  
France;

They show their teeth upon it; and  
your Grace,

So you will take advice of mine, should  
stay

Yet for awhile, to shape and guide  
the event.

*Philip.* Good! Renard, I will stay  
then.



*Renard.* Also, sire,  
Might I not say—to please your wife,  
the Queen?

*Philip.* Ay, Renard, if you care to  
put it so. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN THE  
PALACE.

MARY, sitting: a rose in her hand.  
LADY CLARENCE. ALICE, in the  
background.

*Mary.* Look! I have play'd with  
this poor rose so long  
I have broken off the head.

*Lady Clarence.* Your Grace hath  
been  
More merciful to many a rebel head  
That should have fallen, and may rise  
again.

*Mary.* There were not many  
hang'd for Wyatt's rising.

*Lady Clarence.* Nay, not two hun-  
dred.

*Mary.* I could weep for them  
And her, and mine own self and all  
the world.

*Lady Clarence.* For her? for  
whom, your Grace?

Enter USHER.

*Usher.* The Cardinal.

Enter CARDINAL POLE. (MARY  
rises.)

*Mary.* Reginald Pole, what news  
hath plagued thy heart?  
What makes thy favor like the blood-  
less head  
Fall'n on the block, and held up by  
the hair?

*Philip?*—

*Pole.* No, Philip is as warm in life  
As ever.

*Mary.* Ay, and then as cold as  
ever. Is Calais taken?

*Pole.* Cousin, there hath chanced  
A sharper harm to England and to  
Rome,  
Than Calais taken. Julius the Third

Was ever just, and mild, and father-  
like;

But this new Pope Caraffa, Paul the  
Fourth,

Not only reft me of that legateship  
Which Julius gave me, and the legate-  
ship

Annex'd to Canterbury—nay, but  
worse—

And yet I must obey the Holy Father,  
And so must you, good cousin;—worse  
than all,

A passing bell toll'd in a dying ear—  
He hath cited me to Rome, for  
heresy,

Before his Inquisition.

*Mary.* I knew it, cousin,  
But held from you all papers sent by  
Rome,

That you might rest among us, till the  
Pope,

To compass which I wrote myself to  
Rome,

Reversed his doom, and that you  
might not seem

To disobey his Holiness.

*Pole.* He hates Philip;  
He is all Italian, and he hates the  
Spaniard;

He cannot dream that I advised the  
war;

He strikes thro' me at Philip and  
yourself.

Nay, but I know it of old, he hates  
me too;

So brands me in the stare of Christen-  
dom

A heretic!

Now, even now, when bow'd before  
my time,

The house half-ruin'd ere the lease be  
out;

When I should guide the Church in  
peace at home,

After my twenty years of banishment,  
And all my lifelong labor to uphold

The primacy—a heretic. Long ago,  
When I was ruler in the patrimony,

I was too lenient to the Lutheran,  
And I and learned friends among our-  
selves

Would freely canvass certain Luther-  
anisms.

What then, he knew I was no  
Lutheran.

A heretic!

He drew this shaft against me to the  
head,

When it was thought I might be  
chosen Pope,

But then withdrew it. In full consi-  
story,

When I was made Archbishop, he  
approved me.

And how should he have sent me  
Legate hither,

Deeming me heretic? and what  
heresy since?

But he was evermore mine enemy,  
And hates the Spaniard—fiery-

choleric,  
A drinker of black, strong, volcanic

wines,  
That ever make him fierier. I, a here-  
tic?

Your Highness knows that in pursu-  
ing heresy

I have gone beyond your late Lord  
Chancellor,—

He cried Enough! enough! before  
his death.—

Gone beyond him and mine own nat-  
ural man

(It was God's cause); so far they call  
me now,

The scourge and butcher of their  
English church.

*Mary.* Have courage, your reward  
is Heaven itself.

*Pole.* They groan amen; they  
swarm into the fire

Like flies—for what? no dogma.  
They know nothing;

They burn for nothing.

*Mary.* You have done your best.

*Pole.* Have done my best, and as  
a faithful son,

That all day long hath wrought his  
father's work,

When back he comes at evening hath  
the door

Shut on him by the father whom he  
loved,

His early follies cast into his teeth,  
And the poor son turn'd out into the

street

To sleep, to die—I shall die of it,  
cousin.

*Mary.* I pray you be not so dis-  
consolate;

I still will do mine utmost with the  
Pope.

Poor cousin!  
Have not I been the fast friend of  
your life

Since mine began, and it was thought  
we two

Might make one flesh, and cleave  
unto each other

As man and wife?

*Pole.* Ah, cousin, I remember  
How I would dandle you upon my  
knee

At lisping-age. I watch'd you danc-  
ing once

With your huge father; he look'd the  
Great Harry,

You but his cockboat; prettily you  
did it,

And innocently. No—we were not  
made

One flesh in happiness, no happiness  
here;

But now we are made one flesh in  
misery;

Our bridemaids are not lovely—Dis-  
appointment,

Ingratitude, Injustice, Evil-tongue,  
Labor-in-vain.

*Mary.* Surely, not all in vain.  
Peace, cousin, peace! I am sad at  
heart myself.

*Pole.* Our altar is a mound of  
dead men's clay,

Dug from the grave that yawns for  
us beyond;

And there is one Death stands be-  
hind the Groom,

And there is one Death stands be-  
hind the Bride—

*Mary.* Have you been looking at  
the 'Dance of Death'?

*Pole.* No; but these libellous pa-  
pers which I found

Strewn in your palace. Look you  
here—the Pope

Pointing at me with 'Pole, the heretic,  
Thou hast burnt others, do thou burn  
thyself,

Or I will burn thee; ' and this other ;  
see !—  
' We pray continually for the death  
Of our accursed Queen and Cardinal  
Pole.'

This last—I dare not read it her.

[*Aside.*  
Away!

*Mary.*  
Why do you bring me these ?  
I thought you knew me better. I  
never read,  
I tear them; they come back upon  
my dreams.  
The hands that write them should be  
burnt clean off  
As Cranmer's, and the fiends that  
utter them  
Tongue-torn with pincers, lash'd to  
death, or lie  
Famishing in black cells, while  
famish'd rats  
Eat them alive. Why do they bring  
me these ?  
Do you mean to drive me mad ?

*Pole.* I had forgotten  
How these poor libels trouble you.  
Your pardon,  
Sweet cousin, and farewell ! ' O bub-  
ble world,  
Whose colors in a moment break and  
fly ! '

Why, who said that ? I know not—  
true enough !

[*Puts up the papers, all but the  
last, which falls. Exit Pole.*

*Alice.* If Cranmer's spirit were a  
mocking one,  
And heard these two, there might be  
sport for him.

*Mary.* Clarence, they hate me ;  
even while I speak  
There lurks a silent dagger, listening  
In some dark closet, some long gal-  
lery, drawn,

And panting for my blood as I go by.

*Lady Clarence.* Nay, Madam, there  
be loyal papers too,

And I have often found them.

*Mary.* Find me one !  
*Lady Clarence.* Ay, Madam ; but  
Sir Nicholas Heath, the Chan-  
cellor,

Would see your Highness.

*Mary.* Wherefore should I see  
him ?

*Lady Clarence.* Well, Madam, he  
may bring you news from  
Philip.

*Mary.* So, Clarence.

*Lady Clarence.* Let me first put  
up your hair ;  
It tumbles all abroad.

*Mary.* And the gray dawn  
Of an old age that never will be  
mine

Is all the clearer seen. No, no ; what  
matters ?

Forlorn I am, and let me look forlorn.

*Enter SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.*

*Heath.* I bring your Majesty such  
grievous news  
I grieve to bring it. Madam, Calais  
is taken.

*Mary.* What traitor spoke ? Here,  
let my cousin Pole  
Seize him and burn him for a Lu-  
theran.

*Heath.* Her Highness is unwell.  
I will retire.

*Lady Clarence.* Madam, your  
Chancellor, Sir Nicholas  
Heath.

*Mary.* Sir Nicholas ! I am stunn'd  
—Nicholas Heath ?

Methought some traitor smote me on  
the head.

What said you, my good Lord, that  
our brave English

Had sallied out from Calais and  
driven back

The Frenchmen from their trenches ?

*Heath.* Alas ! no.  
That gateway to the mainland over  
which

Our flag hath floated for two hundred  
years

Is France again.

*Mary.* So ; but it is not lost—  
Not yet. Send out : let England as  
of old

Rise lionlike, strike hard and deep  
into

The prey they are rending from her  
—ay, and rend

The renders too. Send out, send out,  
and make  
Musters in all the counties; gather  
all  
From sixteen years to sixty; collect  
the fleet;  
Let every craft that carries sail and  
gun  
Steer toward Calais. Guisnes is not  
taken yet?

*Heath.* Guisnes is not taken yet.

*Mary.* There yet is hope.

*Heath.* Ah, Madam, but your peo-  
ple are so cold;  
I do much fear that England will not  
care.

Methinks there is no manhood left  
among us.

*Mary.* Send out; I am too weak  
to stir abroad:

Tell my mind to the Council—to the  
Parliament:

Proclaim it to the winds. Thou art  
cold thyself

To babble of their coldness. O  
would I were

My father for an hour! Away now—  
Quick!

[*Exit Heath.*  
I hoped I had served God with all  
my might!

It seems I have not. Ah! much  
heresy

Shelter'd in Calais. Saints, I have  
rebuilt

Your shrines, set up your broken  
images;

Be comfortable to me. Suffer not  
That my brief reign in England be de-  
famed

Thro' all her angry chronicles here-  
after

By loss of Calais. Grant me Calais.  
Philip,

We have made war upon the Holy  
Father

All for your sake: what good could  
come of that?

*Lady Clarence.* No, Madam, not  
against the Holy Father;

You did but help King Philip's war  
with France,

Your troops were never down in  
Italy.

*Mary.* I am a byword. Heretic  
and rebel

Point at me and make merry. Philip  
gone!

And Calais gone! Time that I were  
gone too!

*Lady Clarence.* Nay, if the fetid  
gutter had a voice

And cried I was not clean, what  
should I care?

Or you, for heretic cries? And I be-  
lieve,

Spite of your melancholy Sir Nicho-  
las,

Your England is as loyal as myself.

*Mary* (*Seeing the paper dropt by  
Pole*).

There! there! another paper!  
Said you not

Many of these were loyal? Shall I  
try

If this be one of such?

*Lady Clarence.* Let it be, let it be.  
God pardon me! I have never yet

found one. [*Aside.*  
*Mary* (*reads*).

'Your people hate  
you as your husband hates you.'

Clarence, Clarence, what have I done?  
what sin

Beyond all grace, all pardon? Mother  
of God,

Thou knowest never woman meant so  
well,

And fared so ill in this disastrous  
world.

My people hate me and desire my  
death.

*Lady Clarence.* No, Madam, no.

*Mary.* My husband hates me, and  
desires my death.

*Lady Clarence.* No, Madam; these  
are libels.

*Mary.* I hate myself, and I desire  
my death.

*Lady Clarence.* Long live your  
Majesty! Shall Alice sing you

One of her pleasant songs? Alice,  
my child,

Bring us your lute (*Alice goes*). They  
say the gloom of Saul

Was lighten'd by young David's harp.  
*Mary.* Too young!  
And never knew a Philip.

*Re-enter Alice.*

Give *me* the lute.

He hates me!

*(She sings.)*

Hapless doom of woman happy in betrothing!

Beauty passes like a breath and love is lost in loathing:

Low, my lute; speak low, my lute, but say the world is nothing—

Low, lute, low!

Love will hover round the flowers when they first awaken;

Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not be overtaken;

Low, my lute! oh low, my lute! we fade and are forsaken—

Low, dear lute, low!

Take it away! not low enough for me!

*Alice.* Your Grace hath a low voice.

*Mary.* How dare you say it? Even for that he hates me. A low voice

Lost in a wilderness where none can hear!

A voice of shipwreck on a shoreless sea!

A low voice from the dust and from the grave

*(Sitting on the ground).* There, am I low enough now?

*Alice.* Good Lord! how grim and ghastly looks her Grace, With both her knees drawn upward to her chin.

There was an old-world tomb beside my father's,

And this was open'd, and the dead were found

Sitting, and in this fashion; she looks a corpse.

*Enter LADY MAGDALEN DACRES.*

*Lady Magdalen.* Madam, the Count de Feria waits without, In hopes to see your Highness.

*Lady Clarence (pointing to Mary).* Wait he must—

Her trance again. She neither sees nor hears, And may not speak for hours.

*Lady Magdalen.* Unhappiest Of Queens and wives and women!

*Alice (in the foreground with Lady Magdalen).* And all along Of Philip.

*Lady Magdalen.* Not so loud! Our Clarence there

Sees ever such an aureole round the Queen,

It gilds the greatest wronger of her peace,

Who stands the nearest to her.

*Alice.* Ay, this Philip: I used to love the Queen with all my

heart—

God help me, but methinks I love her less

For such a dotage upon such a man.

I would I were as tall and strong as you.

*Lady Magdalen.* I seem half-shamed at times to be so tall.

*Alice.* You are the stateliest deer in all the herd—

Beyond his aim—but I am small and scandalous,

And love to hear bad tales of Philip.

*Lady Magdalen.* Why?

I never heard him utter worse of you Than that you were low-statured.

*Alice.* Does he think Low stature is low nature, or all women's

Low as his own?

*Lady Magdalen.* There you strike in the nail.

This coarseness is a want of phantasy. It is the low man thinks the woman low;

Sin is too dull to see beyond himself.

*Alice.* Ah, Magdalen, sin is bold as well as dull.

How dared he?

*Lady Magdalen.* Stupid soldiers oft are bold.

Poor lads, they see not what the general sees,

A risk of utter ruin. I am not

Beyond his aim, or was not.

*Alice.* Who? Not you?

Tell, tell me; save my credit with myself.

*Lady Magdalen.* I never breathed it to a bird in the eaves, Would not for all the stars and maiden moon

Our drooping Queen should know! In Hampton Court

My window look'd upon the corridor;

And I was robing;—this poor throat of mine,

Barer than I should wish a man to see it,—

When he we speak of drove the window back,

And, like a thief, push'd in his royal hand;

But by God's providence a good stout staff

Lay near me; and you know me strong of arm;

I do believe I lamed his Majesty's

For a day or two, tho', give the Devil his due,

I never found he bore me any spite.

*Alice.* I would she could have wedded that poor youth,

My Lord of Devon—light enough, God knows,

And mixt with Wyatt's rising—and the boy

Not out of him—but neither cold, coarse, cruel,

And more than all—no Spaniard.

*Lady Clarence.* Not so loud. Lord Devon, girls! what are you whispering here?

*Alice.* Probing an old state-secret—how it chanced

That this young Earl was sent on foreign travel,

Not lost his head.

*Lady Clarence.* There was no proof against him.

*Alice.* Nay, Madam; did not Gardiner intercept

A letter which the Count de Noailles wrote

To that dead traitor Wyatt, with full proof

Of Courtenay's treason? What became of that?

*Lady Clarence.* Some say that Gardiner, out of love for him, Burnt it, and some relate that it was lost

When Wyatt sack'd the Chancellor's house in Southwark.

Let dead things rest.

*Alice.* Ay, and with him who died Alone in Italy.

*Lady Clarence.* Much changed, I hear,

Had put off levity and put graveness on.

The foreign courts report him in his manner

Noble as his young person and old shield.

It might be so—but all is over now; He caught a chill in the lagoons of

Venice, And died in Padua.

*Mary (looking up suddenly).* Died in the true faith?

*Lady Clarence.* Ay, Madam, happily.

*Mary.* Happier he than I.

*Lady Magdalen.* It seems her Highness hath awaken'd.

Think you That I might dare to tell her that the Count—

*Mary.* I will see no man hence for evermore,

Saving my confessor and my cousin Pole.

*Lady Magdalen.* It is the Count de Feria, my dear lady.

*Mary.* What Count?

*Lady Magdalen.* The Count de Feria, from his Majesty

King Philip.

*Mary.* Philip! quick! loop up my hair!

Throw cushions on that seat, and make it throne-like.

Arrange my dress—the gorgeous Indian shawl

That Philip brought me in our happy days!—

That covers all. So—am I somewhat Queenlike,

Bride of the mightiest sovereign upon earth?

*Lady Clarence.* Ay, so your Grace would bide a moment yet.

*Mary.* No, no, he brings a letter. I may die

Before I read it. Let me see him at once.

*Enter COUNT DE FERIA (kneels).*

*Feria.* I trust your Grace is well. *(Aside)* How her hand burns!

*Mary.* I am not well, but it will better me, Sir Count, to read the letter which you bring.

*Feria.* Madam, I bring no letter.

*Mary.* How! no letter?

*Feria.* His Highness is so vex'd with strange affairs—

*Mary.* That his own wife is no affair of his.

*Feria.* Nay, Madam, nay! he sends his veriest love, And says, he will come quickly.

*Mary.* Doth he, indeed? You, sir, do you remember what you said

When last you came to England?

*Feria.* Madam, I brought My King's congratulations; it was hoped

Your Highness was once more in happy state

To give him an heir male.

*Mary.* Sir, you said more; You said he would come quickly. I had horses

On all the road from Dover, day and night;

On all the road from Harwich, night and day;

But the child came not, and the husband came not;

And yet he will come quickly. . . Thou hast learnt

Thy lesson, and I mine. There is no need

For Philip so to shame himself again. Return,

And tell him that I know he comes no more.

Tell him at last I know his love is dead,

And that I am in state to bring forth death—

Thou art commission'd to Elizabeth, And not to me!

*Feria.* Mere compliments and wishes.

But shall I take some message from your Grace?

*Mary.* Tell her to come and close my dying eyes, And wear my crown, and dance upon my grave.

*Feria.* Then I may say your Grace will see your sister?

Your Grace is too low-spirited. Air and sunshine.

I would we had you, Madam, in our warm Spain.

You droop in your dim London.

*Mary.* Have him away! I sicken of his readiness.

*Lady Clarence.* My Lord Count, Her Highness is too ill for colloquy.

*Feria (kneels, and kisses her hand).* I wish her Highness better.

*(Aside)* How her hand burns! *[Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

ELIZABETH, STEWARD OF THE HOUSEHOLD, ATTENDANTS.

*Elizabeth.* There's half an angel wrong'd in your account; Methinks I am all angel, that I bear it

Without more ruffling. Cast it o'er again.

*Steward.* I were whole devil if I wrong'd you, Madam.

*[Exit Steward.*

*Attendant.* The Count de Feria, from the King of Spain.

*Elizabeth.* Ah!—let him enter. Nay, you need not go:

*[To her Ladies.*

Remain within the chamber, but apart.

We'll have no private conference. Welcome to England!

*Enter FERIA.*

*Feria.* Fair island star!

*Elizabeth.* I shine! What else,  
Sir Count?

*Feria.* As far as France, and into  
Philip's heart.  
My King would know if you be fairly  
served,

And lodged, and treated.

*Elizabeth.* You see the lodging, sir,  
I am well-served, and am in every-  
thing

Most loyal and most grateful to the  
Queen.

*Feria.* You should be grateful to  
my master, too.

He spoke of this; and unto him you  
owe

That Mary hath acknowledged you  
her heir.

*Elizabeth.* No, not to her nor him;  
but to the people,

Who know my right, and love me, as  
I love

The people! whom God aid!

*Feria.* You will be Queen,  
And, were I Philip—

*Elizabeth.* Wherefore pause you—  
what?

*Feria.* Nay, but I speak from mine  
own self, not him;

Your royal sister cannot last; your  
hand

Will be much coveted! What a  
delicate one!

Our Spanish ladies have none such—  
and there,

Were you in Spain, this fine fair  
gossamer gold—

Like sun-gilt breathings on a frosty  
dawn—

That hovers round your shoulder—

*Elizabeth.* Is it so fine?  
Troth, some have said so.

*Feria.* —would be deemed a mir-  
acle.

*Elizabeth.* Your Philip hath gold  
hair and golden beard;

There must be ladies many with hair  
like mine.

*Feria.* Some few of Gothic blood  
have golden hair,

But none like yours.

*Elizabeth.* I am happy you ap-  
prove it.

*Feria.* But as to Philip and your  
Grace—consider,—

If such a one as you should match  
with Spain,

What hinders but that Spain and  
England join'd,

Should make the mightiest empire  
earth has known.

Spain would be England on her seas,  
and England

Mistress of the Indies.

*Elizabeth.* It may chance, that  
England

Will be the Mistress of the Indies  
yet,

Without the help of Spain.

*Feria.* Impossible;  
Except you put Spain down.

Wide of the mark ev'n for a mad-  
man's dream.

*Elizabeth.* Perhaps; but we have  
seamen. Count de Feria,

I take it that the King hath spoken  
to you;

But is Don Carlos such a goodly  
match?

*Feria.* Don Carlos, Madam, is but  
twelve years old.

*Elizabeth.* Ay, tell the King that  
I will muse upon it;

He is my good friend, and I would  
keep him so;

But—he would have me Catholic of  
Rome,

And that I scarce can be; and, sir,  
till now

My sister's marriage, and my father's  
marriages,

Make me full fain to live and die a  
maid.

But I am much beholden to your  
King.

Have you aught else to tell me?

*Feria.* Nothing, Madam,  
Save that methought I gathered from  
the Queen

That she would see your Grace before  
she—died.

*Elizabeth.* God's death! and where-  
fore spake you not before?



We dally with our lazy moments  
here,  
And hers are number'd. Horses  
there, without!  
I am much beholden to the King,  
your master.  
Why did you keep me prating?  
Horses, there!

[Exit Elizabeth, etc.

*Feria.* So from a clear sky falls  
the thunderbolt!

Don Carlos? Madam, if you marry  
Philip,  
Then I and he will snaffle your 'God's  
death.'

And break your paces in, and make  
you tame;

God's death, forsooth—you do not  
know King Philip. [Exit.

SCENE IV.—LONDON. BEFORE  
THE PALACE.

*A light burning within. Voices of  
the night passing.*

*First.* Is not you light in the  
Queen's chamber?

*Second.* Ay,

They say she's dying.

*First.* So is Cardinal Pole.

May the great angels join their wings,  
and make

Down for their heads to heaven!

*Second.* Amen. Come on.  
[Exit.

TWO OTHERS.

*First.* There's the Queen's light.  
I hear she cannot live.

*Second.* God curse her and her  
Legate! Gardiner burns

Already; but to pay them full in  
kind,

The hottest hold in all the devil's  
den

Were but a sort of winter; sir, in  
Guernsey,

I watch'd a woman burn; and in her  
agony

The mother came upon her—a child  
was born—

And, sir, they hurl'd it back into the  
fire,

That, being but baptized in fire, the  
babe

Might be in fire forever. Ah, good  
neighbor,

There should be something fierier  
than fire

To yield them their deserts.

*First.* Amen to all  
Your wish, and further.

*A Third Voice.* Deserts! Amen to  
what? Whose deserts? Yours?

You have a gold ring on your finger,  
and soft raiment about your

body; and is not the woman up yonder  
sleeping after all she has done, in

peace and quietness, on a soft bed, in  
a closed room, with light, fire, physic,

tendance; and I have seen the true  
men of Christ lying famine-dead by

scores, and under no ceiling but the  
cloud that wept on them, not for

them.

*First.* Friend, tho' so late, it is not  
safe to preach.

You had best go home. What are  
you?

*Third.* What am I? One who  
cries continually with sweat and tears

to the Lord God that it would please  
Him out of His infinite love to break

down all kingship and queenship, all  
priesthood and prelacy; to cancel and

abolish all bonds of human allegiance,  
all the magistracy, all the nobles,

and all the wealthy; and to send us  
again, according to His promise, the

one King, the Christ, and all things in  
common, as in the day of the first

church, when Christ Jesus was  
King.

*First.* If ever I heard a madman,  
—let's away!

Why, you long-winded— Sir, you  
go beyond me.

I pride myself on being moderate.

Good night! Go home. Besides, you  
curse so loud.

The watch will hear you. Get you  
home at once. [Exit.

## SCENE V.—LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

*A Gallery on one side. The moonlight streaming through a range of windows on the wall opposite. MARY, LADY CLARENCE, LADY MAGDALEN DACRES, ALICE. QUEEN pacing the Gallery. A writing-table in front. QUEEN comes to the table and writes and goes again, pacing the Gallery.*

*Lady Clarence.* Mine eyes are dim :  
what hath she written ? read.

*Alice.* 'I am dying, Philip ; come to me.'

*Lady Magdalen.* There—up and down, poor lady, up and down.

*Alice.* And how her shadow crosses one by one  
The moonlight casements pattern'd on the wall,

Following her like her sorrow. She turns again.

*[Queen sits and writes, and goes again.]*

*Lady Clarence.* What hath she written now ?

*Alice.* Nothing ; but 'come, come, come,' and all awry,

And blotted by her tears. This cannot last. *[Queen returns.]*

*Mary.* I whistle to the bird has broken cage,  
And all in vain. *[Sitting down.]*

Calais gone—Guisnes gone, too—and Philip gone !

*Lady Clarence.* Dear Madam,  
Philip is like at the wars ;

I cannot doubt but that he comes again ;

And he is with you in a measure still.  
I never look'd upon so fair a likeness  
As your great King in armor there,  
his hand

Upon his helmet.

*[Pointing to the portrait of Philip on the wall.]*

*Mary.* Doth he not look noble ?  
I had heard of him in battle over seas,

And I would have my warrior all in arms.

He said it was not courtly to stand helmeted  
Before the Queen. He had his gracious moment,  
Altho' you'll not believe me. How he smiles

As if he loved me yet !

*Lady Clarence.* And so he does.

*Mary.* He never loved me—nay,  
he could not love me.

It was his father's policy against France.

I am eleven years older than he,  
Poor boy ! *[Weeps.]*

*Alice.* That was a lusty boy of twenty-seven ; *[Aside.]*

Poor enough in God's grace ?

*Mary.* —And all in vain !

The Queen of Scots is married to the Dauphin,

And Charles, the lord of this low world, is gone ;

And all his wars and wisdoms past away ;

And in a moment I shall follow him.

*Lady Clarence.* Nay, dearest Lady,  
see your good physician.

*Mary.* Drugs—but he knows they cannot help me—says

That rest is all—tells me I must not think—

That I must rest—I shall rest by and by.

Catch the wild cat, cage him, and when he springs

And maims himself against the bars, say 'rest' :

Why, you must kill him if you would have him rest—

Dead or alive you cannot make him happy.

*Lady Clarence.* Your Majesty has lived so pure a life,

And done such mighty things by Holy Church,

I trust that God will make you happy yet.

*Mary.* What is the strange thing happiness ? Sit down here :

Tell me thine happiest hour.

*Lady Clarence.* I will, if that May make your Grace forget yourself a little.

There runs a shallow brook across  
our field  
For twenty miles, where the black  
crow flies five,  
And doth so bound and babble all  
the way  
As if itself were happy. It was May-  
time,  
And I was walking with the man I  
loved.  
I loved him, but I thought I was not  
loved.  
And both were silent, letting the wild  
brook  
Speak for us—till he stoop'd and  
gather'd one  
From out a bed of thick forget-me-  
nots,  
Look'd hard and sweet at me, and  
gave it me.  
I took it, tho' I did not know I took  
it,  
And put it in my bosom, and all at  
once  
I felt his arms about me, and his  
lips—  
*Mary.* O God! I have been too  
salck, too slack;  
There are Hot Gospellers even among  
our guards—  
Nobles we dared not touch. We  
have but burnt  
The heretic priest, workmen, and  
women and children.  
Wet, famine, ague, fever, storm, wreck,  
wrath,—  
We have so play'd the coward; but  
by God's grace,  
We'll follow Philip's leading, and set  
up  
The Holy Office here—garner the  
wheat,  
And burn the tares with unquench-  
able fire!  
Burn!—  
Fie, what a savor! tell the cooks to  
close  
The doors of all the offices below.  
Latimer!  
Sit, we are private with our women  
here—  
Ever a rough, blunt, and uncourtly  
fellow—

Thou light a torch that never will go  
out!  
'Tis out—mine flames. Women, the  
Holy Father  
Has ta'en the legateship from our  
cousin Pole—  
Was that well done? and poor Pole  
pines of it,  
As I do, to the death. I am but a  
woman,  
I have no power.—Ah, weak and  
meek old man,  
Seven-fold dishonor'd even in the  
sight  
Of thine own sectaries—No, no. No  
pardon!—  
Why that was false: there is the right  
hand still  
Beckons me hence.  
Sir, you were burnt for heresy, not  
for treason,  
Remember that! 'twas I and Bonner  
did it,  
And Pole; we are three to one—  
Have you found mercy there,  
Grant it me here: and see, he smiles  
and goes,  
Gentle as in life.  
*Alice.* Madam, who goes? King  
Philip?  
*Mary.* No, Philip comes and goes,  
but never goes.  
Women, when I am dead,  
Open my heart, and there you will  
find written  
Two names, Philip and Calais; open  
his,—  
So that he have one,—  
You will find Philip only, policy,  
policy,—  
Ay, worse than that—not one hour  
true to me!  
Foul maggots crawling in a fester'd  
vice!  
Adulterous to the very heart of  
Hell.  
Hast thou a knife?  
*Alice.* Ay, Madam, but o' God's  
mercy—  
*Mary.* Fool, think'st thou I would  
peril mine own soul  
By slaughter of the body? I could  
not, girl,

Not this way—callous with a constant  
stripe,

Unwoundable. The knife!

*Alice.* Take heed, take heed!  
The blade is keen as death.

*Mary.* This Philip shall not  
Stare in upon me in my haggard-  
ness;

Old, miserable, diseased,  
Incapable of children. Come thou  
down.

[*Cuts out the picture and throws it  
down.*]

Lie there. (*Wails*) O God, I have  
kill'd my Philip!

*Alice.* No,  
Madam, you have but cut the canvas  
out;

We can replace it.

*Mary.* All is well then; rest—  
I will to rest; he said, I must have  
rest.

[*Cries of 'Elizabeth' in the street.*  
A cry! What's that? Elizabeth? re-  
volt?

A new Northumberland, another  
Wyatt?

I'll fight it on the threshold of the  
grave.

*Lady Clarence.* Madam, your royal  
sister comes to see you.

*Mary.* I will not see her.  
Who knows if Boleyn's daughter be  
my sister?

I will see none except the priest.  
Your arm.

[*To Lady Clarence.*  
O Saint of Aragon, with that sweet  
worn smile

Among thy patient wrinkles—Help  
me hence. [*Exeunt.*]

*The PRIEST passes. Enter ELIZA-  
BETH and SIR WILLIAM CECIL.*

*Elizabeth.* Good counsel yours—  
No one in waiting? still,

As if the chamberlain were Death  
himself!

The room she sleeps in—is not this  
the way?

No, that way there are voices. Am I  
too late?

Cecil . . . God guide me lest I lose  
the way. [*Exit Elizabeth.*]

*Cecil.* Many points weather'd,  
many perilous ones,  
At last a harbor opens; but there-  
in

Sunk rocks—they need fine steering  
—much it is

To be nor mad, nor bigot—have a  
mind—

Nor let Priests' talk, or dream of  
worlds to be,

Miscolor things about her—sudden  
touches

For him, or him—sunk rocks; no  
passionate faith—

But—if let be—balance and compro-  
mise;

Brave, wary, sane to the heart of her  
—a Tudor

School'd by the shadow of death—a  
Boleyn, too,

Glancing across the Tudor—not so  
well.

*Enter ALICE.*

How is the good Queen now?

*Alice.* Away from Philip.  
Back in her childhood—prattling to  
her mother

Of her betrothal to the Emperor  
Charles,

And childlike-jealous of him again—  
and once

She thank'd her father sweetly for his  
book

Against that godless German. Ah,  
those days

Were happy. It was never merry  
world

In England, since the Bible came  
among us.

*Cecil.* And who says that?

*Alice.* It is a saying among the  
Catholics.

*Cecil.* It never will be merry world  
in England,

Till all men have their Bible, rich and  
poor.

*Alice.* The Queen is dying, or you  
dare not say it.

*Enter ELIZABETH.*

*Elizabeth.* The Queen is dead.

*Cecil.* Then here she stands! my homage.

*Elizabeth.* She knew me, and acknowledged me her heir, Pray'd me to pay her debts, and keep the Faith;

Then claspt the cross, and pass'd away in peace.

I left her lying still and beautiful, More beautiful than in life. Why would you vex yourself,

Poor sister? Sir, I swear I have no heart

To be your Queen. To reign is restless fence,

Tierce, quart, and trickery. Peace is with the dead.

Her life was winter, for her spring was nipt:

And she loved much: pray God she be forgiven.

*Cecil.* Peace with the dead, who never were at peace!

Yet she loved one so much—I needs must say—

That never English monarch dying left

England so little.

*Elizabeth.* But with Cecil's aid And others, if our person be secured

From traitor stabs—we will make England great.

*Enter PAGET, and other LORDS OF THE COUNCIL, SIR RALPH BAGENHALL, etc.*

*Lords.* God save Elizabeth, the Queen of England!

*Bagenhall.* God save the Crown! the Papacy is no more.

*Paget (aside).* Are we so sure of that?

*Acclamation.* God save the Queen!

# HAROLD:

A DRAMA.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY  
THE RIGHT HON. LORD LYTTON,

*Viceroy and Governor-General of India.*

MY DEAR LORD LYTTON.—After old-world records—such as the Bayeux tapestry and the Roman de Rou,—Edward Freeman's History of the Norman Conquest, and your father's Historical Romance treating of the same times, have been mainly helpful to me in writing this Drama. Your father dedicated his 'Harold' to my father's brother; allow me to dedicate my 'Harold' to yourself. A. TENNYSON.

## SHOW-DAY AT BATTLE ABBEY, 1876.

A GARDEN here—May breath and bloom of spring—  
The cuckoo yonder from an English elm  
Crying 'with my false egg I overwhelm  
The native nest;' and fancy hears the ring  
Of harness, and that deathful arrow sing,  
And Saxon battleaxe clang on Norman helm.  
Here rose the dragon-banner of our realm:  
Here fought, here fell, our Norman-slander'd king.  
O Garden blossoming out of English blood!  
O strange hat-healer Time! We stroll and stare  
Where might made right eight hundred years ago;  
Might, right? ay good, so all things make for good—  
But he and he, if soul be soul, are where  
Each stands full face with all he did below.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

STIGAND, *created Archbishop of Canterbury by the Antipope Benedict.*

ALFRED, *Archbishop of York.*

THE NORMAN BISHOP OF LONDON.

HAROLD, *Earl of Wessex, afterwards King of England*

TOSTIG, *Earl of Northumbria*

GURTH, *Earl of East Anglia*

LEOFWIN, *Earl of Kent and Essex*

WULFNOTH

COUNT WILLIAM OF NORMANDY.

WILLIAM MALET, *a Norman Noble.*<sup>1</sup>

EDWIN, *Earl of Mercia*

MORCAR, *Earl of Northumbria after Tostig*

GAMEL, *a Northumbrian Thane.*

ROLF, *a Ponthieu Fisherman.*

OSGOD and ATHELRIC, *Canons from Waltham.*

THE QUEEN, *Edward the Confessor's Wife, Daughter of Godwin.*

ALDWYTH, *Daughter of Alfgar and Widow of Griffyth, King of Wales.*

EDITH, *Ward of King Edward.*

Courtiers, Earls and Thanes, Men-at-Arms, Canons of Waltham, Fishermen, etc.

<sup>1</sup> . . . quidam partim Normannus et Anglus  
Comptar Heraldii. (*Gay of Amiens*, 587.)

"SHE, AND WITH HER THE FACE OF ATLANTER, PAST."—Page 158.







## ACT I.

## SCENE I.—LONDON. THE KING'S PALACE.

(A comet seen through the open window.)

ALDWYTH, GAMEL, COURTIERS talking together.

*First Courtier.* Lo! there once more—this is the seventh night!

Von grimly-glaring, treble-brandish'd scourge  
Of England!

*Second Courtier.* Horrible!

*First Courtier.* Look you, there's a star

That dances in it as mad with agony!

*Third Courtier.* Ay, like a spirit in Hell who skips and flies  
To right and left, and cannot scape the flame.

*Second Courtier.* Steam'd upward from the undescendible  
Abysm.

*First Courtier.* Or floated downward from the throne  
Of God Almighty.

*Aldwyth.* Gamel, son of Orm,  
What thinkest thou this means?

*Gamel.* War, my dear lady!

*Aldwyth.* Doth this affright thee?

*Gamel.* Mightily, my dear lady!

*Aldwyth.* Stand by me then, and look upon my face,  
Not on the comet.

(Enter MORCAR.)

Brother! why so pale?  
*Morcar.* It glares in heaven, it flares upon the Thames,

The people are as thick as bees below,  
They hum like bees,—they cannot speak—for awe;

Look to the skies, then to the river,  
strike

Their hearts, and hold their babies up to it.

I think that they would Molochize them too,  
To have the heavens clear.  
*Aldwyth.* They fright not me.

(Enter LEOFWIN, after him GURTH.)

Ask thou Lord Leofwin what he thinks of this!

*Morcar.* Lord Leofwin, dost thou believe, that these  
Three rods of blood-red fire up yonder mean

The doom of England and the wrath of Heaven?

*Bishop of London (passing).* Did ye not cast with bestial violence

Our holy Norman bishops down from all  
Their thrones in England? I alone remain.

Why should not Heaven be wroth?

*Leofwin.* With us, or thee?

*Bishop of London.* Did ye not outlaw your archbishop Robert,  
Robert of Jumiéges—well-nigh murder him too?

Is there no reason for the wrath of Heaven?

*Leofwin.* Why then the wrath of Heaven hath three tails,  
The devil only one.

{Exit Bishop of London.

(Enter ARCHBISHOP STIGAND.)

Ask our Archbishop.  
Stigand should know the purposes of Heaven.

*Stigand.* Not I. I cannot read the face of heaven;  
Perhaps our vines will grow the better for it.

*Leofwin (laughing).* He can but read the king's face on his coins.

*Stigand.* Ay, ay, young lord, there the king's face is power.

*Gurth.* O father, mock not at a public fear,  
But tell us, is this pendent hell in heaven

A harm to England?

*Stigand.* Ask it of King Edward!  
And he may tell thee, *I* am a harm to  
England.

Old uncanonical Stigand—ask of *me*  
Who had my pallium from an Anti-  
pope!

Not he the man—for in our windy  
world

What's up is faith, what's down is  
heresy.

Our friends, the Normans, help to  
shake his chair.

I have a Norman fever on me, son,  
And cannot answer sanely . . .

What it means?

Ask our broad Earl.

[*Pointing to HAROLD, who enters.*

*Harold* (*seeing Gamel*). Hail,  
Gamel, son of Orm!

Albeit no rolling stone, my good  
friend Gamel,

Thou hast rounded since we met.  
Thy life at home

Is easier than mine here. Look!  
am I not

Work-wan, flesh-fallen?

*Gamel.* Art thou sick, good Earl?

*Harold.* Sick as an autumn swal-  
low for a voyage,

Sick for an idle week of hawk and  
hound

Beyond the seas—a change! When  
camest thou hither?

*Gamel.* To-day, good Earl.

*Harold.* Is the North quiet,  
Gamel?

*Gamel.* Nay, there be murmurs,  
for thy brother breaks us

With over-taxing—quiet, ay, as yet—  
Nothing as yet.

*Harold.* Stand by him, mine old  
friend,

Thou art a great voice in Northum-  
berland!

Advise him: speak him sweetly, he  
will hear thee.

He is passionate but honest. Stand  
thou by him!

More talk of this to-morrow, if you  
weird sign

Not blast us in our dreams.—Well,  
father Stigand—

[*To Stigand, who advances to him.*

*Stigand* (*pointing to the comet*).  
War there, my son? is that the  
doom of England?

*Harold.* Why not the doom of all  
the world as well?

For all the world sees it as well as  
England.

These meteors came and went before  
our day,

Not harming any: it threatens us no  
more

Than French or Norman. War? the  
worst that follows

Things that seem jerk'd out of the  
common rut

Of Nature is the hot religious fool,  
Who, seeing war in heaven, for

heaven's credit  
Makes it on earth: but look, where  
Edward draws

A faint foot hither, leaning upon Tos-  
tig.

He hath learnt to love our *Tostig*  
much of late.

*Leofwin.* And *he* hath learnt, de-  
spite the tiger in him,

To sleek and supple himself to the  
king's hand.

*Gurth.* I trust the kingly touch  
that cures the evil

May serve to charm the tiger out of  
him.

*Leofwin.* He hath as much of cat  
as tiger in him.

Our *Tostig* loves the hand and not  
the man.

*Harold.* Nay! Better die than  
lie!

*Enter KING, QUEEN, and TOSTIG.*

*Edward.* In heaven signs!  
Signs upon earth! signs everywhere!  
your Priests

Gross, worldly, simoniacal, unlearn'd!  
They scarce can read their Psalter;  
and your churches

Uncouth, unhandsome, while in Nor-  
manland

God speaks thro' abler voices, as He  
dwells

In statelier shrines. I say not this, as  
being

Half Norman-blooded, nor as some  
have held,  
Because I love the Norman better—  
no,  
But dreading God's revenge upon this  
realm  
For narrowness and coldness : and I  
say it  
For the last time perchance, before I  
go  
To find the sweet refreshment of the  
Saints.

I have lived a life of utter purity :  
I have baided the great church of  
Holy Peter :  
I have wrought miracles—to God the  
glory—  
And miracles will in my name be  
wrought  
Hereafter.—I have fought the fight  
and go—  
I see the flashing of the gates of  
pearl—  
And it is well with me, tho' some of  
you

Have scorn'd me—ay—but after I am  
gone  
Woe, woe to England! I have had a  
vision ;  
The seven sleepers in the cave at  
Ephesus  
Have turn'd from right to left.

*Harold.* My most dear Master,  
What matters? let them turn from  
left to right  
And sleep again.

*Tostig.* Too hardy with thy king!  
A life of prayer and fasting well may  
see  
Deeper into the mysteries of heaven  
Than thou, good brother.

*Aldwyth (aside).* Sees he into thine,  
That thou wouldst have his promise  
for the crown?

*Edward.* Tostig says true; my  
son, thou art too hard,  
Not stagger'd by this ominous earth  
and heaven :

But heaven and earth are threads of  
the same loom,  
Play into one another, and weave the  
web

That may confound thee yet.

*Harold.* Nay, I trust not,  
For I have served thee long and  
honestly.

*Edward.* I know it, son; I am not  
thankless : thou  
Hast broken all my foes, lighten'd for  
me  
The weight of this poor crown, and  
left me time  
And peace for prayer to gain a better  
one.

Twelve years of service! England  
loves thee for it.

Thou art the man to rule her!

*Aldwyth (aside).* So, not Tostig!

*Harold.* And after those twelve  
years a boon, my king,  
Respite, a holiday : thyself wast wont  
To love the chase : thy leave to set  
my feet

On board, and hunt and hawk beyond  
the seas!

*Edward.* What with this flaming  
horror overhead?

*Harold.* Well, when it passes then.

*Edward.* Ay if it pass.  
Go not to Normandy—go not to Nor-  
mandy.

*Harold.* And wherefore not, my  
king, to Normandy?  
Is not my brother Wulfnoth hōstage  
there

For my dead father's loyalty to thee?  
I pray thee, let me hence and bring  
him home.

*Edward.* Not thee, my son : some  
other messenger.

*Harold.* And why not me, my  
lord, to Normandy?

Is not the Norman Count thy friend  
and mine?

*Edward.* I pray thee, do not go to  
Normandy.

*Harold.* Because my father drove  
the Normans out  
Of England?—That was many a sum-  
mer gone—

Forgotten and forgiven by them and  
thee.

*Edward.* Harold, I will not yield  
thee leave to go.

*Harold.* Why then to Flanders.  
I will hawk and hunt

In Flanders.

*Edward.* Be there not fair woods  
and fields

In England? Wilful, wilful. Go—  
the Saints

Pilot and prosper all thy wandering  
out

And homeward. Tostig, I am faint  
again.

Son Harold, I will in and pray for  
thee.

[*Exit, leaning on Tostig, and  
followed by Stigand, Morcar,  
and Courtiers.*

*Harold.* What lies upon the mind  
of our good king  
That he should harp this way on Nor-  
mandy?

*Queen.* Brother, the king is wiser  
than he seems;

And Tostig knows it; Tostig loves  
the king.

*Harold.* And love should know;  
and—be the king so wise,—  
Then Tostig too were wiser than he  
seems.

I love the man but not his phantasies.

(*Re-enter TOSTIG.*)

Well, brother,  
When didst thou hear from thy North-  
umbria?

*Tostig.* When did I hear aught but  
this 'When' from thee?

Leave me alone, brother, with my  
Northumbria:

She is my mistress, let me look to  
her!

The king hath made me Earl; make  
me not fool!

Nor make the King a fool, who made  
me Earl!

*Harold.* No, Tostig—lest I make  
myself a fool

Who made the King who made thee,  
make thee Earl.

*Tostig.* Why chafe me then?  
Thou knowest I soon go wild.

*Gurth.* Come, come! as yet thou  
art not gone so wild

But thou canst hear the best and  
wisest of us.

*Harold.* So says old Gurth, not I:  
yet hear! thine earldom,  
Tostig, hath been a kingdom. Their  
old crown

Is yet a force among them, a sun set  
But leaving light enough for Alfgar's  
house

To strike thee down by—nay, this  
ghastly glare  
May heat their fancies.

*Tostig.* My most worthy brother,  
Thou art the quietest man in all the  
world—

Ay, ay and wise in peace and great in  
war—

Pray God the people choose thee for  
their king!

But all the powers of the house of  
Godwin

Are not enframed in thee.

*Harold.* Thank the Saints, no!  
But thou hast drain'd them shallow by  
thy tolls,

And thou art ever here about the  
King:

Thine absence well may seem a want  
of care.

Cling to their love; for, now the sons  
of Godwin

Sit topmost in the field of England,  
envy,

Like the rough bear beneath the tree,  
good brother,

Waits till the man let go.

*Tostig.* Good counsel truly!  
I heard from my Northumbria yester-  
day.

*Harold.* How goes it then with  
thy Northumbria? Well?

*Tostig.* And wouldst thou that it  
went aught else than well?

*Harold.* I would it went as well as  
with mine earldom,

Leofwin's and Gurth's.

*Tostig.* Ye govern milder men.  
*Gurth.* We have made them  
milder by just government.

*Tostig.* Ay, ever give yourselves  
your own good word.

*Leofwin.* An honest gift, by all the  
Saints, if giver

And taker be but honest! but they  
bribe

Each other, and so often, an honest world  
Will not believe them.

*Harold.* I may tell thee, Tostig,  
I heard from thy Northumberland to-day.

*Tostig.* From spies of thine to spy my nakedness  
In my poor North!

*Harold.* There is a movement there,  
A blind one—nothing yet.

*Tostig.* Crush it at once  
With all the power I have!—I must  
—I will!—

Crush it half-born! Fool still? or  
wisdom there,  
My wise head-shaking Harold?

*Harold.* Make not thou  
The nothing something. Wisdom  
when in power

And wisest, should not frown as  
Power, but smile

As kindness, watching all, till the true  
*must*

Shall make her strike as Power: but  
when to strike—

O Tostig, O dear brother—If they  
prance,  
Rein in, not lash them, lest they rear  
and run

And break both neck and axle.

*Tostig.* Good again!  
Good counsel tho' scarce needed.

Pour not water  
In the full vessel running out at  
top

To swamp the house.

*Leofwin.* Nor thou be a wild thing  
Out of the waste, to turn and bite the  
hand

Would help thee from the trap.

*Tostig.* Thou playest in tune.  
*Leofwin.* To the deaf adder thee,  
that wilt not dance

However wisely charm'd.

*Tostig.* No more, no more!  
*Gurth.* I likewise cry 'no more.'

Unwholesome talk  
For Godwin's house! Leofwin, thou  
hast a tongue!

Tostig, thou look'st as thou wouldst  
spring upon him.

St. Olaf, not while I am by!—Come,  
come,

Join hands, let brethren dwell in unity;  
Let kith and kin stand close as our  
shield-wall,

Who breaks us then? I say, thou  
hast a tongue,  
And Tostig is not stout enough to  
bear it.

Vex him not, Leofwin.

*Tostig.* No, I am not vext,—  
Altho' ye seek to vex me, one and all.  
I have to make report of my good  
earldom

To the good king who gave it—not to  
you—

Not any of you.—I am not vext at all.

*Harold.* The king? the king is  
ever at his prayers;  
In all that handles matter of the state  
I am the king.

*Tostig.* That shalt thou never be  
If I can thwart thee.

*Harold.* Brother, brother!  
*Tostig.* Away!

[*Exit Tostig.*  
*Queen.* Spite of this grisly star ye  
three must gall

Poor Tostig.  
*Leofwin.* Tostig, sister, galls him-  
self;

He cannot smell a rose but pricks his  
nose

Against the thorn, and rails against  
the rose.

*Queen.* I am the only rose of all  
the stock

That never thorn'd him; Edward  
loves him, so

Ye hate him. Harold always hated  
him.

Why—how they fought when boys—  
and, Holy Mary!

How Harold used to beat him!

*Harold.* Why, boys will fight.  
Leofwin would often fight me, and I  
beat him.

Even old Gurth would fight. I had  
much ado

To hold mine own against old Gurth.  
Old Gurth,

We fought like great staves for grave  
cause; but Tostig—

On a sudden—at a something—for a nothing—  
The boy would fist me hard, and when we fought  
I conquer'd, and he loved me none the less,  
Till thou wouldst get him all apart, and tell him  
That where he was but worsted, he was wrong'd.  
Ah! thou hast taught the king to spoil him too;  
Now the spoilt child sways both.  
Take heed, take heed;  
Thou art the Queen; ye are boy and girl no more:  
Side not with Tostig in any violence,  
Lest thou be sideways guilty of the violence.

*Queen.* Come fall not foul on me.  
I leave thee, brother.

*Harold.* Nay, my good sister—  
[*Exeunt Queen, Harold, Gurth, and Leofwin.*]

*Aldwyth.* Gamel, son of Orm,  
What thinkest thou this means?

[*Pointing to the comet.*]  
*Gamel.* War, my dear lady,  
War, waste, plague, famine, all malignities.

*Aldwyth.* It means the fall of Tostig from his earldom.

*Gamel.* That were too small a matter for a comet!

*Aldwyth.* It means the lifting of the house of Algar.

*Gamel.* Too small! a comet would not show for that!

*Aldwyth.* Not small for thee, if thou canst compass it.

*Gamel.* Thy love?

*Aldwyth.* As much as I can give thee, man;

This Tostig is, or like to be, a tyrant;

Stir up thy people: oust him!

*Gamel.* And thy love?

*Aldwyth.* As much as thou canst bear.

*Gamel.* I can bear all,  
And not be giddy.

*Aldwyth.* No more now: to-morrow.

SCENE II.—IN THE GARDEN. THE KING'S HOUSE NEAR LONDON. SUNSET.

*Edith.* Mad for thy mate, passionate nightingale . . .

I love thee for it—ay, but stay a moment;

*He* can but stay a moment: he is going.

I fain would hear him coming! . . . near me . . . near,

Somewhere—To draw him nearer with a charm

Like thine to thine.

[*Singing.*]

Love is come with a song and a smile,  
Welcome Love with a smile and a

song:

Love can stay but a little while.

Why cannot he stay? They call him away:

Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong;  
Love will stay for a whole life long.

*Enter HAROLD.*

*Harold.* The nightingales in Haveringatte-Bower

Sang out their loves so loud, that Edward's prayers

Were deafen'd and he pray'd them dumb, and thus

I dumb thee too, my wingless nightingale!

[*Kissing her.*]

*Edith.* Thou art my music!

Would their wings were mine To follow thee to Flanders! Must thou go?

*Harold.* Not must, but will. It is but for one moon.

*Edith.* Leaving so many foes in Edward's hall

To league against thy weal. The Lady Aldwyth

Was here to-day, and when she touch'd on thee,

She stammer'd in her hate; I am sure she hates thee,

Pants for thy blood.

*Harold.* Well, I have given her cause—

I fear no woman.

*Edith.* Hate not one who felt  
Some pity for thy hater! I am sure  
Her morning wanted sunlight, she so  
praised

The convent and lone life—within the  
pale—

Beyond the passion. Nay—she held  
with Edward,

At least methought she held with holy  
Edward,

That marriage was half sin.

*Harold.* A lesson worth  
finger and thumb—thus (*snaps his  
fingers*). And my answer to  
it—

See here—an interwoven H and E!

Take thou this ring; I will demand  
his ward

From Edward when I come again.

Ay, would she?

She to shut up my blossom in the  
dark!

Thou art my nun, thy cloister in mine  
arms.

*Edith (taking the ring).* Yea, but  
Earl Tostig—

*Harold.* That's a truer fear!  
For if the North take fire, I should be  
back;

I shall be, soon enough.

*Edith.* Ay, but last night  
An evil dream that ever came and  
went—

*Harold.* A gnat that vexed thy  
pillow! Had I been by,  
I would have spoil'd his horn. My  
girl, what was it?

*Edith.* Oh! that thou wert not go-  
ing!

For so methought it was our mar-  
riage-morn,

And while we stood together, a dead  
man

Rose from behind the altar, tore  
away

My marriage ring, and rent my bridal  
veil;

And then I turn'd, and saw the church  
all fill'd

With dead men upright from their  
graves, and all

The dead men made at thee to mur-  
der thee,

But thou didst back thyself against a  
pillar,  
And strike among them with thy  
battle-axe—

There, what a dream!

*Harold.* Well, well—a dream—  
no more!

*Edith.* Did not Heaven speak to  
men in dreams of old?

*Harold.* Ay—well—of old. I tell  
thee what, my child;

Thou hast misread this merry dream  
of thine,

Taken the rifted pillars of the wood  
For smooth stone columns of the  
sanctuary,

The shadows of a hundred fat dead  
deer

For dead men's ghosts. True, that  
the battle-axe

Was out of place; it should have  
been the bow.—

Come, thou shalt dream no more such  
dreams; I swear it,

By mine own eyes—and these two  
sapphires—these

Twin rubies, that are amulets against  
all

The kisses of all kind of womankind  
In Flanders, till the sea shall roll me

back

To tumble at thy feet.

*Edith.* That would but shame  
me,

Rather than make me vain. The sea  
may roll

Sand, shingle, shore-weed, not the  
living rock

Which guards the land.

*Harold.* Except it be a soft one,  
And undertaken to the fall. Mine  
amulet . . .

This last . . . upon thine eyelids, to  
shut in

A happier dream. Sleep, sleep, and  
thou shalt see

My grayhounds fleeting like a beam of  
light,

And hear my peregrine and her bells  
in heaven;

And other bells on earth, which yet  
are heaven's;

Guess what they be.

*Edith.* He cannot guess who knows.

Farewell, my king.

*Harold.* Not yet, but then—my queen. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter ALDWYTH from the thicket.*

*Aldwyth.* The kiss that charms thine eyelids into sleep, Will hold mine waking. Hate him? I could love him

More, tenfold, than this fearful child can do;

Griffyth I hated: why not hate the foe Of England? Griffyth when I saw

him flee, Chased deer-like up his mountains, all the blood

That should have only pulsed for Griffyth, beat

For his pursuer. I love him or think I love him.

If he were King of England, I his queen,

I might be sure of it. Nay, I do love him.—

She must be cloister'd somehow, lest the king

Should yield his ward to Harold's will. What harm?

She hath but blood enough to live, not love.—

When Harold goes and Tostig, shall I play

The craftier Tostig with him? fawn upon him?

Chime in with all? 'O thou more saint than king!'

And that were true enough. 'O blessed relics!'

'O Holy Peter!' If he found me thus,

Harold might hate me; he is broad and honest,

Breathing an easy gladness . . . not like Aldwyth . . .

For which I strangely love him. Should not England

Love Aldwyth, if she stay the feuds that part

The sons of Godwin from the sons of Alfgar

By such a marrying? Courage, noble Aldwyth!

Let all thy people bless thee!

Our wild Tostig, Edward hath made him Earl: he would be king:—

The dog that snapt the shadow, dropt the bone.—

I trust he may do well, this Gamel, whom

I play upon, that he may play the note

Whereat the dog shall howl and run, and Harold

Hear the king's music, all alone with him,

Pronounced his heir of England.

I see the goal and half the way to it.—

Peace-lover is our Harold for the sake

Of England's wholeness—so—to shake the North

With earthquake and disruption—some division—

Then fling mine own fair person in the gap

A sacrifice to Harold, a peace-offering,

A scape-goat marriage—all the sins of both

The houses on mine head—then a fair life

And bless the Queen of England.

*Morcar (coming from the thicket).*

Art thou assured

By this, that Harold loves but Edith?

*Aldwyth.* Morcar!

Why creep'st thou like a timorous beast of prey

Out of the bush by night?

*Morcar.* I follow'd thee.

*Aldwyth.* Follow my lead, and I will make thee earl.

*Morcar.* What lead then?

*Aldwyth.* Thou shalt flash it secretly

Among the good Northumbrian folk, that I—

That Harold loves me—yea, and presently

That I and Harold are betroth'd—and last—



Perchance that Harold wrongs me ;  
tho' I would not

That it should come to that.

*Morcar.* I will both flash  
And thunder for thee.

*Aldwyth.* I said 'secretly ;'  
It is the flash that murders, the poor  
thunder  
Never harm'd head.

*Morcar.* But thunder may bring  
down  
That which the flash hath stricken.

*Aldwyth.* Down with Tostig !  
That first of all.—And when doth  
Harold go ?

*Morcar.* To-morrow—first to Bo-  
sham, then to Flanders.

*Aldwyth.* Not to come back till  
Tostig shall have shown  
And redden'd with his people's blood  
the teeth

That shall be broken by us—yea, and  
thou

Chair'd in his place. Good-night, and  
dream thyself

Their chosen Earl. [*Exit Aldwyth.*]

*Morcar.* Earl first, and after that  
Who knows I may not dream myself  
their king !

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—SEASHORE. PONTIEU.  
NIGHT.

HAROLD and his Men, wrecked.

*Harold.* Friends, in that last in-  
hospitable plunge  
Our boat hath burst her ribs ; but  
ours are whole ;

I have but bark'd my hands.

*Attendant.* I dug mine into  
My old fast friend the shore, and  
clinging thus

Felt the remorseless outdraught of  
the deep

Haul like a great strong fellow at my  
legs.

And then I rose and ran. The blast  
that came

So suddenly hath fallen as suddenly—

Put thou the comet and this blast  
together—

*Harold.* Put thou thyself and  
mother-wit together.

Be not a fool !

(*Enter Fishermen with torches, HAR-  
OLD going up to one of them, ROLF.*)

Wicked sea-will-o'-the-wisp !  
Wolf of the shore ! dog, with thy  
lying lights  
Thou hast betray'd us on these rocks  
of thine !

*Rolf.* Ay, but thou liest as loud  
as the black herring-pond behind  
thee. We be fishermen ; I came to  
see after my nets.

*Harold.* To drag us into them.  
Fishermen ? devils !

Who, while ye fish for men with your  
false fires,  
Let the great Devil fish for your own  
souls.

*Rolf.* Nay then, we be liker the  
blessed Apostles ; they were fishers of  
men, Father Jean says.

*Harold.* I had liefer that the fish  
had swallowed me.  
Like Jonah, than have known there  
were such devils.

What's to be done ?

[*To his Men—goes apart with them.*]

*Fisherman.* Rolf, what fish did  
swallow Jonah ?

*Rolf.* A whale !

*Fisherman.* Then a whale to a  
whelk we have swallowed the King of  
England. I saw him over there.  
Look thee, Rolf, when I was down in  
the fever, she was down with the hun-  
ger, and thou didst stand by her and  
give her thy crabs, and set her up  
again, till now, by the patient Saints,  
she's as crabb'd as ever.

*Rolf.* And I'll give her my crabs  
again, when thou art down again.

*Fisherman.* I thank thee, Rolf.  
Run thou to Count Guy ; he is hard  
at hand. Tell him what hath crept  
into our creel, and he will fee thee as  
freely as he will wrench this outland-  
er's ransom out of him—and why not ?

for what right had he to get himself wrecked on another man's land?

*Rolf.* Thou art the human-hearted-est,  
Christian-charitiest of all crab-catch-ers.

Share and share alike! [*Exit.*  
*Harold* (to Fisherman). Fellow,  
dost thou catch crabs?

*Fisherman.* As few as I may in a wind, and less than I would in a calm.  
Ay!

*Harold.* I have a mind that thou shalt catch no more.

*Fisherman.* How?

*Harold.* I have a mind to brain thee with mine axe.

*Fisherman.* Ay, do, do, and our great Count-crab will make his nippers meet in thine heart; he'll sweat it out of thee, he'll sweat it out of thee. Look, he's here! He'll speak for himself! Hold thine own, if thou canst!

*Enter GUY, COUNT OF PONTHEIU.*

*Harold.* Guy, Count of Ponthieu?

*Guy.* Harold, Earl of Wessex!

*Harold.* Thy villians with their lying lights have wreck'd us!

*Guy.* Art thou not Earl of Wessex?

*Harold.* In mine earldom  
A man may hang gold bracelets on a bush,  
And leave them for a year, and coming back  
Find them again.

*Guy.* Thou art a mighty man  
In thine own earldom!

*Harold.* Were such murderous liars

In Wessex—if I caught them, they should hang  
Cliff-gibbeted for sea-marks; our sea-  
mew

Winging their only wail!

*Guy.* Ay, but my men  
Hold that the shipwreckt are accursed  
of God;—

What hinders me to hold with mine  
own men?

*Harold.* The Christian manhood  
of the man who reigns!

*Guy.* Ay, rave thy worst, but in our oubliettes  
Thou shalt or rot or ransom. Hale him hence! [*To one of his Attendants.*  
Fly thou to William; tell him we have Harold.

SCENE II.—BAYEUX. PALACE.

COUNT WILLIAM and WILLIAM MALET.

*William.* We hold our Saxon woodcock in the spring,  
But he begins to flutter. As I think  
He was thine host in England when I went  
To visit Edward.

*Malet.* Yea, and there, my lord,  
To make allowance for their rougher fashions,

I found him all a noble host should be.

*William.* Thou art his friend:  
thou know'st my claim on Eng-  
land

Thro' Edward's promise: we have him in the toils.

And it were well, if thou shouldst let him feel,  
How dense a fold of danger nets him round,

So that he bristle himself against my will.

*Malet.* What would I do, my lord,  
if I were you?

*William.* What wouldst thou do?

*Malet.* My lord, he is thy guest.

*William.* Nay, by the splendor of God, no guest of mine.

He came not to see me, had past me by

To hunt and hawk elsewhere, save for the fate

Which hunted him when that un-Saxon blast,  
And bolts of thunder moulded in  
high heaven

To serve the Norman purpose, drave  
and crack'd  
His boat on Ponthieu beach; where  
our friend Guy  
Had wrung his ransom from him by  
the rack,  
But that I stept between and pur-  
chased him,  
Translating his captivity from Guy  
To mine own hearth at Bayeux, where  
he sits  
My ransom'd prisoner.

*Malet.* Well, if not with gold,  
With golden deeds and iron strokes  
that brought  
Thy war with Brittany to a goodlier  
close  
Than else had been, he paid his ran-  
som back.

*William.* So that henceforth they  
are not like to league  
with Harold against me.

*Malet.* A marvel, how  
He from the liquid sands of Coesnon  
Haled thy shore-swallow'd, armor'd  
Normans up

To fight for thee again!

*William.* Perchance against  
Their savor, save thou save him from  
himself.

*Malet.* But I should let him home  
again, my lord.

*William.* Simple! let fly the bird  
within the hand,  
To catch the bird again within the  
bush!

No.

Smooth thou my way, before he clash  
with me;

I want his voice in England for the  
crown,

I want thy voice with him to bring  
him round;

And being brave he must be subtly  
cow'd,

And being truthful wrought upon to  
swear

Vows that he dare not break. Eng-  
land our own

Thro' Harold's help, he shall be my  
dear friend

As well as thine, and thou thyself  
shalt have

Large lordship there of lands and  
territory.

*Malet.* I knew thy purpose; he  
and Wulfnoth never  
Have met, except in public; shall  
they meet

In private? I have often talk'd with  
Wulfnoth,

And stuff'd the boy with fears that  
these may act

On Harold when they meet.

*William.* Then let them meet!  
*Malet.* I can but love this noble,  
honest Harold.

*William.* Love him! why not?  
thine is a loving office,  
I have commission'd thee to save the  
man:

Help the good ship, showing the  
sunken rock,  
Or he is wreckt for ever.

*Enter WILLIAM RUFUS.*

*William Rufus.* Father.

*William.* Well, boy.

*William Rufus.* They have taken  
away the toy thou gavest me,  
The Norman knight.

*William.* Why, boy?

*William Rufus.* Because I broke  
The horse's leg—it was mine own to  
break;

I like to have my toys, and break them  
too.

*William.* Well, thou shalt have  
another Norman knight!

*William Rufus.* And may I break  
his legs?

*William.* Yea,—get thee gone!

*William Rufus.* I'll tell them I  
have had my way with thee.

[*Exit.*

*Malet.* I never knew thee check  
thy will for ought  
Save for the prattling of thy little  
ones.

*William.* Who shall be kings of  
England. I am heir  
Of England by the promise of her  
king.

*Malet.* But there the great Assem-  
bly choose their king,

The choice of England is the voice of  
England.

*William.* I will be king of England  
by the laws,  
The choice, and voice of England.

*Malet.* Can that be?  
*William.* The voice of any people  
is the sword

That guards them, or the sword that  
beats them down.

Here comes the would-be what I will  
be . . . kinglike . . .

Tho' scarce at ease; for, save our  
meshes break,  
More kinglike he than like to prove a  
king.

*(Enter HAROLD, musing, with his eyes  
on the ground.)*

He sees me not—and yet he dreams  
of me.

Earl, wilt thou fly my falcons this fair  
day?

They are of the best, strong-wing'd  
against the wind.

*Harold (looking up suddenly, having  
caught but the last word).*  
Which way does it blow?

*William.* Blowing for England,  
ha?

Not yet. Thou hast not learnt thy  
quarters here

The winds so cross and jostle among  
these towers.

*Harold.* Count of the Normans,  
thou hast ransom'd us,  
Maintain'd, and entertain'd us roy-  
ally!

*William.* And thou for us hast  
fought as loyally,  
Which binds us friendship-fast for  
ever!

*Harold.* Good!  
But lest we turn the scale of courtesy  
By too much pressure on it, I would  
fain,

Since thou hast promised Wulfnoth  
home with us,

Be home again with Wulfnoth.

*William.* Stay—as yet  
Thou hast but seen how Norman  
hands can strike,

But walk'd our Norman field, scarce  
touch'd or tasted  
The splendors of our Court.

*Harold.* I am in no mood:  
I should be as the shadow of a cloud  
Crossing your light.

*William.* Nay, rest a week or two,  
And we will fill thee full of Norman  
sun,

And send thee back among thine  
island mists

With laughter.

*Harold.* Count, I thank thee, but  
had rather

Breathe the free wind from off our  
Saxon downs,  
Tho' charged with all the wet of all  
the west.

*William.* Why if thou wilt, so let  
it be—thou shalt.

That were a graceless hospitality  
To chain the free guest to the ban-  
quet-board;

To-morrow we will ride with thee to  
Harfleur,

And see thee shipt, and pray in thy  
behalf

For happier homeward winds than  
that which crack'd

Thy bark at Ponthieu,—yet to us, in  
faith,

A happy one—whereby we came to  
know

Thy valor and thy value, noble  
earl.

Ay, and perchance a happy one for  
thee,

Provided—I will go with thee to-mor-  
row—

Nay—but there be conditions, easy  
ones,

So thou, fair friend, will take them  
easily.

*Enter PAGE.*

*Page.* My lord, there is a post  
from over seas

With news for thee. [*Exit Page.*]

*William.* Come, Malet, let us  
hear!

[*Exeunt Count William and  
Malet.*]

*Harold.* Conditions? What conditions? pay him back  
His ransom? 'easy'—that were easy  
—nay—  
No money-lover he! What said the King?

'I pray you do not go to Normandy,'  
And fate hath blown me hither, bound me too  
With bitter obligation to the Count—  
Have I not fought it out? What did he mean?  
There lodged a gleaming grimness in his eyes,  
Gave his shorn smile the lie. The walls oppress me,  
And you huge keep that hinders half the heaven.

Free air! free field!

[*Moves to go out. A Man-at-arms follows him.*]

*Harold (to the Man-at-arms).* I need thee not. Why dost thou follow me?

*Man-at-arms.* I have the Count's commands to follow thee.

*Harold.* What then? Am I in danger in this court?

*Man-at-arms.* I cannot tell. I have the Count's commands.

*Harold.* Stand out of earshot then, and keep me still

In eyeshot.

*Man-at-arms.* Yea, lord Harold.  
[*Withdraws.*]

*Harold.* And arm'd men  
Ever keep watch beside my chamber door,  
And if I walk within the lonely wood,  
There is an arm'd man ever glides behind!

(*Enter MALET.*)

Why am I follow'd, haunted, harass'd,  
watch'd?  
See yonder!

[*Pointing to the Man-at-arms.*]

*Malet.* 'Tis the good Count's care for thee!

The Normans love thee not, nor thou the Normans,  
Or—so they deem.

*Harold.* But wherefore is the wind,  
Which way soever the vane-arrow swing,  
Not ever fair for England? Why but now  
He said (thou heardest him) that I must not hence  
Save on conditions.

*Malet.* So in truth he said.

*Harold.* Malet, thy mother was an Englishwoman;  
There somewhere beats an English pulse in thee!

*Malet.* Well—for my mother's sake I love your England,  
But for my father I love Normandy.

*Harold.* Speak for thy mother's sake, and tell me true.

*Malet.* Then for my Mother's sake, and England's sake  
That suffers in the daily want of thee,  
Obey the Count's conditions, my good friend.

*Harold.* How, Malet, if they be not honorable!

*Malet.* Seem to obey them.

*Harold.* Better die than lie!

*Malet.* Choose therefore whether thou wilt have thy conscience  
White as a maiden's hand, or whether England  
Be shattered into fragments.

*Harold.* News from England?

*Malet.* Morcar and Edwin have stirr'd up the Thanes  
Against thy brother Tostig's governance;  
And all the North of Humber is one storm.

*Harold.* I should be there, Malet, I should be there!

*Malet.* And Tostig in his own hall on suspicion  
Hath massacred the Thane that was his guest,  
Gamel, the son of Orm: and there be more  
As villainously slain.

*Harold.* The wolf! the beast!  
Ill news for guests, ha, Malet!  
More? What more?

What do they say? did Edward know of this?

*Malet.* They say, his wife was knowing and abetting.

*Harold.* They say, his wife!—To marry and have no husband  
Makes the wife fool. My God, I should be there.  
I'll hack my way to the sea.

*Malet.* Thou canst not, Harold;  
Our Duke is all between thee and the sea,

Our Duke is all about thee like a God;  
All passes block'd. Obey him, speak him fair,

For he is only debonair to those  
That follow where he leads, but stark as death

To those that cross him.—Look thou, here is Wulfnoth!

I leave thee to thy talk with him alone;

How wan, poor lad! how sick and sad for home! [*Exit Malet.*]

*Harold (muttering).* Go not to Normandy—go not to Normandy!

(*Enter WULFNOTH.*)

Poor brother! still a hostage!

*Wulfnoth.* Yea, and I shall see the dewy kiss of dawn no more

Make blush the maiden-white of our tall cliffs,

Nor mark the sea-bird rouse himself and hover

Above the windy ripple, and fill the sky

With free sea-laughter—never—save indeed

Thou canst make yield this iron-mooded Duke

To let me go.

*Harold.* Why, brother, so he will; but on conditions. Canst thou guess at them?

*Wulfnoth.* Draw nearer,—I was in the corridor,

I saw him coming with his brother Odo

The Bayeux bishop, and I hid myself.

*Harold.* They did thee wrong who made thee hostage; thou

Wast ever fearful.

*Wulfnoth.* And he spoke—I heard him—

'This Harold is not of the royal blood,

Can have no right to the crown,' and Odo said,

'Thine is the right, for thine the might; he is here,

And yonder is thy keep.'

*Harold.* No, Wulfnoth, no.

*Wulfnoth.* And William laugh'd and swore that might was right,

Far as he knew in this poor world of ours—

'Marry, the Saints must go along with us,

And, brother, we will find a way,' said he—

Yea, yea, he would be king of England.

*Harold.* Never!

*Wulfnoth.* Yea, but thou must not this way answer him.

*Harold.* Is it not better still to speak the truth?

*Wulfnoth.* Not here, or thou wilt never hence nor I:

For in the racing toward this golden goal

He turns not right or left, but tramples flat

Whatever thwarts him; hast thou never heard

His savagery at Alençon,—the town Hung out raw hides along their walls,

and cried

'Work for the tanner.'

*Harold.* That had anger'd me Had I been William.

*Wulfnoth.* Nay, but he had prisoners,

He tore their eyes out, sliced their hands away,

And flung them streaming o'er the battlements

Upon the heads of those who walk'd within—

O speak him fair, Harold, for thine own sake.

*Harold.* Your Welshman says, 'The Truth against the World,'

Much more the truth against myself.

*Wulfnoth.* Thyscif?

But for my sake, oh brother! oh! for my sake!

*Harold.* Poor Wulfnoth! do they not entreat thee well?

*Wulfnoth.* I see the blackness of my dungeon loom

Across their lamps of revel, and beyond

The merriest murmurs of their banquet clank

The shackles that will bind me to the wall.

*Harold.* Too fearful still!

*Wulfnoth.* Oh no, no—speak him fair!

Call it to temporize; and not to lie;

Harold, I do not counsel thee to lie. The man that hath to foil a murder-

ous aim

May, surely, play with words.

*Harold.* Words are the man.

Not ev'n for thy sake, brother, would I lie.

*Wulfnoth.* Then for thine Edith?

*Harold.* There thou prick'st me deep.

*Wulfnoth.* And for our Mother England?

*Harold.* Deeper still.

*Wulfnoth.* And deeper still the deep down oubliette,

Down thirty feet below the smiling day—

In blackness—dogs' food thrown upon thy head.

And over thee the suns arise and set, And the lark sings, the sweet stars

come and go,

And men are at their markets, in their fields,

And woo their loves and have forgotten thee;

And thou art upright in thy living grave,

Where there is barely room to shift thy side,

And all thine England hath forgotten thee;

And he our lazy-pious Norman King, With all his Normans round him

once again,

Counts his old beads, and hath forgotten thee.

*Harold.* Thou art of my blood, and so methinks, my boy,

Thy fears infect me beyond reason. Peace!

*Wulfnoth.* And then our fiery Tostig, while thy hands

Are palsied here, if his Northumbrians rise

And hurl him from them,—I have heard the Normans

Count upon this confusion—may he not make

A league with William, so to bring him back?

*Harold.* That lies within the shadow of the chance.

*Wulfnoth.* And like a river in flood thro' a burst dam

Descends the ruthless Norman—our good King

Kneels mumbling some old bone—our helpless folk

Are wash'd away, wailing, in their own blood—

*Harold.* Wailing! not warring? Boy, thou hast forgotten

That thou art English.

*Wulfnoth.* Then our modest women—

I know the Norman license—thine own Edith—

*Harold.* No more! I will not hear thee—William comes.

*Wulfnoth.* I dare not well be seen in talk with thee.

Make thou not mention that I spake with thee.

*[Moves away to the back of the stage.]*

*Enter WILLIAM, MALET, and Officer.*

*Officer.* We have the man that rail'd against thy birth.

*William.* Tear out his tongue.

*Officer.* He shall not rail again, He said that he should see confusion fall

On thee and on thine house.

*William.* Tear out his eyes, And plunge him into prison.

*Officer.* It shall be done.

[Exit Officer.]

*William.* Look not amazed, fair earl! Better leave undone Than do by halves—tongueless and eyeless, prison'd—

*Harold.* Better methinks have slain the man at once!

*William.* We have respect for man's immortal soul, We seldom take man's life, except in war;

It frights the traitor more to maim and blind.

*Harold.* In mine own land I should have scorn'd the man, Or lash'd his rascal back, and let him go.

*William.* And let him go? To slander thee again! Yet in thine own land in thy father's day

They blinded my young kinsman, Alfred—ay, Some said it was thy father's deed.

*Harold.* They lied.

*William.* But thou and he—whom at thy word, for thou Art known a speaker of the truth, I free

From this foul charge—

*Harold.* Nay, nay, he freed himself By oath and compurgation from the charge.

The king, the lords, the people clear'd him of it.

*William.* But thou and he drove our good Normans out From England, and this rankles in us yet.

Archbishop Robert hardly scaped with life.

*Harold.* Archbishop Robert! Robert the Archbishop! Robert of Jumiéges, he that—

*Malet.* Quiet! quiet!

*Harold.* Count! if there sat within the Norman chair

A ruler all for England—one who fill'd

All offices, all bishopricks with English—

We could not move from Dover to the Humber

Saving thro' Norman bishopricks—I say

Ye would applaud that Norman who should drive

The stranger to the fiends!

*William.* Why, that is reason! Warrior thou art, and mighty wise withal!

Ay, ay, but many among our Norman lords

Hate thee for this, and press upon me—saying

God and the sea have given thee to our hands—

To plunge thee into life-long prison here:—

Yet I hold out against them, as I may,

Yea—would hold out, yea, tho' they should revolt—

For thou hast done the battle in my cause;

I am thy fastest friend in Normandy.

*Harold.* I am doubly bound to thee . . . if this be so.

*William.* And I would bind thee more, and would myself

Be bounden to thee more.

*Harold.* Then let me hence With Wulfnoth to King Edward.

*William.* So we will. We hear he hath not long to live.

*Harold.* It may be.

*William.* Why then the heir of England, who is he?

*Harold.* The Atheling is nearest to the throne.

*William.* But sickly, slight, half-witted and a child,

Will England have him king?

*Harold.* It may be, no.

*William.* And hath King Edward not pronounced his heir?

*Harold.* Not that I know.

*William.* When he was here in Normandy,

He loved us and we him, because we found him

A Norman of the Normans.

*Harold.* So did we.

*William.* A gentle, gracious, pure and saintly man!



And grateful to the hand that shielded  
him,  
He promised that if ever he were  
king  
In England, he would give his kingly  
voice

To me as his successor. Knowest  
thou this?

*Harold.* I learn it now.

*William.* Thou knowest I am his  
cousin,

And that my wife descends from Al-  
fred?

*Harold.* Ay.

*William.* Who hath a better claim  
then to the crown

So that ye will not crown the Athel-  
ing?

*Harold.* None that I know . . . if  
that but hung upon

King Edward's will.

*William.* Wilt thou uphold my  
claim?

*Malet (aside to Harold).* Be careful  
of thine answer, my good friend.

*Wulfnoth (aside to Harold).* Oh!  
Harold, for my sake and for  
thine own!

*Harold.* Ay . . . if the king have  
not revoked his promise.

*William.* But hath he done it then?

*Harold.* Not that I know.

*William.* Good, good, and thou  
wilt help me to the crown?

*Harold.* Ay . . . if the Witan will  
consent to this.

*William.* Thou art the mightiest  
voice in England, man,

Thy voice will lead the Witan—shall  
I have it?

*Wulfnoth (aside to Harold).* Oh!  
Harold, if thou love thine  
Edith, ay.

*Harold.* Ay, if—

*Malet (aside to Harold).* Thine  
'ifs' will sear thine eyes out—  
ay.

*William.* I ask thee, wilt thou  
help me to the crown?

And I will make thee my great Earl  
of Earls,

Foremost in England and in Nor-  
mandy;

Thou shalt be verily king—all but the  
name—

For I shall most sojourn in Nor-  
mandy;

And thou be my vice-king in Eng-  
land. Speak.

*Wulfnoth (aside to Harold).* Ay,  
brother—for the sake of Eng-  
land—ay.

*Harold.* My lord—

*Malet (aside to Harold).* Take  
heed now.

*Harold.* Ay.

*William.* I am content,  
For thou art truthful, and thy word  
thy bond.

To-morrow will we ride with thee to  
Harfleur. [*Exit William.*]

*Malet.* Harold, I am thy friend,  
one life with thee,

And even as I should bless thee sav-  
ing mine,

I thank thee now for having saved  
thyself. [*Exit Malet.*]

*Harold.* For having lost myself to  
save myself,

Said 'ay' when I meant 'no,' lied like  
a lad

That dreads the pendent scourge, said  
'ay' for 'no'!

Ay! No!—he hath not bound me by  
an oath—

Is 'ay' an oath? is 'ay' strong as an  
oath?

Or is it the same sin to break my  
word

As break mine oath? He call'd my  
word my bond!

He is a liar who knows I am a liar,  
And makes believe that he believes  
my word—

The crime be on his head—not  
bounden—no.

[*Suddenly doors are flung open, dis-  
covering in an inner hall*

COUNT WILLIAM in his state  
robes, seated upon his throne,

between two Bishops, ODO OF  
BAYEUX being one: in the  
centre of the hall an ark covered  
with cloth of gold; and on  
either side of it the Norman  
barons.

Enter a JAILOR before William's throne.

William (to Jailor). Knave, hast thou let thy prisoner scape?

Jailor. Sir Count, He had but one foot, he must have hopt away,

Yea, some familiar spirit must have help'd him.

William. Woe knave to thy familiar and to thee!  
Give me thy keys. [*They fall clashing.*]

Nay let them lie. Stand there and wait my will.

[*The Jailor stands aside.*]

William (to Harold). Hast thou such trustless jailors in thy North?

Harold. We have few prisoners in mine earldom there,  
So less chance for false keepers.

William. We have heard Of thy just, mild, and equal governance;

Honor to thee! thou art perfect in all honor!

Thy naked word thy bond! confirm it now

Before our gather'd Norman baronage,

For they will not believe thee—as I believe.

[*Descends from his throne and stands by the ark.*]

Let all men here bear witness of our bond! [*Beckons to Harold, who advances.*]

Enter MALET behind him.

Lay thou thy hand upon this golden pall!

Behold the jewel of St. Pancratius Woven into the gold. Swear thou on this!

Harold. What should I swear?  
Why should I swear on this?

William. (*savagely*). Swear thou to help me to the crown of England.

Malet (*whispering* Harold). My friend, thou hast gone too far to palter now.

Wulfnoth (*whispering* Harold). Swear thou to-day, to-morrow is thine own.

Harold. I swear to help thee to the crown of England . . . According as King Edward promises.

William. Thou must swear abolutely, noble Earl.

Malet (*whispering*). Delay is death to thee, ruin to England.

Wulfnoth (*whispering*). Swear, dearest brother, I beseech thee, swear!

Harold (*putting his hand on the jewel*). I swear to help thee to the crown of England.

William. Thanks, truthful Earl; I did not doubt thy word,  
But that my barons might believe thy word,

And that the Holy Saints of Normandy

When thou art home in England, with thine own,

Might strengthen thee in keeping of thy word,

I made thee swear.—Show him by whom he hath sworn.

[*The two Bishops advance, and raise the cloth of gold. The bodies and bones of Saints are seen lying in the ark.*]

The holy bones of all the Canonized

From all the holiest shrines in Normandy!

Harold. Horrible! [*They let the cloth fall again.*]

William. Ay, for thou hast sworn an oath

Which, if not kept, would make the hard earth rive

To the very Devil's horns, the bright sky cleave

To the very feet of God, and send her hosts

Of injured Saints to scatter sparks of plague

Thro' all your cities, blast your infants, dash

The torch of war among your stand-  
ing corn,  
Dabble your hearths with your own  
blood.—Enough!  
Thou wilt not break it! I, the  
Count—the King—  
Thy friend—am grateful for thine  
honest oath,  
Not coming fiercely like a conqueror,  
now,  
But softly as a bridegroom to his own.  
For I shall rule according to your  
laws,  
And make your ever-jarring Earldoms  
move  
To music and in order—Angle, Jute,  
Dane, Saxon, Norman, help to build a  
throne  
Out-towering hers of France . . . The  
wind is fair  
For England now . . . To-night we  
will be merry.  
To-morrow will I ride with thee to  
Harfleur.

[*Exeunt William and all the  
Norman barons, etc.*]

Harold. To-night we will be merry  
—and to-morrow—

Juggler and bastard—bastard—he  
hates that most—  
William the tanner's bastard!  
Would he heard me!  
O God, that I were in some wide,  
waste field  
With nothing but my battle-axe and  
him  
To spatter his brains! Why let earth  
rive, gulf in  
These cursed Normans—yea and mine  
own self.  
Cleave heaven, and send thy saints  
that I may say  
Ev'n to their faces, 'If ye side with  
William  
Ye are not noble.' How their pointed  
fingers  
Glared at me! Am I Harold,  
Harold, son  
Of our great Godwin? Lo! I touch  
mine arms,  
My limbs—they are not mine—they  
are a liar's—  
I mean to be a liar—I am not bound—

Stigand shall give me absolution for  
it—  
Did the chest move? did it move? I  
am utter craven!  
O Wulfnoth, Wulfnoth, brother, thou  
hast betray'd me!  
Wulfnoth. Forgive me, brother,  
I will live here and die.

*Enter PAGE.*

Page. My lord! the Duke awaits  
thee at the banquet.

Harold. Where they eat dead  
men's flesh, and drink their  
blood.

Page. My Lord—

Harold. I know your Norman  
cookery is so spiced,  
It masks all this.

Page. My lord! thou art white  
as death.

Harold. With looking on the dead.  
Am I so white?

Thy Duke will seem the darker.  
Hence, I follow. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE KING'S PALACE.  
LONDON.

KING EDWARD *dying on a couch, and  
by him standing the* QUEEN, HAR-  
OLD, ARCHBISHOP STIGAND,  
GURTH, LEOFWIN, ARCHBISHOP  
ALDRED, ALDWYTH, *and* EDITH.

Stigand. Sleeping or dying there?

If this be death,

Then our great Council wait to crown  
thee King—

Come hither, I have a power;

[*To Harold.*]

They call me near, for I am close to  
thee

And England—I, old shrivell'd  
Stigand, I,

Dry as an old wood-fungus on a dead  
tree

I have a power!

See here this little key about my neck!

There lies a treasure buried down in Ely:

If e'er the Norman grow too hard for thee,

Ask me for this at thy most need, son Harold,

At thy most need—not sooner.

*Harold.* So I will.

*Stigand.* Red gold—a hundred purses—yea, and more!

If thou canst make a wholesome use of these

To chink against the Norman, I do believe

My old crook'd spine would bud out two young wings

To fly to heaven straight with.

*Harold.* Thank thee, father!

Thou art English, Edward too is English now,

He hath clean repented of his Normanism.

*Stigand.* Ay, as the libertine repents who cannot

Make done undone, when thro' his dying sense

Shrills 'lost thro' thee.' They have built their castles here;

Our priories are Norman; the Norman adder

Hath bitten us; we are poison'd: our dear England

Is demi-Norman. He!—

*{Pointing to King Edward, sleeping.}*

*Harold.* I would I were

As holy and as passionless as he! 'That I might rest as calmly! Look at him—

The rosy face, and long down-silvering beard,

The brows unwrinkled as a summer mere.—

*Stigand.* A summer mere with sudden wreckful gusts

From a side-gorge. Passionless?

How he flamed

When Tostig's anger'd earldom flung him, nay,

He fain had calcined all Northumbria To one black ash, but that thy patriot passion

Siding with our great Council against Tostig,

Out-passion'd his! Holy? ay, ay, forsooth,

A conscience for his own soul, not his realm;

A twilight conscience lighted thro' a chink;

Thine by the sun; nay, by some sun to be,

When all the world hath learnt to speak the truth,

And lying were self-murder by that state

Which was the exception.

*Harold.* That sun may God speed!

*Stigand.* Come, Harold, shake the cloud off!

*Harold.* Can I, father?

Our Tostig parted cursing me and England;

Our sister hates us for his banishment;

He hath gone to kindle Norway against England,

And Wulfnoth is alone in Normandy. For when I rode with William down to Harfeur,

'Wulfnoth is sick,' he said; 'he cannot follow;'

Then with that friendly-fiendly smile of his,

'We have learnt to love him, let him a little longer

Remain a hostage for the loyalty Of Godwin's house.' As far as touches Wulfnoth

I that so prized plain word and naked truth

Have sinn'd against it—all in vain.

*Loefwin.* Good brother,

By all the truths that ever priest hath preach'd,

Of all the lies that ever men have lied,

Thine is the pardonablest.

*Harold.* May be so!

I think it so, I think I am a fool To think it can be otherwise than so.

*Stigand.* Tut, tut, I have absolved thee: dost thou scorn me.

Because I had my Canterbury pallium, From one whom they disposed?

*Harold.* No, Stigand, no!

*Stigand.* Is naked truth actable in true life?

I have heard a saying of thy father Godwin,

That, were a man of state nakedly true,

Men would but take him for the craftier liar.

*Leofwin.* Be men less delicate than the Devil himself?

I thought that naked Truth would shame the Devil

The Devil is so modest.

*Gurth.* He never said it!

*Leofwin.* Be thou not stupid-honest, brother Gurth!

*Harold.* Better to be a liar's dog, and hold

My master honest, than believe that lying

And ruling men are fatal twins that cannot

Move one without the other. Edward wakes!—

Dazed—he hath seen a vision.

*Edward.* The green tree!

Then a great Angel past along the highest

Crying 'the doom of England,' and at once

He stood beside me, in his grasp a sword

Of lightnings, wherewithal he cleft the tree

From off the bearing trunk, and hurl'd it from him

Three fields away, and then he dash'd and drench'd,

He dyed, he soak'd the trunk with human blood,

And brought the sunder'd tree again, and set it

Straight on the trunk, that thus baptized in blood

Grew ever high and higher, beyond my seeing,

And shot out sidelong boughs across the deep

That dropt themselves, and rooted in far isles

Beyond my seeing: and the great Angel rose

And past again along the highest crying

'The doom of England!'—Tostig, raise my head!

[*Falls back senseless.*]

*Harold* (*raising him*). Let Harold serve for Tostig!

*Queen.* Harold served Tostig so ill, he cannot serve for Tostig!

Ay, raise his head, for thou hast laid it low!

The sickness of our saintly king, for whom

My prayers go up as fast as my tears fall,

I well believe, hath mainly drawn itself

From lack of Tostig—thou hast banish'd him.

*Harold.* Nay—but the council, and the king himself,

*Queen.* Thou hatest him, hatest him.

*Harold* (*coldly*). Ay—Stigand, unriddle

This vision, canst thou?

*Stigand.* Dotage!

*Edward* (*starting up*). It is finish'd.

I have built the Lord a house—the Lord hath dwelt

In darkness. I have built the Lord a house—

Palms, flowers, pomegranates, golden cherubim

With twenty-cubit wings from wall to wall—

I have built the Lord a house—sing, Asaph! clash

The cymbal, Heman! blow the trumpet, priest!

Fall, cloud, and fill the house—lo! my two pillars,

Jachin and Boaz!—

[*Seeing Harold and Gurth.*]

Harold, Gurth,—where am I?

Where is the charter of our Westminster?

*Stigand.* It lies beside thee, king, upon thy bed.

*Edward.* Sign, sign at once—take, sign it, Stigand, Aldred!

Sign it, my good son Harold, Gurth,  
and Leofwin,  
Sign it, my queen!

*All.* We have sign'd it.

*Edward.* It is finish'd!  
The kingliest Abbey in all Christian  
lands,  
The lordliest, loftiest minster ever  
built

To Holy Peter in our English isle!  
Let me be buried there, and all our  
kings,  
And all our just and wise and holy  
men

That shall be born hereafter. It is  
finish'd!

Hast thou had absolution for thine  
oath? [*To Harold.*]

*Harold.* Stigand hath given me  
absolution for it.

*Edward.* Stigand is not canonical  
enough

To save thee from the wrath of Nor-  
man Saints.

*Stigand.* Norman enough! Be  
there no Saints of England

To help us from their brethren you-  
der?

*Edward.* Prelate,  
The Saints are one, but those of Nor-  
manland

Are mightier than our own. Ask it  
of Aldred. [*To Harold.*]

*Aldred.* It shall be granted him,  
my king; for he

Who vows a vow to strangle his own  
mother

Is guiltier keeping this, than breaking  
it.

*Edward.* O friends, I shall not  
over-live the day.

*Stigand.* Why then the throne is  
empty. Who inherits?

For tho' we be not bound by the  
king's voice

In making of a king, yet the king's  
voice

Is much toward his making. Who  
inherits?

Edgar the Atheling?

*Edward.* No, no, but Harold.  
I love him: he hath served me: none  
but he

Can rule all England. Yet the curse  
is on him

For swearing falsely by those blessed  
bones;

He did not mean to keep his vow.

*Harold.* Not mean  
To make our England Norman.

*Edward.* There spake Godwin,  
Who hated all the Normans; but  
their Saints

I have heard thee, Harold.

*Edith.* Oh! my lord, my king!  
He knew not whom he sware by.

*Edward.* Yea, I know  
He knew not, but those heavenly ears

have heard,  
Their curse is on him; wilt thou

bring another,  
Edith, upon his head?

*Edith.* No, no, not I,  
*Edward.* Why then, thou must  
not wed him.

*Harold.* Wherefore, wherefore?  
*Edward.* O son, when thou didst

tell me of thine oath,  
I sorrow'd for my random promise

given  
To yon fox-lion. I did not dream

then  
I should be king.—My son, the Saints

are virgins;  
They love the white rose of virgin-

ity,  
The cold, white lily blowing in her

cell:  
I have been myself a virgin; and I

sware  
To consecrate my virgin here to  
heaven—

The silent, cloister'd, solitary life,  
A life of life-long prayer against the

curse  
That lies on thee and England.

*Harold.* No, no, no,  
*Edward.* Treble denial of the

tongue of flesh,  
Like Peter's when he fell, and thou

wilt have  
To wail for it like Peter. O my son!

Are all oaths to be broken then, all  
promises

Made in our agony for help from  
heaven?

Son, there is one who loves thee: and  
a wife,  
What matters who, so she be service-  
able  
In all obedience, as mine own hath  
been:

God bless thee, wedded daughter.

[*Laying his hand on the Queen's head.*

*Queen.* Bless thou too  
That brother whom I love beyond the  
rest,

My banish'd Tostig.

*Edward.* All the sweet Saints  
bless him!

Spare and forbear him, Harold, if he  
comes!

And let him pass unscathed; he loves  
me, Harold!

Be kindly to the Normans left among  
us,

Who follow'd me for love! and dear  
son, swear

When thou art king, to see my solemn  
vow

Accomplish'd.

*Harold.* Nay, dear lord, for I have  
sworn

Not to swear falsely twice.

*Edward.* Thou wilt not swear?

*Harold.* I cannot.

*Edward.* Then on thee remains  
the curse,

Harold, if thou embrace her: and on  
thee,

Edith, if thou abide it,—

[*The King swoons; Edith falls  
and kneels by the couch.*

*Stigand.* He hath swoon'd!

Death? . . . no, as yet a breath.

*Harold.* Look up! look up!

Edith!

*Aldred.* Confuse her not; she hath  
begun

Her life-long prayer for thee.

*Aldwyth.* O noble Harold,

I would thou couldst have sworn.

*Harold.* For thine own pleasure?

*Aldwyth.* No, but to please our

dying king, and those

Who make thy good their own—all

England, Earl.

*Aldred.* I would thou couldst have  
sworn. Our holy king

Hath given his virgin lamb to Holy  
Church

To save thee from the curse.

*Harold.* Alas! poor man,

*His promise brought it on me.*

*Aldred.* O good son!

That knowledge made him all the  
carefuller

To find a means whereby the curse  
might glance

From thee and England.

*Harold.* Father, we so loved—

*Aldred.* The more the love, the  
mightier is the prayer;

The more the love, the more acceptable  
The sacrifice of both your loves to  
heaven.

No sacrifice to heaven, no help from  
heaven;

That runs thro' all the faiths of all the  
world.

And sacrifice there must be, for the  
king

Is holy, and hath talk'd with God, and  
seen

A shadowing horror; there are signs  
in heaven—

*Harold.* Your comet came and  
went.

*Aldred.* And signs on earth!  
Knowest thou Senlac hill?

*Harold.* I know all Sussex;

A good entrenchment for a perilous  
hour!

*Aldred.* Pray God that come not  
suddenly! There is one

Who passing by that hill three nights  
ago—

He shook so that he scarce could out  
with it—

Heard, heard—

*Harold.* The wind in his hair?

*Aldred.* A ghostly horn  
Blowing continually, and faint battle-

hymns,

And cries, and clashes, and the groans  
of men;

And dreadful shadows strove upon the  
hill,

And dreadful lights crept up from out  
the marsh—

Corpse-candles gliding over nameless  
graves—

*Harold.* At Senlac?

*Aldred.* Senlac.

*Edward (waking).* Senlac! Sanguelac,

The Lake of Blood!

*Stigand.* This lightning before death

Plays on the word,—and Normanizes too!

*Harold.* Hush, father, hush!

*Edward.* Thou uncanonical fool, wilt thou play with the thunder?

North and South

Thunder together, showers of blood are blown

Before a never ending blast, and hiss Against the blaze they cannot quench—a lake,

A sea of blood—we are drown'd in blood—for God

Has fill'd the quiver, and Death has drawn the bow—

Sanguelac! Sanguelac! the arrow! the arrow!

*Stigand.* It is the arrow of death in his own heart—

And our great Council wait to crown thee King.

SCENE II.—IN THE GARDEN. THE KING'S HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

*Edith.* Crown'd, crown'd and lost, crown'd King—and lost to me!

(Singing.)

Two young lovers in winter weather,  
None to guide them,  
Walk'd at night on the misty heather;  
Night, as black as a raven's feather;  
Both were lost and found together,  
None beside them.

That is the burthen of it—lost and found

Together in the cruel river Swale  
A hundred years ago; and there's another,

Lost, lost, the light of day,

To which the lover answers lovingly

'I am beside thee.'

Lost, lost, we have lost the way.

'Love, I will guide thee.'

Whither, O whither? into the river,

Where we two may be lost together,

And lost for ever? 'Oh! never, oh! never,

Tho' we be lost and be found together.'

Some think they loved within the pale forbidden

By Holy Church: but who shall say? the truth

Was lost in that fierce North, where they were lost,

Where all good things are lost, where Tostig lost

The good hearts of his people. It is Harold!

(Enter HAROLD.)

Harold the King!

*Harold.* Call me not King, but

Harold.

*Edith.* Nay, thou art King!

*Harold.* Thine, thine, or King or churl!

My girl, thou hast been weeping: turn not thou

Thy face away, but rather let me be

King of the moment to thee, and command

That kiss my due when subject, which will make

My kingship kinglier to me than to reign

King of the world without it.

*Edith.* Ask me not, Lest I should yield it, and the second curse

Descend upon thine head, and thou be only

King of the moment over England.

*Harold.* Edith, Tho' somewhat less a king to my true self

Than ere they crown'd me one, for I have lost





"A SATYR, A SATYR, SEE, FOLLOWS."—Page 152.



Somewhat of upright stature thro'  
mine oath,  
Yet thee I would not lose, and sell  
not thou  
Our living passion for a dead man's  
dream;  
Stigand believed he knew not what he  
spake.

Oh God! I cannot help it, but at  
times

They seem to me too narrow, all the  
faiths

Of this grown world of ours, whose  
baby eye

Saw them sufficient. Fool and wise,  
I fear

This curse, and scorn it. But a little  
light!—

And on it falls the shadow of the  
priest;

Heaven yield us more! for better,  
Woden, all

Our cancell'd warrior-gods, our grim  
Walhalla,

Eternal war, than that the Saints at  
peace

The Holiest of our Holiest one should  
be

This William's fellow-tricksters;—better  
die

Than credit this, for death is death,  
or else

Lifts us beyond the lie. Kiss me—  
thou art not

A holy sister yet, my girl, to fear  
There might be more than brother in  
my kiss,

And more than sister in thine own.

*Edith.* I dare not.

*Harold.* Scared by the church—  
'Love for a whole life long'

When was that sung?

*Edith.* Here to the nightingales.

*Harold.* Their anthems of no  
church, how sweet they are!

Nor kingly priest, nor priestly king to  
cross

Their billings ere they nest.

*Edith.* They are but of spring,

They fly the winter change—not so  
with us—

No wings to come and go.

*Harold.* But wing'd souls flying

Beyond all change and in the eternal  
distance  
To settle on the Truth.

*Edith.* They are not so true,  
They change their mates.

*Harold.* Do they? I did not know  
it.

*Edith.* They say thou art to wed  
the Lady Aldwyth.

*Harold.* They say, they say.

*Edith.* If this be politic,  
And well for thee and England—and  
for her—

Care not for me who love thee.

*Gurth (calling).* Harold, Harold!

*Harold.* The voice of Gurth!  
(*Enter GURTH.*) Good even,  
my good brother!

*Gurth.* Good even, gentle Edith.

*Edith.* Good even, Gurth.

*Gurth.* Ill news hath come! Our  
hapless brother, Tostig—

He, and the giant King of Norway,  
Harold

Hardrada—Scotland, Ireland, Iceland,  
Orkney,

Are landed North of Humber, and in  
a field

So packt with carnage that the dykes  
and brooks

Were bridged and damm'd with dead,  
have overthrown

Morcar and Edwin.

*Harold.* Well then, we must  
fight.

How blows the wind?

*Gurth.* Against St. Valery

And William.

*Harold.* Well then, we will to the  
North

*Gurth.* Ay, but worse news: this  
William sent to Rome.

Swearing thou swearest falsely by his  
Saints:

The Pope and that Archdeacon Hilde-  
brand

His master, heard him, and have sent  
him back

A holy gonfanon, and a blessed hair  
Of Peter, and all France, all Bur-

gundy,

Poitou, all Christendom is raised  
against thee;

He hath cursed thee, and all those  
who fight for thee,  
And given thy realm of England to  
the bastard.

*Harold.* Ha! ha!

*Edith.* Oh! laugh not! . . . Strange  
and ghastly in the gloom  
And shadowing of this double thun-  
dercloud

That lours on England—laughter!

*Harold.* No, not strange!  
This was old human laughter in old  
Rome

Before a Pope was born, when that  
which reign'd

Call'd itself God.—A kindly rendering  
Of 'Render unto Caesar.' . . . . The  
Good Shepherd!

Take this, and render that.

*Gurth.* They have taken York.

*Harold.* The Lord was God and  
came as man—the Pope  
Is man and comes as God.—York  
taken?

*Gurth.* Yea,  
Tostig hath taken York!

*Harold.* To York then. Edith,  
Hadst thou been braver, I had better  
braved

All—but I love thee and thou me—  
and that

Remains beyond all chances and all  
churches,

And that thou knowest.

*Edith.* Ay, but take back thy ring.  
It burns my hand—a curse to thee  
and me.

I dare not wear it.

[*Proffers Harold the ring, which  
he takes.*]

*Harold.* But I dare. God with thee!

[*Exeunt Harold and Gurth.*]

*Edith.* The King hath cursed him,  
if he marry me;

The Pope hath cursed him, marry me  
or no!

God help me! I know nothing—can  
but pray

For Harold—pray, pray, pray—no  
help but prayer,

A breath that fleets beyond this iron  
world,

And touches Him that made it.

## ACT IV.

## SCENE I.—IN NORTHUMBRIA.

ARCHEBISHOP ALDRED, MORCAR,  
EDWIN, and Forces. *Enter Har-  
old. The standard of the golden  
Dragon of Wessex preceding him.*

*Harold.* What! are thy people  
sullen from defeat?  
Our Wessex dragon flies beyond the  
Humber,

No voice to greet it.

*Edwin.* Let not our great king  
Believe us sullen—only shamed to the  
quick

Before the king—as having been so  
bruised

By Harold, king of Norway; but our  
help

Is Harold, king of England. Pardon  
us, thou!

Our silence is our reverence for the  
king!

*Harold.* Earl of the Mercians! if  
the truth be gall,

Cram me not thou with honey, when  
our good hive

Needs every sting to save it.

*Voices.* Aldwyth, Aldwyth!

*Harold.* Why cry thy people on  
thy sister's name?

*Morcar.* She hath won upon our  
people thro' her beauty,  
And pleasantness among them.

*Voices.* Aldwyth! Aldwyth!

*Harold.* They shout as they would  
have her for a queen.

*Morcar.* She hath followed with  
our host, and suffer'd all.

*Harold.* What would ye, men?

*Voice.* Our old Northumbrian  
crown,

And kings of our own choosing.

*Harold.* Your old crown  
Were little help without our Saxon  
carles

Against Hardrada.

*Voice.* Little! we are Danes,  
Who conquer'd what we walk on, our  
own field.

*Harold.* They have been plotting here!

*Voice.* He calls us little!

*Harold.* The kingdoms of this world began with little,

A hill, a fort, a city—that reach'd a hand

Down to the field beneath it, 'Be thou mine,'

Then to the next, 'Thou also!' If the field

Cried out 'I am mine own;' another hill

Or fort, or city, took it, and the first Fell, and the next became an Empire.

*Voice.* Yet Thou art but a West Saxon: we are Danes!

*Harold.* My mother is a Dane, and I am English;

There is a pleasant fable in old books, Ye take a stick, and break it; bind a score

All in one faggot, snap it over knee, Ye cannot.

*Voice.* Hear King Harold! he says true!

*Harold.* Would ye be Norsemen?

*Voices.* No!

*Harold.* Or Norman?

*Voices.* No!

*Harold.* Snap not the faggot-band then.

*Voice.* That is true!

*Voice.* Ay, but thou art not kingly, only grandson

To Wulfnoth, a poor cow-herd.

*Harold.* This old Wulfnoth Would take me on his knees and tell me tales

Of Alfred and of Athelstan the Great Who drove you Danes; and yet he held that Dane,

Jute, Angle, Saxon, were or should be all

One England, for this cow-herd, like my father,

Who shook the Norman scoundrels off the throne,

Had in him kingly thoughts—a king of men,

Not made but born, like the great king of all,

A light among the oxen.

*Voice.* That is true!

*Voice.* Ay, and I love him now, for mine own father

Was great, and cobbled.

*Voice.* Thou art Tostig's brother, Who wastes the land.

*Harold.* This brother comes to save

Your land from waste; I saved it once before,

For when your people banish'd Tostig hence,

And Edward would have sent a host against you,

Then I, who loved my brother, bad the king

Who doted on him, sanction your decree

Of Tostig's banishment, and choice of Morcar,

To help the realm from scattering.

*Voice.* King! thy brother, If one may dare to speak the truth, was wrong'd.

Wild was he, born so: but the plots against him

Had madden'd tamer men.

*Morcar.* Thou art one of those Who brake into Lord Tostig's treasure house

And slew two hundred of his following,

And now, when Tostig hath come back with power,

Are frighted back to Tostig.

*Old Thane.* Ugh! Plots and feuds! This is my ninetieth birthday. Can

ye not be brethren? Godwin, still at feud with Alfgar,

And Alfgar hates King Harold. Plots and feuds!

This is my ninetieth birthday!

*Harold.* Old man, Harold Hates nothing; not his fault, if our

two houses Be less than brothers.

*Voices.* Aldwyth, Harold, Aldwyth!

*Harold.* Again! Morcar! Edwin! What do they mean?

*Edwin.* So the good king would  
deign to lend an ear  
Not overscornful, we might chance—  
perchance—

To guess their meaning.

*Morcar.* Thine own meaning, Har-  
old,  
To make all England one, to close all  
feuds,  
Mixing our bloods, that thence a king  
may rise  
Half-Godwin and half-Alfgar, one to  
rule  
All England beyond question, beyond  
quarrel.

*Harold.* Who sow'd this fancy  
here among the people?

*Morcar.* Who knows what sows  
itself among the people?

A goodly flower at times.

*Harold.* The Queen of Wales?  
Why, *Morcar*, it is all but duty in  
her

To hate me; I have heard she hates  
me.

*Morcar.* No!  
For I can swear to that, but cannot  
swear

That these will follow thee against  
the Norsemen,  
If thou deny them this.

*Harold.* *Morcar* and *Edwin*,  
When will ye cease to plot against  
my house?

*Edwin.* The king can scarcely  
dream that we, who know  
His prowess in the mountains of the  
West,

Should care to plot against him in  
the North.

*Morcar.* Who dares arraign us,  
king, of such a plot?

*Harold.* Ye heard one witness even  
now.

*Morcar.* The craven!  
There is a faction risen again for  
*Tostig*,

Since *Tostig* came with Norway—  
fright not love.

*Harold.* *Morcar* and *Edwin*, will  
ye, if I yield,  
Follow against the Norseman?

*Morcar.* Surely, surely!

*Harold.* *Morcar* and *Edwin*, will  
ye upon oath,  
Help us against the Norman?

*Morcar.* With good will;  
Yea, take the Sacrament upon it, king.

*Harold.* Where is thy sister?

*Morcar.* Somewhere hard at hand.  
Call and she comes.

[*One goes out, then enter Aldwyth.*]

*Harold.* I doubt not but thou  
knowest

Why thou art summon'd.

*Aldwyth.* Why?—I stay with  
these,

Least thy fierce *Tostig* spy me out  
alone,

And flay me all alive.

*Harold.* Canst thou love one  
Who did discrown thine husband, un-  
queen thee?

Didst thou not love thine husband?

*Aldwyth.* Oh! my lord,  
The nimble, wild, red, wiry, savage  
king—

That was, my lord, a match of pol-  
icy.

*Harold.* Was it?

I knew him brave: he loved his land:  
he fain

Had made her great: his finger on  
her harp

(I heard him more than once) had in  
it Wales,

Her floods, her woods, her hills: had  
I been his,

I had been all Welsh.

*Aldwyth.* Oh, ay—all Welsh—and  
yet

I saw thee drive him up his hills—  
and women

Cling to the conquer'd, if they love,  
the more;

If not, they cannot hate the conqueror.  
We never—oh! good *Morcar*, speak  
for us,

His conqueror conquer'd *Aldwyth*.

*Harold.* Goodly news!

*Morcar.* Doubt it not thou! Since  
*Griffyth's* head was sent

To *Edward*, she hath said it.

*Harold.* I had rather  
She would have loved her husband.

*Aldwyth, Aldwyth,*

Canst thou love me, thou knowing  
where I love?

*Aldwyth.* I can, my lord, for mine  
own sake, for thine,  
For England, for thy poor white dove,  
who flutters

Between thee and the porch, but then  
would find

Her nest within the cloister, and be  
still.

*Harold.* Canst thou love one, who  
cannot love again?

*Aldwyth.* Full hope have I that  
love will answer love.

*Harold.* Then in the name of the  
great God, so be it!

Come, Aldred, join our hands before  
the hosts,

That all may see.

[Aldred joins the hands of Harold  
and Aldwyth and blesses them.

*Voices.* Harold, Harold and Ald-  
wyth!

*Harold.* Set forth our golden  
Dragon, let him flap

The wings that beat down Wales!  
Advance our Standard of the War-  
rior,

Dark among gems and gold; and  
thou, brave banner,

Blaze like a night of fatal stars on  
those

Who read their doom and die.

Where lie the Norsemen? on the  
Derwent? ay

At Stamford-bridge.

Morcar, collect thy men; Edwin, my  
friend—

Thou lingerest.—Gurth,—

Last night King Edward came to me  
in dreams—

The rosy face and long down-silvering  
beard—

He told me I should conquer:—

I am no woman to put faith in dreams.

(*To his army.*)

Last night King Edward came to me  
in dreams,

And told me we should conquer.

*Voices.* Forward! Forward!

Harold and Holy Cross!

*Aldwyth.* The day is won!

SCENE II.—A PLAIN. BEFORE  
THE BATTLE OF STAMFORD-  
BRIDGE.

HAROLD and his Guard.

*Harold.* Who is it comes this way?

*Tostig?* (Enter TOSTIG with a  
small force.) O brother,  
What art thou doing here?

*Tostig.* I am foraging  
For Norway's army.

*Harold.* I could take and slay  
thee.

Thou art in arms against us.

*Tostig.* Take and slay me,  
For Edward loved me.

*Harold.* Edward bad me spare  
thee.

*Tostig.* I hate King Edward, for he  
join'd with thee

To drive me outlaw'd. Take and slay  
me, I say,

Or I shall count thee fool.

*Harold.* Take thee, or free thee,  
Free thee or slay thee, Norway will  
have war;

No man would strike with Tostig,  
save for Norway.

Thou art nothing in thine England,  
save for Norway,

Who loves not thee but war. What  
dost thou here,

Trampling thy mother's bosom into  
blood?

*Tostig.* She hath wean'd me from  
it with such bitterness.

I come for mine own Earldom, my  
Northumbria;

Thou hast given it to the enemy of  
our house.

*Harold.* Northumbria threw thee  
off, she will not have thee,

Thou hast misused her: and, O  
crowning crime!

Hast murder'd thine own guest, the  
son of Orm,

Gamel, at thine own hearth.

*Tostig.* The slow, fat fool!  
He drawl'd and prated so, I smote  
him suddenly,

I knew not what I did. He held with  
Morcar.—

I hate myself for all things that I do.

*Harold.* And Morcar holds with us. Come back with him.

Know what thou dost; and we may find for thee,

So thou be chasten'd by thy banishment,

Some easier earldom.

*Tostig.* What for Norway then? He looks for land among us, he and his.

*Harold.* Seven feet of English land, or something more, Seeing he is a giant.

*Tostig.* That is noble! That sounds of Godwin.

*Harold.* Come thou back, and be Once more a son of Godwin.

*Tostig (turns away).* O brother, brother,

O Harold—

*Harold (laying his hand on Tostig's shoulder).* Nay then, come thou back to us!

*Tostig (after a pause turning to him).* Never shall any man say that I, that Tostig

Conjured the mightier Harold from his North

To do the battle for me here in England,

Then left him for the meaner! thee!—

Thou hast no passion for the House of Godwin—

Thou hast but cared to make thyself a king—

Thou hast sold me for a cry.—

Thou gavest thy voice against me in the Council—

I hate thee, and despise thee, and defy thee.

Farewell for ever! *[Exit.]*

*Harold.* On to Stamford-bridge!

### SCENE III.

AFTER THE BATTLE OF STAMFORD-BRIDGE. BANQUET.

HAROLD and ALDWYTH. GURTH, LOEFTWIN, MORCAR, EDWIN, and other Earls and Thanes.

*Voices.* Hail! Harold! Aldwyth! hail, bridegroom and bride!

*Aldwyth (talking with Harold).* Answer them thou!

Is this our marriage-banquet? Would the wines

Of wedding had been dash'd into the cups

Of victory, and our marriage and thy glory

Been drunk together! these poor hands but sew,

Spin, broider—would that they were man's to have held

The battle-axe by thee!

*Harold.* There was a moment When being forced aloof from all my

guard,

And striking at Hardrada and his madmen

I had wish'd for any weapon.

*Aldwyth.* Why art thou sad? *Harold.* I have lost the boy who

play'd at ball with me,

With whom I fought another fight than this

Of Stamford-bridge.

*Aldwyth.* Ay! ay! thy victories Over our own poor Wales, when at

thy side

He conquer'd with thee. *Harold.* No—the childish fist That cannot strike again.

*Aldwyth.* Thou art too kindly. Why didst thou let so many Norsemen hence?

Thy fierce forekings had clench'd their pirate hides

To the bleak church doors, like kites upon a barn.

*Harold.* Is there so great a need to tell thee why?

*Aldwyth.* Yea, am I not thy wife?

*Voices.* Hail, Harold, Aldwyth! Bridegroom and bride!

*Aldwyth.* Answer them!

*[To Harold.] Harold (to all).* Earls and Thanes!

Full thanks for your fair greeting of my bride!

Earls, Thanes, and all our countrymen! the day,



Our day beside the Derwent will not shine  
 Less than a star among the goldenest hours  
 Of Alfred, or of Edward his great son,  
 Or Athelstan, or English Ironside  
 Who fought with Knut, or Knut who coming Dane  
 Died English. Every man about his king  
 Fought like a king; the king like his own man,  
 No better; one for all, and all for one,  
 One soul! and therefore have we shatter'd back  
 The hugest wave from Norseland ever yet  
 Surged on us, and our battle-axes broken  
 The Raven's wing, and dumb'd his carrion croak  
 From the gray sea for ever. Many are gone—  
 Drink to the dead who died for us, the living  
 Who fought and would have died, but happier lived,  
 If happier be to live; they both have life  
 In the large mouth of England, till *her* voice  
 Die with the world. Hail—hail!  
*Morcar.* May all invaders perish like Hardrada!  
 All traitors fall like Tostig!  
     [*All drink but Harold.*  
*Aldwyth.* Thy cup's full!  
*Harold.* I saw the hand of Tostig cover it.  
 Our dear, dead, traitor-brother, Tostig, him  
 Reverently we buried. Friends, had I been here,  
 Without too large self-lauding I must hold  
 The sequel had been other than his league  
 With Norway, and this battle. Peace be with him!  
 He was not of the worst. If there be those

At banquet in this hall, and hearing me—  
 For there be those I fear who prick'd the lion  
 To make him spring, that sight of Danish blood  
 Might serve an end not English—peace with them  
 Likewise, if *they* can be at peace with what  
 God gave us to divide us from the wolf!  
*Aldwyth* (*aside to Harold*). Make not our Morcar sullen: it is not wise.  
*Harold.* Hail to the living who fought, the dead who fell!  
*Voices.* Hail, hail!  
*First Thane.* How ran that answer which King Harold gave  
 To his dead namesake, when he ask'd for England?  
*Leofwin.* 'Seven feet of English earth, or something more,  
 Seeing he is a giant!'  
*First Thane.* Then for the bastard  
 Six feet and nothing more!  
*Leofwin.* Ay, but belike  
 Thou hast not learnt his measure  
*First Thane.* By St. Edmund I over-measure him. Sound sleep to the man  
 Here by dead Norway without dream or dawn!  
*Second Thane.* What is he bragging still that he will come  
 To thrust our Harold's throne from under him?  
 My nurse would tell me of a molchil! crying  
 To a mountain 'Stand aside and room for me!'  
*First Thane.* Let him come! let him come. Here's to him, sink or swim! [*Drinks.*  
*Second Thane.* God sink him!  
*First Thane.* Cannot hands which had the strength  
 To shove that stranded iceberg off our shores,  
 And send the shatter'd North again to sea,

Scuttle his cockle-shell? What's  
 Brunanburg  
 To Stamford-bridge? a war-crash, and  
 so hard,  
 So loud, that, by St. Dunstan, old St.  
 Thor—  
 By God, we thought him dead—but  
 our old Thor  
 Heard his own thunder again, and  
 woke and came  
 Among us again, and mark'd the sons  
 of those  
 Who made this Britain England,  
 break the North:

Mark'd how the war-axe swang,  
 Heard how the war-horn sang,  
 Mark'd how the spear-head sprang,  
 Heard how the shield-wall rang,  
 Iron on iron clang,  
 Anvil on hammer bang—

*Second Thane.* Hammer on anvil,  
 hammer on anvil. Old dog,  
 Thou art drunk, old dog!

*First Thane.* Too drunk to fight  
 with thee!

*Second Thane.* Fight thou with  
 thine own double, not with me,  
 Keep that for Norman William!

*First Thane.* Down with William!

*Third Thane.* The washerwoman's  
 brat!

*Fourth Thane.* The tanner's bas-  
 tard!

*Fifth Thane.* The Falaise byblow!

[*Enter a Thane, from Pevensey,*  
*spatter'd with mud.*

*Harold.* Ay, but what late guest,  
 As haggard as a fast of forty days,  
 And caked and plaster'd with a hun-  
 dred mires,  
 Hath stumbled on our cups?

*Thane from Pevensey.* My lord the  
 King!

William the Norman, for the wind  
 had changed—

*Harold.* I felt it in the middle of  
 that fierce fight

At Stamford-bridge. William hath  
 landed, ha?

*Thane from Pevensey.* Landed at  
 Pevensey—I am from Peven-  
 sey—

Hath wasted all the land at Peven-  
 sey—

Hath harried mine own cattle—God  
 confound him!

I have ridden night and day from  
 Pevensey—

A thousand ships—a hundred thou-  
 sand men—

Thousands of horses, like as many  
 lions

Neighing and roaring as they leapt to  
 land—

*Harold.* How oft in coming hast  
 thou broken bread?

*Thane from Pevensey.* Some thrice,  
 or so.

*Harold.* Bring not thy hollowness  
 On our full feast. Famine is fear,  
 were it but

Of being starved. Sit down, sit  
 down, and eat,

And, when again red-blooded, speak  
 again;

[*Aside.*] The men that guarded  
 England to the South

Were scatter'd to the harvest. . . .

No power mine

To hold their force together. . . .

Many are fallen

At Stamford-bridge . . . the peo-  
 ple stupid-sure

Sleep like their swine . . . in  
 South and North at once

I could not be.

[*Aloud.*] Gurth, Leofwin, Morcar,  
 Edwin!

[*Pointing to the revellers.*] The curse  
 of England! these are drown'd  
 in wassail,

And cannot see the world but thro'  
 their wines!

Leave them! and thee too! Aldwyth,  
 must I leave—

Harsh is the news! hard is our  
 honeymoon!

Thy pardon. [*Turning round to his  
 attendant.*] Break the ban-  
 quet up . . . Ye four!

And thou, my carrier-pigeon of black  
 news,

Cram thy crop full, but come when  
thou art call'd. [*Exit Harold.*]

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—A TENT ON A MOUND,  
FROM WHICH CAN BE SEEN THE  
FIELD OF SENLAC.

HAROLD, *sitting; by him standing*  
HUGH MARGOT *the Monk*, GURTH,  
LEOFWIN.

*Harold.* Refer my cause, my  
crown to Rome! . . . The  
wolf  
Mudded the brook and predetermined  
all.

Monk,  
Thou hast said thy say, and had my  
constant 'No'  
For all but instant battle. I hear no  
more.

*Margot.* Hear me again—for the  
last time. Arise,  
Scatter thy people home, descend the  
hill,

Lay hands of full allegiance in thy  
Lord's  
And crave his mercy, for the Holy  
Father

Hath given this realm of England to  
the Norman.

*Harold.* Then for the last time,  
monk, I ask again  
When had the Lateran and the Holy  
Father

To do with England's choice of her  
own king?

*Margot.* Earl, the first Christian  
Cæsar drew to the East  
To leave the Pope dominion in the  
West.

He gave him all the kingdoms of the  
West.

*Harold.* So!—did he?—Earl—I  
have a mind to play  
The William with thine eyesight and  
thy tongue.

Earl—ay—thou art but a messenger  
of William.

I am weary—go: make me not wroth  
with thee!

*Margot.* Mock-king, I am the mes-  
senger of God,  
His Norman Daniel! Mene, Mene,  
Tekel!

Is thy wrath Hell, that I should spare  
to cry,

Yon heaven is wroth with thee?  
Hear me again!

Our Saints have moved the Church  
that moves the world,  
And all the Heavens and very God:  
they heard—

They know King Edward's promise  
and thine—thine.

*Harold.* Should they not know  
free England crowns her-  
self?

Not know that he nor I had power to  
promise?

Not know that Edward cancell'd his  
own promise?

And for my part therein—Back to  
that juggler, [*Rising.*]

Tell him the Saints are nobler than  
he dreams,

Tell him that God is nobler than the  
Saints,

And tell him we stand arm'd on  
Senlac Hill,

And bide the doom of God.

*Margot.* Hear it thro' me.  
The realm for which thou art fore-  
sworn is cursed,

The babe enwomb'd and at the breast  
is cursed,

The corpse thou whelmest with thine  
earth is cursed,

The soul who fighteth on thy side is  
cursed.

The seed thou sowest in thy field is  
cursed,

The steer wherewith thou plowest thy  
field is cursed,

The fowl that fleeth o'er thy field is  
cursed,

And thou, usurper, liar—

*Harold.* Out, beast monk!

[*Lifting his hand to strike him.*  
*Garth stops the blow.*]

I ever hated monks.

*Margot.* I am but a voice  
Among you: murder, martyr me if ye  
will—

*Harold.* Thanks, Gurth! The simple, silent, selfless man Is worth a world of tonguesters. (To Margot.) Get thee gone! He means the thing he says. See him out safe!

*Leofwin.* He hath blown himself as red as fire with curses. An honest fool! Follow me, honest fool, But if thou blurt thy curse among our folk, I know not—I may give that egg-bald head The tap that silences.

*Harold.* See him out safe.

[*Exeunt Leofwin and Margot.*]

*Gurth.* Thou hast lost thine even temper, brother Harold!

*Harold.* Gurth, when I past by Waltham, my foundation For men who serve the neighbor, not themselves, I cast me down prone, praying; and, when I rose, They told me that the Holy Rood had lean'd And bow'd above me; whether that which held it Had weaken'd, and the Rood itself were bound To that necessity which binds us down; Whether it bow'd at all but in their fancy; Or if it bow'd, whether it symbol'd ruin Or glory, who shall tell? but they were sad, And somewhat sadden'd me.

*Gurth.* Yet if a fear, Or shadow of a fear, lest the strange Saints By whom thou swarest, should have power to balk Thy puissance in this fight with him, who made And heard thee swear—brother—I have not sworn— If the king fall, may not the kingdom fall? But if I fall, I fall, and thou art king; And, if I win, I win, and thou art king;

Draw thou to London, there make strength to breast Whatever chance, but leave this day to me.

*Leofwin (entering).* And waste the land about thee as thou goest, And be thy hand as winter on the field, To leave the foe no forage.

*Harold.* Noble Gurth! Best son of Godwin! If I fall, I fall—

The doom of God! How should the people fight When the King flies? And, Leofwin, art thou mad?

How should the King of England waste the fields Of England, his own people?—No glance yet Of the Northumbrian helmet on the heath?

*Leofwin.* No, but a shoal of wives upon the heath, And someone saw thy willy-nilly nun Vying a tress against our golden fern.

*Harold.* Vying a tear with our cold dews, a sigh With these low-moaning heavens. Let her be fetch'd.

We have parted from our wife without reproach, Tho' we have pierced thro' all her practices; And that is well.

*Leofwin.* I saw her even now: She hath not left us.

*Harold.* Nought of Morcar then? *Gurth.* Nor seen, nor heard; thine, William's or his own

As wind blows, or tide flows: belike he watches, If this war-storm in one of its rough rolls Wash up that old crown of Northumberland.

*Harold.* I married her for Morcar—a sin against

The truth of love. Evil for good, it seems, Is oft as childless of the good as evil

For evil.

*Leofwin.* Good for good hath borne at times

A bastard false as William.

*Harold.* Ay, if Wisdom Pair'd not with Good. But I am somewhat worn, A snatch of sleep were like the peace of God.

Gurth, Leofwin, go once more about the hill—

What did the dead man call it—Sanguelac,

The lake of blood?

*Leofwin.* A lake that dips in William As well as Harold.

*Harold.* Like enough. I have seen

The trenches dug, the palisades up-rear'd

And wattled thick with ash and willow-wands;

Yea, wrought at them myself. Go round once more;

See all be sound and whole. No Norman horse

Can shatter England, standing shield by shield;

Tell that again to all.

*Gurth.* I will, good brother.

*Harold.* Our guardsman hath but toil'd his hand and foot,

I hand, foot, heart and head. Some wine!

*(One pours wine into a goblet which he hands to Harold.)*

Too much!

What? we must use our battle-axe to-day.

Our guardsmen have slept well, since we came in?

*Leofwin.* Ay, slept and snored.

Your second-sighted man That scared the dying conscience of the king,

Misheard their snores for groans.

They are up again

And chanting that old song of Brunanburg

Where England conquer'd.

*Harold.* That is well. The Norman,

What is he doing?

*Leofwin.* Praying for Normandy; Our scouts have heard the tinkle of their bells.

*Harold.* And our old songs are prayers for England too! But by all Saints—

*Leofwin.* Barring the Norman!

*Harold.* Nay,

Were the great trumpet blowing doomsday dawn,

I needs must rest. Call when the Norman moves—

*[Exeunt all, but Harold.]*

No horse—thousands of horses—our shield wall—

Wall—break it not—break not—break—

*[Sleeps.]*

*Vision of Edward.* Son Harold, I

thy king, who came before

To tell thee thou shouldst win at

Stamford-bridge,

Come yet once more, from where I am

at peace,

Because I loved thee in my mortal

day,

To tell thee thou shalt die on Senlac

hill—

Sanguelac!

*Vision of Wulfnoth.* O brother,

from my ghastly oubliette

I send my voice across the narrow

seas—

No more, no more, dear brother,

never-more—

Sanguelac!

*Vision of Tostig.* O brother, most

unbrotherlike to me,

Thou gavest thy voice against me in

my life,

I give my voice against thee from the

grave—

Sanguelac!

*Vision of Norman Saints.* O hap-

less Harold! King but for an

hour!

Thou swarest falsely by our blessed

bones,

We give our voice against thee out of

heaven!

Sanguelac! Sanguelac! The arrow!

the arrow!

*Harold (starting up, battle-axe in*

*hand). Away!*

My battle-axe against your voices.  
Peace!  
The king's last word—'the arrow!'  
I shall die—  
I die for England then, who lived for  
England—  
What nobler? men must die.  
I cannot fall into a falsèr  
world—  
I have done no man wrong. Tostig,  
poor brother,  
Art *thou* so anger'd?  
Fain had I kept thine earldom in thy  
hands  
Save for thy wild and violent will  
that wench'd  
All hearts of freemen from thee. I  
could do  
No other than this way advise the  
king  
Against the race of Godwin. Is it  
possible  
That mortal men should bear their  
earthly heats  
Into yon bloodless world, and threaten  
us thence  
Unschool'd of Death? Thus then  
thou art revenged—  
I left our England naked to the  
South  
To meet thee in the North. The  
Norseman's raid  
Hath helpt the Norman, and the race  
of Godwin  
Hath ruin'd Godwin. No—our wak-  
ing thoughts  
Suffer a stormless shipwreck in the  
pools  
Of sullen slumber, and arise  
again  
Disjointed: only dreams—where  
mine own self  
Takes part against myself! Why?  
for a spark  
Of self-disdain born in me when I  
sware  
Falsely to him, the falsèr Norman,  
over  
His gilded ark of mummy-saints, by  
whom  
I knew not that I swear,—not for my-  
self—  
For England—yet not wholly—

(Enter EDITH.)

Edith, Edith,  
Get thou into thy cloister as the king  
Will'd it be safe: the perjury-mon-  
gering Count  
Hath made too good an use of Holy  
Church  
To break her close! There the great  
God of truth  
Fill all thine hours with peace!—A  
lying devil  
Hath haunted me—mine oath—my  
wife—I fain  
Had made my marriage not a lie; I  
could not:  
Thou art my bride! and thou in after  
years  
Praying perchance for this poor soul  
of mine  
In cold, white cells beneath an icy  
moon—  
This memory to thee!—and this to  
England,  
My legacy of war against the Pope  
From child to child, from Pope to  
Pope, from age to age,  
Till the sea wash her level with her  
shores,  
Or till the Pope be Christ's.

Enter ALDWYTH.

*Aldwyth* (to Edith). Away from  
him!

*Edith*. I will . . . I have not  
spoken to the king  
One word; and one I must. Fare-  
well!

*Harold*. [Going.  
Not yet.  
Stay.

*Edith*. To what use?

*Harold*. The king commands thee,  
woman!

(To Aldwyth.)

Have thy two brethren sent their  
forces in?

*Aldwyth*. Nay, I fear not.

*Harold*. Then there's no force in  
thee!

Thou didst possess thyself of Ed-  
ward's ear

To part me from the woman that I  
loved!

Thou didst arouse the fierce Northumbrians!

Thou hast been false to England and to me!—

As . . . in some sort . . . I have been false to thee.

Leave me. No more—Pardon on both sides—Go!

*Aldwyth.* Alas, my lord, I loved thee.

*Harold (bitterly).* With a love  
Passing thy love for Griffyth! wherefore now

Obey my first and last commandment.  
Go!

*Aldwyth.* O Harold! husband!  
Shall we meet again?

*Harold.* After the battle—after the battle. Go.

*Aldwyth.* I go. (*Aside.*) That I could stab her standing there!

[*Exit Aldwyth.*]  
*Edith.* Alas, my lord, she loved thee.

*Harold.* Never! never!  
I saw it in her eyes!

*Harold.* I see it in thine.  
And not on thee—nor England—fall  
God's doom!

*Edith.* On thee? on me. And thou art England! Alfred

Was England. Æthelred was nothing. England

Is but her king, and thou art Harold!

*Harold.* Edith,  
The sign in heaven—the sudden blast  
at sea—

My fatal oath—the dead Saints—the dark dreams—

The Pope's Anathema—the Holy Rood

That bow'd to me at Waltham—Edith, if

I, the last English King of England—  
*Edith.* No,

First of a line that coming from the people,

And chosen by the people—  
*Harold.* And fighting for  
And dying for the people—

*Edith.* Living! living!  
*Harold.* Yea so, good cheer! thou  
art Harold, I am Edith!

Look not thus wan!

*Edith.* What matters how I look? Have we not broken Wales and

Norseland? slain,  
Whose life was all one battle, incarnate war,

Their giant-king, a mightier man-in-arms

Than William.

*Harold.* Ay, my girl, no tricks in him—

No bastard he! when all was lost, he yell'd,

And bit his shield, and dash'd it on the ground,

And swaying his two-handed sword about him,

Two deaths at every swing, ran in upon us

And died so, and I loved him as I hate

This liar who made me liar. If Hate can kill,

And Loathing wield a Saxon battle-axe—

*Edith.* Waste not thy might before the battle!

*Harold.* No,  
And thou must hence. Stigand will see thee safe,

And so—Farewell.

[*He is going, but turns back.*]  
The ring thou dardest not wear,

I have had it fashion'd, see, to meet my hand.

[*Harold shows the ring which is on his finger.*]

Farewell!  
[*He is going, but turns back again.*]

I am dead as Death this day to ought of earth's

Save William's death or mine.  
*Edith.* Thy death!—to-day!

Is it not thy birthday?

*Harold.* Ay, that happy day!  
A birthday welcome! happy days  
and many!

One—this! [*They embrace.*]  
Look, I will bear thy blessing into the battle

And front the doom of God.  
*Norman cries (heard in the distance).*  
Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

*Enter GURTH.*

*Gurth.* The Norman moves!  
*Harold.* Harold and Holy Cross!  
 [Exit Harold and Gurth.]

*Enter STIGAND.*

*Stigand.* Our Church in arms—the  
 lamb the lion—not  
 Spear into pruning-hook—the counter  
 way—  
 Cowl, helm; and crozier, battle-axe.  
 Abbot Alfwig,  
 Leofric, and all the monks of Peter-  
 boro'  
 Strike for the king; but I, old wretch,  
 old Stigand,  
 With hands too limp to brandish iron  
 —and yet  
 I have a power—would Harold ask  
 me for it—  
 I have a power.

*Edith.* What power, holy father?

*Stigand.* Power now from Harold  
 to command thee hence  
 And see thee safe from Senlac.

*Edith.* I remain!

*Stigand.* Yea, so will I, daughter,  
 until I find  
 Which way the battle balance. I can  
 see it  
 From where we stand: and, live or  
 die, I would  
 I were among them!

*Canons from Waltham (singing with-  
 out).*

Salva patriam  
 Sancte Pater,  
 Salva Fili,  
 Salva Spiritus,  
 Salva patriam,  
 Sancta Mater.<sup>1</sup>

*Edith.* Are those the blessed angels  
 quiring, father?

*Stigand.* No, daughter, but the  
 canons out of Waltham,

<sup>1</sup> The *a* throughout these Latin hymns  
 should be sounded broad, as in 'father.'

The king's foundation, that have fol-  
 low'd him.

*Edith.* O God of battles, make  
 their wall of shields  
 Firm as thy cliffs, strengthen their  
 palisades!

What is that whirring sound?

*Stigand.* The Norman arrow!  
*Edith.* Look out upon the battle—  
 is he safe?

*Stigand.* The king of England  
 stands between his banners.  
 He glitters on the crowning of the  
 hill.

God save King Harold!

*Edith.* —chosen by his people  
 And fighting for his people!

*Stigand.* There is one  
 Come as Goliath came of yore—he  
 flings

His brand in air and catches it  
 again,

He is chanting some old warsong.

*Edith.* And no David  
 To meet him?

*Stigand.* Ay, there springs a Saxon  
 on him,  
 Falls—and another falls.

*Edith.* Have mercy on us!

*Stigand.* Lo! our good Gurth hath  
 smitten him to the death.

*Edith.* So perish all the enemies  
 of Harold!

*Canons (singing).*

Hostis in Angliam  
 Ruit prædator,  
 Illorum, Domine,  
 Scutum scindatur!  
 Hostis per Angliæ  
 Plagas bacchatur;  
 Casa crematur,  
 Pastor fugatur  
 Grex trucidatur—

*Stigand.* Illos trucidâ, Domine.

*Edith.* Ay, good father.

*Canons (singing).*

Illorum scelera  
 Pœna sequatur!

*English cries.* Harold and Holy  
 Cross! Out! Out!



*Stigand.* Our javelins  
Answer their arrows. All the Nor-  
man foot  
Are storming up the hill. The range  
of knights  
Sit, each a statue on his horse, and  
wait.

*English cries.* Harold and God  
Almighty!

*Norman cries.* Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

*Canons (singing).*

Eques cum pedite  
Præpediatur!  
Illorum in lacrymas  
Cruor fundatur!  
Pereant, pereant,  
Anglia precatur.

*Stigand.* Look, daughter, look.

*Edith.* Nay, father, look for me!

*Stigand.* Our axes lighten with a  
single flash  
About the summit of the hill, and  
heads

And arms are sliver'd off and splin-  
ter'd by  
Their lightning—and they fly—the  
Norman flies.

*Edith.* Stigand, O father, have we  
won the day?

*Stigand.* No, daughter, no—they  
fall behind the horse—  
Their horse are thronging to the barri-  
cades;

I see the gonfanon of Holy Peter  
Floating above their helmets—ha! he  
is down!

*Edith.* He down! Who down?

*Stigand.* The Norman Count is  
down.

*Edith.* So perish all the enemies  
of England!

*Stigand.* No, no, he hath risen  
again—he bares his face—  
Shouts something—he points onward  
—all their horse  
Swallow the hill locust-like, swarming  
up.

*Edith.* O God of battles, make his  
battle-axe keen  
As thine own sharp-dividing justice,  
heavy

As thine own bolts that fall on crime-  
ful heads  
Charged with the weight of heaven  
wherefrom they fall!

*Canons (singing).*

Jacta tonitrua  
Deus bellator!  
Surgas e tenebris,  
Sis vindicator!  
Fulmina, fulmina  
Deus vastator!

*Edith.* O God of battles, they are  
three to one,  
Make thou one man as three to roll  
them down!

*Canons (singing).*

Equus cum equite  
Dejiciatur!  
Acies, Acies  
Prona sternatur!  
Illorum lanceas  
Frange Creator!

*Stigand.* Yea, yea, for how their  
lances snap and shiver  
Against the shifting blaze of Harold's  
axe!

War-woodman of old Woden, how he  
fells

The mortal copse of faces! There!  
And there!

The horse and horseman cannot meet  
the shield,

The blow that brains the horseman  
cleaves the horse,

The horse and horseman roll along  
the hill,

They fly once more, they fly, the Nor-  
man flies!

Equus cum equite  
Præcipitatur.

*Edith.* O God, the God of truth  
hath heard my cry.  
Follow them, follow them, drive them  
to the sea!

Illorum scelera  
Pœna sequatur!

*Stigand.* Truth! no; a lie; a trick,  
a Norman trick!

They turn on the pursuer, horse  
against foot,

They murder all that follow.

*Edith.* Have mercy on us!

*Stigand.* Hot-headed fools—to  
burst the wall of shields!

They have broken the commandment  
of the king!

*Edith.* His oath was broken—O  
holy Norman Saints,

Ye that are now of heaven, and see  
beyond

Your Norman shrines, pardon it, par-  
don it,

That he forswore himself for all he  
loved,

Me, me and all! Look out upon the  
battle!

*Stigand.* They thunder again upon  
the barricades.

My sight is eagle, but the strife so  
thick—

This is the hottest of it: hold, ash!  
hold, willow!

*English cries.* Out, out!

*Norman cries.* Ha Rou!

*Stigand.* Ha! Gurth hath leapt  
upon him

And slain him: he hath fallen.

*Edith.* And I am heard.

Glory to God in the Highest! fallen,  
fallen!

*Stigand.* No, no, his horse—he  
mounts another—wields

His war club, dashes it on Gurth, and  
Gurth,

Our noble Gurth, is down!

*Edith.* Have mercy on us!

*Stigand.* And Leofwin is down!

*Edith.* Have mercy on us!

O Thou that knowest, let not my  
strong prayer

Be weaken'd in thy sight, because I  
love

The husband of another!

*Norman cries.* Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

*Edith.* I do not hear our English  
war-cry.

*Stigand.* No.

*Edith.* Look out upon the battle  
—is he safe?

*Stigand.* He stands between the  
banners with the dead

So piled about him he can hardly  
move.

*Edith* (takes up the war-cry). Out!  
out!

*Norman cries.* Ha Rou!

*Edith* (cries out). Harold and Holy  
Cross!

*Norman cries.* Ha Rou! Ha  
Rou!

*Edith.* What is that whirring  
sound?

*Stigand.* The Norman sends his  
arrows up to Heaven,

They fall on those within the pali-  
sade!

*Edith.* Look out upon the hill—is  
Harold there?

*Stigand.* Sanguelac—Sanguelac—  
the arrow—the arrow!—away!

SCENE II.—FIELD OF THE DEAD.  
NIGHT.

ALDWYTH and EDITH.

*Aldwyth.* O Edith, art thou here?  
O Harold, Harold—

Our Harold—we shall never see him  
more.

*Edith.* For there was more than  
sister in my kiss,

And so the saints were wroth. I can-  
not love them,

For they are Norman saints—and yet  
I should—

They are so much holier than their  
harlot's son

With whom they play'd their game  
against the king!

*Aldwyth.* The king is slain, the  
kingdom overthrown!

*Edith.* No matter!

*Aldwyth.* How no matter, Harold  
slain?—

I cannot find his body. O help me  
thou!

O Edith, if I ever wrought against  
thee,

Forgive me thou, and help me here!

*Edith.* No matter!

*Aldwyth.* Not help me, nor forgive  
me?

*Edith.* So thou saidest.

*Aldwyth.* I say it now, forgive me!

*Edith.* Cross me not!  
I am seeking one who wedded me in secret.

Whisper! God's angels only know it.  
Ha!

What art *thou* doing here among the dead?

They are stripping the dead bodies naked yonder,

And thou art come to rob them of their rings!

*Aldwyth.* O Edith, Edith, I have lost both crown  
And husband.

*Edith.* So have I.

*Aldwyth.* I tell thee, girl,  
I am seeking my dead Harold.

*Edith.* And I mine!  
The Holy Father strangled him with a

hair  
Of Peter, and his brother Tostig

help;  
The wicked sister clapt her hands and

laugh'd;  
Then all the dead fell on him.

*Aldwyth.* Edith, Edith—

*Edith.* What was he like, this husband? like to thee?

Call not for help from me. I knew him not.

He lies not here: not close beside the standard.

Here fell the truest, manliest hearts of England.

Go further hence and find him.

*Aldwyth.* She is crazed!

*Edith.* That doth not matter either. Lower the light.  
He must be here.

*Enter two Canons, OSGOD and ATHELRIC, with torches. They turn over the dead bodies and examine them as they pass.*

*Osgod.* I think that this is Thurkill.

*Athelric.* More likely Godric.

*Osgod.* I am sure this body  
Is Alfwig, the king's uncle.

*Athelric.* So it is!  
No, no—brave Gurth, one gash from brow to knee!

*Osgod.* And here is Leofwin.

*Edith.* And here is *He!*

*Aldwyth.* Harold? Oh no—nay,  
if it were—my God,

They have so main'd and murder'd  
all his face

There is no man can swear to  
him.

*Edith.* But one woman!  
Look you, we never mean to part

again.

I have found him, I am happy.  
Was there not someone ask'd me for

forgiveness?  
I yield it freely, being the true wife

Of this dead King, who never bore

revenge.

*Enter COUNT WILLIAM and WILLIAM MALET.*

*William.* Who be these women?  
And what body is this?

*Edith.* Harold, thy better!

*William.* Ay, and what art thou?

*Edith.* His wife!

*Malet.* Not true, my girl, here is the Queen! [*Pointing out Aldwyth.*]

*William (to Aldwyth).* Wast thou his Queen?

*Aldwyth.* I was the Queen of Wales.

*William.* Why then of England.  
Madam, fear us not.

(*To Malet.*) Knowest thou this other?

*Malet.* When I visited England,  
Some held she was his wife in secret—

some—  
Well—some believed she was his para-

mour.  
*Edith.* Norman, thou liest! liars

all of you,  
Your Saints and all! I am his wife!

and she—  
For look, our marriage ring!

[*She draws it off the finger of Harold.*]

I lost it somehow—

I lost it, playing with it when I was wild.

*That bred the doubt!* but I am wiser now . . .

I am too wise . . . Will none among you all

Bear me true witness—only for this once—

That I have found it here again?

*[She puts it out.*

And thou,

Thy wife am I for ever and evermore.

*[Falls on the body and dies.*

*William.* Death!—and enough of death for this one day,

The day of St. Calixtus, and the day, My day when I was born.

*Malet.* And this dead king's Who, king or not, hath kinglike fought and fallen,

His birthday, too. It seems but yester-even

I held it with him in his English halls, His day, with all his roof-tree ringing

'Harold,'

Before he fell into the snare of Guy; When all men counted Harold would

be king,

And Harold was most happy.

*William.* Thou art half English. Take them away!

Malet, I vow to build a church to God

Here on the hill of battle; let our high altar

Stand where their standard fell . . . where these two lie.

Take them away, I do not love to see them.

Pluck the dead woman off the dead man, Malet!

*Malet.* Faster than ivy. Must I hack her arms off?

How shall I part them?

*William.* Leave them. Let them be!

Bury him and his paramour together. He that was false in oath to me, it seems

Was false to his own wife. We will not give him

A Christian burial: yet he was a warrior,

And wise, yea truthful, till that blighted vow

Which God avenged to-day.

Wrap them together in a purple cloak

And lay them both upon the waste seashore

At Hastings, there to guard the land for which

He did forswear himself—a warrior—ay,

And but that Holy Peter fought for us,

And that the false Northumbrian held aloof,

And save for that chance arrow which the Saints

Sharpen'd and sent against him—who can tell?—

Three horses had I slain beneath me: twice

I thought that all was lost. Since I knew battle,

And that was from my boyhood, never yet—

No, by the splendor of God—have I fought men

Like Harold and his brethren, and his guard

Of English. Every man about his king

Fell where he stood. They loved him: and, pray God

My Normans may but move as true with me

To the door of death. Of one self-stock at first,

Make them again one people—Norman, English;

And English, Norman; we should have a hand

To grasp the world with, and a foot to stamp it . . .

Flat. Praise the Saints. It is over. No more blood!

I am king of England, so they thwart me not,

And I will rule according to their laws.

*(To Aldwyth.)* Madam, we will entreat thee with all honor.

*Aldwyth.* My punishment is more than I can bear.

# BECKET.

TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR,  
THE RIGHT HONORABLE EARL OF SELBORNE.

MY DEAR SELBORNE—To you, the honored Chancellor of our own day, I dedicate this dramatic memorial of your great predecessor;—which, altho' not intended in its present form to meet the exigencies of our modern theatre, has nevertheless—for so you have assured me—won your approbation.—Ever yours,  
TENNYSON.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HENRY II. (*son of the Earl of Anjou*).  
THOMAS BECKET, *Chancellor of England, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury*.  
GILBERT FOLIOT, *Bishop of London*.  
ROGER, *Archbishop of York*.  
*Bishop of Hereford*.  
HILARY, *Bishop of Chichester*.  
JOCELYN, *Bishop of Salisbury*.  
JOHN OF SALISBURY } *friends of Becket.*  
HERBERT OF BOSHAM }  
WALTER MAP, *reputed author of 'Goliath,' Latin poems against the priesthood*.  
KING LOUIS OF FRANCE.  
GEOFFREY, *son of Rosamund and Henry*.  
GRIM, *a monk of Cambridge*.  
SIR REGINALD FITZURSE }  
SIR RICHARD DE BRITO } *the four knights of the King's household, enemies of*  
SIR WILLIAM DE TRACY } *Becket.*  
SIR HUGH DE MORVILLE }  
DE BROC OF SALTWOOD CASTLE.  
LORD LEICESTER.  
PHILIP DE ELEMOSYNA.  
TWO KNIGHT TEMPLARS.  
JOHN OF OXFORD (*called the Swearer*).  
ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE, *Queen of England (divorced from Louis of France)*.  
ROSAMUND DE CLIFFORD.  
MARGERY.

*Knights, Monks, Beggars, etc.*

## PROLOGUE.

*A Castle in Normandy. Interior of the Hall. Roofs of a City seen thro' Windows.*

HENRY and BECKET at chess.

Henry. So then our good Archbishop Theobald Lies dying.

Becket. I am grieved to know as much.

Henry. But we must have a mightier man than he For his successor.

Becket. Have you thought of one?

Henry. A cleric lately poison'd his own mother, And being brought before the courts of the Church,

They but degraded him. I hope they whipt him.

I would have hang'd him.

Becket. It is your move.

Henry. Well—there. [*Moves.*]

The Church in the pell-mell of Stephen's time

Hath climb'd the throne and almost clutch'd the crown;

But by the royal customs of our realm

The Church should hold her baronies of me,

Like other lords amenable to law.

I'll have them written down and made the law.

*Becket.* My liege, I move my bishop.

*Henry.* And if I live, No man without my leave shall excommunicate

My tenants or my household.

*Becket.* Look to your king.

*Henry.* No man without my leave shall cross the seas

To set the Pope against me—I pray your pardon.

*Becket.* Well—will you move?

*Henry.* There. [*Moves.*]

*Becket.* Check—you move so wildly.

*Henry.* There then! [*Moves.*]

*Becket.* Why—there then, for you see my bishop

Hath brought your king to a standstill. You are beaten.

*Henry (kicks over the board).* Why, there then—down go bishop and king together.

I loathe being beaten; had I fixt my fancy

Upon the game I should have beaten thee,

But that was vagabond.

*Becket.* Where, my liege? With Phryne,

Or Lais, or thy Rosamund, or another?

*Henry.* My Rosamund is no Lais,

Thomas Becket;

And yet she plagues me too—no fault in her—

But that I fear the Queen would have her life.

*Becket.* Put her away, put her

away, my liege!

Put her away into a nunnery!

Safe enough there from her to whom thou art bound

By Holy Church. And wherefore should she seek

The life of Rosamund de Clifford more

Than that of other paramours of thine?

*Henry.* How dost thou know I am not wedded to her?

*Becket.* How should I know?

*Henry.* That is my secret, Thomas.

*Becket.* State secrets should be patent to the statesman

Who serves and loves his king, and whom the king

Loves not as statesman, but true lover and friend.

*Henry.* Come, come, thou art but deacon, not yet bishop,

No, nor archbishop, nor my confessor yet.

I would to God thou wert, for I should find

An easy father confessor in thee.

*Becket.* St. Denis, that thou shouldst not. I should beat

Thy kingship as my bishop hath beaten it.

*Henry.* Hell take thy bishop then, and my kingship too!

Come, come, I love thee and I know thee, I know thee,

A doter on white pheasant-flesh at feasts,

A sauce-deviser for thy days of fish,

A dish-designer, and most amorous Of good old red sound liberal Gascon

wine:

Will not thy body rebel, man, if thou flatter it?

*Becket.* That palate is insane which cannot tell

A good dish from a bad, new wine from old.

*Henry.* Well, who loves wine loves woman.

*Becket.* So I do.

Men are God's trees, and women are God's flowers;

And when the Gascon wine mounts to my head,

The trees are all the statelier, and the  
flowers  
Are all the fairer.

*Henry.* And thy thoughts, thy fan-  
cies?

*Becket.* Good dogs, my liege, well  
train'd, and easily call'd  
Off from the game.

*Henry.* Save for some once or  
twice,  
When they ran down the game and  
worried it.

*Becket.* No, my liege, no!—not  
once—in God's name, no!

*Henry.* Nay, then, I take thee at  
thy word—believe thee  
The veriest Galahad of old Arthur's  
hall.

And so this Rosamund, my true heart-  
wife,

Not Eleanor—she whom I love in-  
deed

As a woman should be loved—Why  
dost thou smile  
So dolorously?

*Becket.* My good liege, if a man  
Wastes himself among women, how  
should he love

A woman, as a woman should be  
loved?

*Henry.* How shouldst thou know  
that never hast loved one?

Come, I would give her to thy care in  
England

When I am out in Normandy or An-  
jou.

*Becket.* My lord, I am your subject,  
not your—

*Henry.* Pander.  
God's eyes! I know all that—not my  
purveyor

Of pleasures, but to save a life—her  
life;

Ay, and the soul of Eleanor from hell-  
fire.

I have built a secret bower in Eng-  
land, Thomas,  
A nest in a bush.

*Becket.* And where, my liege?  
*Henry (whispers).* Thine ear.

*Becket.* That's lone enough.

*Henry (laying paper on table).* This  
chart here mark'd 'Her Bower,'

Take, keep it, friend. See, first, a  
circling wood,

A hundred pathways running every-  
way,

And then a brook, a bridge; and after  
that

This labyrinthine brickwork maze in  
maze,

And then another wood, and in the  
midst

A garden and my Rosamund. Look,  
this line—

The rest you see is color'd green—but  
this

Draws thro' the chart to her.

*Becket.* This blood-red line?

*Henry.* Ay! blood, perchance, ex-  
cept thou see to her.

*Becket.* And where is she? There  
in her English nest?

*Henry.* Would God she were—no,  
here within the city.

We take her from her secret bower in  
Anjou

And pass her to her secret bower in  
England.

She is ignorant of all but that I love  
her.

*Becket.* My liege, I pray thee let  
me hence: a widow

And orphan child, whom one of thy  
wild barons—

*Henry.* Ay, ay, but swear to see  
to her in England.

*Becket.* Well, well, I swear, but  
not to please myself.

*Henry.* Whatever come between  
us?

*Becket.* What should come  
between us, Henry?

*Henry.* Nay—I know not,  
Thomas.

*Becket.* What need then? Well—  
whatever come between us.

[*Going.*

*Henry.* A moment! thou didst  
help me to my throne

In Theobald's time, and after by thy  
wisdom

Hast kept it firm from shaking; but  
now I,

For my realm's sake, myself must be  
the wizard

To raise that tempest which will set it  
trembling

Only to base it deeper. I, true son  
Of Holy Church—no croucher to the  
Gregories

That tread the kings their children  
underheel—

Must curb her; and the Holy Father,  
while

This Barbarossa butts him from his  
chair,

Will need my help—be facile to my  
hands.

Now is my time. Yet—lest there  
should be flashes

And fulminations from the side of  
Rome,

An interdict on England—I will have  
My young son Henry crown'd the  
King of England,

That so the Papal bolt may pass by  
England,

As seeming his, not mine, and fall  
abroad.

I'll have it done—and now.

*Becket.* Surely too young  
Even for this shadow of a crown; and  
tho'

I love him heartily, I can spy al-  
ready

A strain of hard and headstrong in  
him. Say,

The Queen should play his kingship  
against thine!

*Henry.* I will not think so,  
Thomas. Who shall crown  
him?

Canterbury is dying.

*Becket.* The next Canterbury.

*Henry.* And who shall he be, my  
friend Thomas? Who?

*Becket.* Name him; the Holy  
Father will confirm him.

*Henry (lays his hand on Becket's  
shoulder).* Here!

*Becket.* Mock me not. I am not  
even a monk.

Thy jest—no more. Why—look—is  
this a sleeve  
For an archbishop?

*Henry.* But the arm within  
Is Becket's, who hath beaten down  
my foes.

*Becket.* A soldier's, not a spiritual  
arm.

*Henry.* I lack a spiritual soldier,  
Thomas—

A man of this world and the next to  
boot.

*Becket.* There's Gilbert Foliot.

*Henry.* He! too thin, too thin.  
Thou art the man to fill out the  
Church robe;

Your Foliot fasts and fawns too much  
for me.

*Becket.* Roger of York.

*Henry.* Roger is Roger of York.  
King, Church, and State to him but  
foils wherein

To set that precious jewel, Roger of  
York.

No.

*Becket.* Henry of Winchester?

*Henry.* Him who crown'd Stephen  
—King Stephen's brother!

No; too royal for me.

And I'll have no more Anselms.

*Becket.* Sire, the business  
Of thy whole kingdom waits me: let  
me go.

*Henry.* Answer me first.

*Becket.* Then for thy barren jest  
Take thou mine answer in bare com-  
monplace—

*Nolo episcopari.*

*Henry.* Ay, but *Nolo  
Archiepiscopari*, my good friend,  
Is quite another matter.

*Becket.* A more awful one.  
Make *me* archbishop! Why, my  
liege, I know

Some three or four poor priests a  
thousand times

Fitter for this grand function. *Me*  
archbishop!

God's favor and king's favor might  
so clash

That thou and I— That were a jest  
indeed!

*Henry.* Thou angerest me, man: I  
do not jest.

*Enter ELEANOR and SIR REGINALD  
FITZURSE.*

*Eleanor (singing).* Over! the  
sweet summer closes,



The reign of the roses is done—  
Henry (to Becket, who is going).

Thou shalt not go. I have not  
ended with thee.

Eleanor (seeing chart on table).  
This chart with the red line! her  
bower! whose bower?

Henry. The chart is not mine, but  
Becket's: take it, Thomas.

Eleanor. Becket! O—ay—and  
these chessmen on the floor—the  
king's crown broken! Becket hath  
beaten thee again—and thou hast  
kicked down the board. I know  
thee of old.

Henry. True enough, my mind  
was set upon other matters.

Eleanor. What matters?— State  
matters? love matters?

Henry. My love for thee, and thine  
for me.

Eleanor. Over! the sweet summer  
closes,

The reign of the roses is done;  
Over and gone with the roses,  
And over and gone with the sun.

Here; but our sun in Aquitaine  
lasts longer. I would I were in Aquitain  
again—your north chills me.

Over! the sweet summer closes,  
And never a flower at the close;  
Over and gone with the roses,  
And winter again and the snows.

That was not the way I ended it first  
—but unsymmetrically, preposterously,  
illogically, out of passion, with-  
out art—like a song of the people.  
Will you have it? The last Parthian  
shaft of a forlorn Cupid at the King's  
left breast, and all left-handedness  
and under-handedness.

And never a flower at the close,  
Over and gone with the roses,  
Not over and gone with the rose.

True, one rose will outblossom the  
rest, one rose in a bower. I speak  
after my fancies, for I am a Trouba-  
dour, you know, and won the violet at  
Toulouse; but my voice is harsh  
here, not in tune, a nightingale out of

season; for marriage, rose or no  
rose, has killed the golden violet.

Becket. Madam, you do ill to scorn  
wedded love.

Eleanor. So I do. Louis of  
France loved me, and I dreamed that  
I loved Louis of France: and I loved  
Henry of England, and Henry of  
England dreamed that he loved me;  
but the marriage-garland withers even  
with the putting on, the bright link  
rusts with the breath of the first after-  
marriage kiss, the harvest moon is the  
ripening of the harvest, and the honey-  
moon is the gall of love; he dies of  
his honeymoon. I could pity this  
poor world myself that it is no better  
ordered.

Henry. Dead is he, my Queen?  
What, altogether? Let me swear nay  
to that by this cross on thy neck.  
God's eyes! what a lovely cross!  
What jewels!

Eleanor. Doth it please you?  
Take it and wear it on that hard heart  
of yours—there. [Gives it to him.]

Henry (puts it on). On this left  
breast before so hard a heart,  
To hide the scar left by thy Parthian  
dart.

Eleanor. Has my simple song set  
you jingling? Nay, if I took and  
translated that hard heart into our  
Provençal facilities, I could so play  
about it with the rhyme—

Henry. That the heart were lost  
in the rhyme and the matter in the  
metre. May we not pray you, Madam,  
to spare us the hardness of your facili-  
ty?

Eleanor. The wells of Castaly are  
not wasted upon the desert. We did  
but jest.

Henry. There's no jest on the  
brows of Herbert there. What is it,  
Herbert?

Enter HERBERT OF BOSHAM.

Herbert. My liege, the good Arch-  
bishop is no more.

Henry. Peace to his soul!

Herbert. I left him with peace on

his face—that sweet other-world smile, which will be reflected in the spiritual body among the angels. But he longed much to see your Grace and the Chancellor ere he past, and his last words were a commendation of Thomas Becket to your Grace as his successor in the archbishopric.

*Henry.* Ha, Becket! thou rememberest our talk!

*Becket.* My heart is full of tears—I have no answer.

*Henry.* Well, well, old men must die, or the world would grow mouldy, would only breed the past again. Come to me to-morrow. Thou hast but to hold out thy hand. Meanwhile the revenues are mine. A-hawking, a-hawking! If I sit, I grow fat. [*Leaps over the table and exits.*]

*Becket.* He did prefer me to the chancellorship, Believing I should ever aid the Church—

But have I done it? He commends me now  
From out his grave to this archbishopric.

*Herbert.* A dead man's dying wish should be of weight.

*Becket.* His should. Come with me. Let me learn at full  
The manner of his death, and all he said.

[*Exeunt Herbert and Becket.*]

*Eleanor.* Fitzurse, that chart with the red line—thou sawest it—her bower.

*Fitzurse.* Rosamund's?

*Eleanor.* Ay—there lies the secret of her whereabouts, and the King gave it to his Chancellor.

*Fitzurse.* To this son of a London merchant—how your Grace must hate him.

*Eleanor.* Hate him? as brave a soldier as Henry and a goodlier man: but thou—dost thou love this Chancellor, that thou hast sworn a voluntary allegiance to him?

*Fitzurse.* Not for my love toward him, but because he had the love of the King. How should a baron love

a beggar on horseback, with the retinue of three kings behind him, outroyalling royalty? Besides, he help the King to break down our castles, for the which I hate him.

*Eleanor.* For the which I honor him. Statesman not Churchman he. A great and sound policy that: I could embrace him for it: you could not see the King for the kinglings.

*Fitzurse.* Ay, but he speaks to a noble as tho' he were a churl, and to a churl as if he were a noble.

*Eleanor.* Pride of the plebeian!

*Fitzurse.* And this plebeian like to be Archbishop!

*Eleanor.* True, and I have an inherited loathing of these black sheep of the Papacy. Archbishop? I can see further into a man than our hot-headed Henry, and if there ever come feud between Church and Crown, and I do not then charm this secret out of our loyal Thomas, I am not Eleanor.

*Fitzurse.* Last night I followed a woman in the city here. Her face was veiled, but the back methought was Rosamund—his paramour, thy rival. I can feel for thee.

*Eleanor.* Thou feel for me!—paramour—rival! King Louis had no paramours, and I loved him none the more. Henry had many, and I loved him none the less—now neither more nor less—not at all; the cup's empty. I would she were but his paramour, for men tire of their fancies; but I fear this one fancy hath taken root, and borne blossom too, and she, whom the King loves indeed, is a power in the State. Rival!—ay, and when the King passes, there may come a crash and embroilment as in Stephen's time; and her children—canst thou not—that secret matter which would heat the King against thee [*whispers him and he starts*]. Nay, that is safe with me as with thyself: but canst thou not—thou art drowned in debt—thou shalt have our love, our silence, and our gold—canst



MAUD.—Page 155.



thou not—if thou light upon her—free me from her?

*Fitzurse.* Well, Madam, I have loved her in my time.

*Eleanor.* No, my bear, thou hast not. My Courts of Love would have held thee guiltless of love—the fine attractions and repulses, the delicacies, the subtleties.

*Fitzurse.* Madam, I loved according to the main purpose and intent of nature.

*Eleanor.* I warrant thee! thou wouldst hug thy Cupid till his ribs cracked—enough of this. Follow me this Rosamund day and night, whithersoever she goes; track her, if thou canst, even into the King's lodging, that I may (*clenches her fist*)—may at least have my cry against him and her,—and thou in thy way shouldst be jealous of the King, for thou in thy way didst once, what shall I call it, affect her thine own self.

*Fitzurse.* Ay, but the young colt winced and whinnied and flung up her heels; and then the King came honeying about her, and this Becket, her father's friend, like enough staved us from her.

*Eleanor.* Us!

*Fitzurse.* Yea, by the Blessed Virgin! There were more than I buzzing round the blossom—De Tracy—even that flint De Brito.

*Eleanor.* Carry her off among you; run in upon her and devour her, one and all of you; make her as hateful to herself and to the King, as she is to me.

*Fitzurse.* I and all would be glad to wreak our spite on the rosefaced minion of the King, and bring her to the level of the dust, so that the King—

*Eleanor.* Let her eat it like the serpent, and be driven out of her paradise.

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—BECKET'S HOUSE IN LONDON.

*Chamber barely furnished.* BECKET *unrobing.* HERBERT OF BOSHAM and SERVANT.

*Servant.* Shall I not help your lordship to your rest?

*Becket.* Friend, am I so much better than thyself?

That thou shouldst help me? Thou art wearied out.

With this day's work, get thee to thine own bed.

Leave me with Herbert, friend.

[*Exit Servant.*  
Help me off, Herbert, with this—and this.

*Herbert.* Was not the people's blessing as we past?

Heart-comfort and a balsam to thy blood?

*Becket.* The people know their Church a tower of strength, A bulwark against Throne and Bar-onage.

Too heavy for me, this; off with it, Herbert!

*Herbert.* Is it so much heavier than thy Chancellor's robe?

*Becket.* No; but the Chancellor's and the Archbishop's Together more than mortal man can bear.

*Herbert.* Not heavier than thine armor at Thoulouse?

*Becket.* O Herbert, Herbert, in my chancellorship

I more than once have gone against the Church.

*Herbert.* To please the King?

*Becket.* Ay, and the King of kings,

Or justice; for it seem'd to me but just

The Church should pay her scutage like the lords.

But hast thou heard this cry of Gilbert Foliot

That I am not the man to be your Primate,

For Henry could not work a miracle—

Make an Archbishop of a soldier?

*Herbert.* Ay,

For Gilbert Foliot held himself the man.

*Becket.* Am I the man? My mother, ere she bore me, Dream'd that twelve stars fell glittering out of heaven Into her bosom.

*Herbert.* Ay, the fire, the light, The spirit of the twelve Apostles enter'd Into thy making.

*Becket.* And when I was a child, The Virgin, in a vision of my sleep, Gave me the golden keys of Paradise. Dream, Or prophecy, that?

*Herbert.* Well, dream and prophecy both.

*Becket.* And when I was of Theobald's household, once— The good old man would sometimes have his jest— He took his mitre off, and set it on me,

And said, 'My young Archbishop— thou wouldst make A stately Archbishop!' Jest or prophecy there?

*Herbert.* Both, Thomas, both.

*Becket.* Am I the man? That rang Within my head last night, and when I slept Methought I stood in Canterbury Minster,

And spake to the Lord God, and said, 'O Lord,

I have been a lover of wines, and delicate meats, And secular splendors, and a favorer Of players, and a courtier, and a feeder

Of dogs and hawks, and apes, and lions, and lynxes.

Am I the man?' And the Lord answer'd me,

'Thou art the man, and all the more the man.'

And then I asked again, 'O Lord my God,

Henry the King hath been my friend, my brother,

And mine uplifter in this world, and chosen me

For this thy great archbishopric, believing

That I should go against the Church with him,

And I shall go against him with the Church,

And I have said no word of this to him:

Am I the man?' And the Lord answer'd me,

'Thou art the man, and all the more the man.'

And thereupon, methought, He drew toward me,

And smote me down upon the Minster floor.

I fell.

*Herbert.* God make not thee, but thy foes, fall.

*Becket.* I fell. Why fall? Why did He smite me? What?

Shall I fall off—to please the King once more?

Not fight—tho' somehow traitor to the King—

My truest and mine utmost for the Church?

*Herbert.* Thou canst not fall that way. Let traitor be;

For how have fought thine utmost for the Church,

Save from the throne of thine archbishopric?

And how been made Archbishop hadst thou told him,

'I mean to fight mine utmost for the Church,

Against the King?'

*Becket.* But dost thou think the King

Forced mine election?

*Herbert.* I do think the King Was potent in the election, and why not?

Why should not Heaven have so inspired the King?

Be comforted. Thou art the man—be thou

A mightier Anselm.

*Becket.* I do believe thee, then. I am the man.

And yet I seem appall'd—on such a sudden

At such an eagle-height I stand and see

The rift that runs between me and the King.

I served our Theobald well when I was with him;

I served King Henry well as Chancellor;

I am his no more, and I must serve the Church.

This Canterbury is only less than Rome,

And all my doubts I fling from me like dust,

Winnow and scatter all scruples to the wind,

And all the puissance of the warrior, And all the wisdom of the Chancellor,

And all the heap'd experiences of life,

I cast upon the side of Canterbury— Our holy mother Canterbury, who sits

With tatter'd robes. Laics and barons, thro'

The random gifts of careless kings, have graspt

Her livings, her advowsons, granges, farms,

And goodly acres—we will make her whole;

Not one rood lost. And for these Royal customs,

These ancient Royal customs—they are Royal,

Not of the Church—and let them be anathema,

And all that speak for them anathema.

*Herbert.* Thomas, thou art moved too much.

*Becket.* O Herbert, here I gash myself asunder from the King,

Tho' leaving each, a wound; mine own, a grief

To show the scar for ever—his, a hate

Not ever to be heal'd.

*Enter ROSAMUND DE CLIFFORD, flying from SIR REGINALD FITZURSE. Drops her veil.*

*Becket.* Rosamund de Clifford!

*Rosamund.* Save me, father, hide me—they follow me—and I must not be known.

*Becket.* Pass in with Herbert there. [*Exeunt Rosamund and Herbert by side door.*]

*Enter FITZURSE.*

*Fitzurse.* The Archbishop!

*Becket.* Ay! what wouldst thou, Reginald?

*Fitzurse.* Why—why, my lord, I follow'd—follow'd one—

*Becket.* And then what follows? Let me follow thee.

*Fitzurse.* It much imports me I should know her name.

*Becket.* What her?

*Fitzurse.* The woman that I follow'd hither.

*Becket.* Perhaps it may import her all as much Not to be known.

*Fitzurse.* And what care I for that?

Come, come, my lord Archbishop; I saw that door

Close even now upon the woman.

*Becket.* Well? *Fitzurse* (*making for the door*).

Nay, let me pass, my lord, for I must know.

*Becket.* Back, man!

*Fitzurse.* Then tell me who and what she is.

*Becket.* Art thou so sure thou followedst anything?

Go home, and sleep thy wine off, for thine eyes

Glare stupid-wild with wine.

*Fitzurse* (*making to the door*). I must and will.

I care not for thy new archbishopric.

*Becket.* Back, man, I tell thee! What!

Shall I forget my new archbishopric

And smite thee with my crozier on the skull?

'Fore God, I am a mightier man than thou.

*Fitzurse.* It well befits thy new  
archbishopsric  
To take the vagabond woman of the  
street  
Into thine arms!

*Becket.* O drunken ribaldry!  
Out, beast! out, bear!

*Fitzurse.* I shall remember this.

*Becket.* Do, and begone!

[*Exit Fitzurse.*]

[*Going to the door, sees De Tracy.*]

Tracy, what dost thou here?

*De Tracy.* My lord, I follow'd  
Reginald Fitzurse.

*Becket.* Follow him out!

*De Tracy.* I shall remember this  
Discourtesy.

[*Exit.*]

*Becket.* Do. These be those  
baron-brutes  
That havock'd all the land in  
Stephen's day.  
Rosamund de Clifford.

*Re-enter ROSAMUND and HERBERT.*

*Rosamund.* Here am I.

*Becket.* Why here?  
We gave thee to the charge of John  
of Salisbury,  
To pass thee to thy secret bower to-  
morrow.

Wast thou not told to keep thyself  
from sight?

*Rosamund.* Poor bird of passage!  
so I was; but, father,  
They say that you are wise in winged  
things,

And know the ways of Nature. Bar  
the bird  
From following the fled summer—a  
chink—he's out,

Gone! And there stole into the city  
a breath

Full of the meadows, and it minded  
me

Of the sweet woods of Clifford, and  
the walks

Where I could move at pleasure, and  
I thought

Lo! I must out or die.

*Becket.* Or out and die.  
And what hast thou to do with this  
Fitzurse?

*Rosamund.* Nothing. He sued  
my hand. I shook at him.

He found me once alone. Nay—nay  
—I cannot

Tell you: my father drove him and  
his friends,  
De Tracy and De Brito, from our  
castle.

I was but fourteen and an April  
then.

I heard him swear revenge.

*Becket.* Why will you court it  
By self-exposure? flutter out at  
night?

Make it so hard to save a moth from  
the fire?

*Rosamund.* I have saved many of  
'em. You catch 'em, so,  
Softly, and fling them out to the free  
air.

They burn themselves *within-door*.

*Becket.* Our good John  
Must speed you to your bower at  
once. The child  
Is there already.

*Rosamund.* Yes—the child—the  
child—

O rare, a whole long day of open field.

*Becket.* Ay, but you go disguised.

*Rosamund.* O rare again!  
We'll baffle them, I warrant. What  
shall it be?

I'll go as a nun.

*Becket.* No.

*Rosamund.* What, not good enough  
Even to play at nun?

*Becket.* Dan John with a nun,  
That Map, and these new railers at  
the Church  
May plaister his clean name with  
scurrilous rhymes!

No!

Go like a monk, cowling and clouding  
up

That fatal star, thy Beauty, from the  
squin

Of lust and glare of malice. Good  
night! good night!

*Rosamund.* Father, I am so tender  
to all hardness!

Nay, father, first thy blessing.

*Becket.* Wedded?  
*Rosamund.* Father!



*Becket.* Well, well! I ask no more. Heaven bless thee! hence!

*Rosamund.* O, holy father, when thou seest him next, Commend me to thy friend.

*Becket.* What friend?

*Rosamund.* The King.

*Becket.* Herbert, take out a score of armed men To guard this bird of passage to her cage;

And watch Fitzurse, and if he follow thee, Make him thy prisoner. I am Chancellor yet.

[*Exeunt Herbert and Rosamund.*]

Poor soul! poor soul!

My friend, the King! . . . O thou

Great Seal of England,

Given me by my dear friend the King of England—

We long have wrought together, thou and I—

Now must I send thee as a common friend

To tell the King, my friend, I am against him.

We are friends no more: he will say that, not I.

The worldly bond between us is dissolved,

Not yet the love: can I be under him

As Chancellor? as Archbishop over him?

Go therefore like a friend slighted by one

That hath climb'd up to nobler company.

Not slighted—all but moan'd for: thou must go.

I have not dishonor'd thee—I trust I have not;

Not mangled justice. May the hand that next

Inherits thee be but as true to thee As mine hath been! O, my dear

friend, the King!

O brother!—I may come to martyrdom.

I am martyr in myself already.—  
Herbert!

*Herbert (re-entering).* My lord, the town is quiet, and the moon Divides the whole long street with light and shade.

No footfall—no Fitzurse. We have seen her home.

*Becket.* The hog hath tumbled himself into some corner, Some ditch, to snore away his drunkenness

Into the sober headache,—Nature's moral

Against excess. Let the Great Seal be sent

Back to the King to-morrow.

*Herbert.* Must that be?

The King may rend the bearer limb from limb.

Think on it again.

*Becket.* Against the moral excess No physical ache, but failure it may be

Of all we aim'd at. John of Salisbury

Hath often laid a cold hand on my heats,

And Herbert hath rebuked me even now.

I will be wise and wary, not the soldier

As Foliot swears it.—John, and out of breath!

*Enter JOHN OF SALISBURY.*

*John of Salisbury.* Thomas, thou wast not happy taking charge

Of this wild Rosamund to please the King,

Nor am I happy having charge of her—

The included Danaë has escaped again

Her tower, and her Acrisius—where to seek?

I have been about the city.

*Becket.* Thou wilt find her Back in her lodging. Go with her—

at once—

To-night—my men will guard you to the gates.

Be sweet to her, she has many enemies.

Send the Great Seal by daybreak.  
Both, good night!

SCENE II.—STREET IN NORTH-AMPTON LEADING TO THE CASTLE.

ELEANOR'S RETAINERS and BECKET'S RETAINERS *fighting*. Enter ELEANOR and BECKET *from opposite streets*.

*Eleanor*. Peace, fools!

*Becket*. Peace, friends! what idle brawl is this?

*Retainer of Becket*. They said—her Grace's people—thou wast found—

Liars! I shame to quote 'em—caught, my lord,

With a wanton in thy lodging—Hell requite 'em!

*Retainer of Eleanor*. My liege, the Lord Fitzurse reported this in passing to the Castle even now.

*Retainer of Becket*. And then they mock'd us and we fell upon 'em,

For we would live and die for thee, my lord,

However kings and queens may frown on thee.

*Becket to his Retainers*. Go, go—no more of this!

*Eleanor to her Retainers*. Away!—*(Exit Retainers)* Fitzurse—

*Becket*. Nay, let him be.

*Eleanor*. No, no, my Lord Archbishop,

'Tis known you are midwinter to all women,

But often in your chancellorship you served

The follies of the King.

*Becket*. No, not these follies!

*Eleanor*. My lord, Fitzurse beheld her in your lodging.

*Becket*. Whom?

*Eleanor*. Well—you know—the minion, Rosamund.

*Becket*. He had good eyes!

*Eleanor*. Then hidden in the street

He watch'd her pass with John of Salisbury  
And heard her cry 'Where is this bower of mine?'

*Becket*. Good ears too!

*Eleanor*. You are going to the Castle,

Will you subscribe the customs?

*Becket*. I leave that, Knowing how much your reverence Holy Church,

My liege, to your conjecture.

*Eleanor*. I and mine— And many a baron holds along with me—

Are not so much at feud with Holy Church

But we might take your side against the customs—

So that you grant me one slight favor.

*Becket*. What?

*Eleanor*. A sight of that same chart which Henry gave you

With the red line—'her bower.'

*Becket*. And to what end?

*Eleanor*. That Church must scorn herself whose fearful Priest Sits winking at the license of a king,

Altho' we grant when kings are dangerous

The Church must play into the hands of kings;

Look! I would move this wanton from his sight

And take the Church's danger on myself.

*Becket*. For which she should be duly grateful.

*Eleanor*. True!

Tho' she that binds the bond, herself should see

That kings are faithful to their marriage vow.

*Becket*. Ay, Madam, and queens also.

*Eleanor*. And queens also!

What is your drift?

*Becket*. My drift is to the Castle, Where I shall meet the Barons and my King. *[Exit.*

DE BROC, DE TRACY, DE BRITO,  
DE MORVILLE (*passing*).

*Eleanor.* To the Castle?

*De Broc.* Ay!

*Eleanor.* Stir up the King, the  
Lords!

Set all on fire against him!

*De Brito.* Ay, good Madam!

[*Exeunt.*]

*Eleanor.* Fool! I will make thee  
hateful to thy King.

Churl! I will have thee frightened into  
France,

And I shall live to trample on thy  
grave.

SCENE III.—THE HALL IN  
NORTHAMPTON CASTLE.

*On one side of the stage the doors of an  
inner Council-chamber, half-open.*

*At the bottom, the great doors of the*

*Hall. ROGER ARCHBISHOP OF*

*YORK, FOLIOT BISHOP OF LONDON,*

*HILARY OF CHICHESTER,*

*BISHOP OF HEREFORD, RICHARD*

*DE HASTINGS (Grand Prior of*

*Templars), PHILIP DE ELEEMOSYNA*

*(The Pope's Almoner), and others.*

*DE BROC, FITZURSE, DE BRITO,*

*DE MORVILLE, DE TRACY, and*

*other BARONS assembled—a table*

*before them. JOHN OF OXFORD,*

*President of the Council.*

*Enter BECKET and HERBERT  
OF BOSHAM.*

*Becket.* Where is the King?

*Roger of York.* Gone hawking on  
the Nene,

His heart so gall'd with thine ingrati-  
tude,

He will not see thy face till thou hast  
sign'd

These ancient laws and customs of  
the realm.

Thy sending back the Great Seal  
madden'd him,

He all but pluck'd the bearer's eyes  
away.

Take heed, lest he destroy thee  
utterly.

*Becket.* Then shalt thou step into  
my place and sign.

*Roger of York.* Didst thou not pro-  
mise Henry to obey

These ancient laws and customs of  
the realm?

*Becket.* Saving the honor of my  
order—ay.

Customs, traditions,—clouds that  
come and go;

The customs of the Church are Peter's  
rock.

*Roger of York.* Saving thine order!  
But King Henry sware

That, saving his King's kingship, he  
would grant thee

The crown itself. Saving thine or-  
der, Thomas,

Is black and white at once, and comes  
to nought.

O bolster'd up with stubbornness and  
pride,

Wilt thou destroy the Church in  
fighting for it,

And bring us all to shame?

*Becket.* Roger of York,

When I and thou were youths in  
Theobald's house,

Twice did thy malice and thy calum-  
nies

Exile me from the face of Theobald.  
Now I am Canterbury and thou art  
York.

*Roger of York.* And is not York  
the peer of Canterbury?

Did not Great Gregory bid St. Austin  
here

Found two archbishoprics, London  
and York?

*Becket.* What came of that? The  
first archbishop fled,

And York lay barren for a hundred  
years.

Why, by this rule, Foliot may claim  
the pall

For London too.

*Foliot.* And with good reason too,  
For London had a temple and a  
priest

When Canterbury hardly bore a  
name.

*Becket.* The pagan temple of a  
pagan Rome!  
The heathen priesthood of a heathen  
creed!  
Thou goest beyond thyself in petu-  
lancy!

Who made thee London? Who, but  
Canterbury?

*John of Oxford.* Peace, peace, my  
lords! these customs are no  
longer

As Canterbury calls them, wandering  
clouds,

But by the King's command are writ-  
ten down,

And by the King's command I, John  
of Oxford,

The President of this Council, read  
them.

*Becket.* Read!

*John of Oxford (reads).* 'All  
causes of advowsons and presenta-  
tions, whether between laymen or  
clerics, shall be tried in the King's  
court.'

*Becket.* But that I cannot sign:  
for that would drag  
The cleric before the civil judgment-  
seat,

And on a matter wholly spiritual.

*John of Oxford.* 'If any cleric be  
accused of felony, the Church shall  
not protect him; but he shall answer  
to the summons of the King's court  
to be tried therein.'

*Becket.* And that I cannot sign.  
Is not the Church the visible Lord  
on earth?

Shall hands that do create the Lord  
be bound

Behind the back like laymen-crimi-  
nals?

The Lord be judged again by Pilate?  
No!

*John of Oxford.* 'When a bishop-  
ric falls vacant, the King, till another  
be appointed, shall receive the reve-  
nues thereof.'

*Becket.* And that I cannot sign:  
Is the King's treasury

A fit place for the monies of the  
Church,

That be the patrimony of the poor?

*John of Oxford.* 'And when the  
vacancy is to be filled up, the King  
shall summon the chapter of that  
church to court, and the election  
shall be made in the Chapel Royal,  
with the consent of our lord the King,  
and by the advice of his Government.'

*Becket.* And that I cannot sign?  
for that would make  
Our island-Church a schism from  
Christendom,

And weight down all free choice be-  
neath the throne.

*Foliot.* And was thine own election  
so canonical,  
Good father?

*Becket.* If it were not, Gilbert  
Foliot,  
I mean to cross the sea to France,  
and lay

My crozier in the Holy Father's  
hands,

And bid him re-create me, Gilbert  
Foliot.

*Foliot.* Nay; by another of these  
customs thou

Wilt not be suffer'd so to cross the  
seas

Without the license of our lord the  
King.

*Becket.* That, too, I cannot sign.

DE BROC, DE BRITO, DE  
TRACY, FITZURSE, DE MOR-  
VILLE, *start up—a clash of  
swords.*

Sign and obey!

*Becket.* My lords, is this a combat  
or a council?

Are ye my masters, or my lord the  
King?

Ye make this clashing for no love o'  
the customs

Or constitutions, or whate'er ye call  
them,

But that there be among you those  
that hold

Lands reft from Canterbury.

*De Broc.* And mean to keep them,  
In spite of thee!

*Lords (shouting).* Sign, and obey  
the crown!

*Becket.* The crown? Shall I do less for Canterbury Than Henry for the crown? King Stephen gave Many of the crown lands to those that helpt him; So did Matilda, the King's mother. Mark, When Henry came into his own again, Then he took back not only Stephen's gifts, But his own mother's, lest the crown should be Shorn of ancestral splendor. This did Henry. Shall I do less for mine own Canterbury? And thou, De Broc, that holdest Saltwood Castle—

*De Broc.* And mean to hold it, or—

*Becket.* To have my life.

*De Broc.* The King is quick to anger; if thou anger him, We wait but the King's word to strike thee dead.

*Becket.* Strike, and I die the death of martyrdom; Strike, and ye set these customs by my death Ringing their own death-knell thro' all the realm.

*Herbert.* And I can tell you, lords, ye are all as like To lodge a fear in Thomas Becket's heart As find a hare's form in a lion's cave.

*John of Oxford.* Ay, sheathe your swords, ye will displease the King.

*De Broc.* Why down then thou! but an he come to Saltwood, By God's death, thou shalt stik him like a calf!

[*Sheathing his sword.*]

*Hilary.* O my good lord, I do entreat thee—sign. Save the King's honor here before his barons.

He hath sworn that thou shouldst sign, and now but shuns

The semblance of defeat; I have heard him say He means no more; so if thou sign, my lord, That were but as the shadow of an assent.

*Becket.* 'Twould seem too like the substance, if I sign'd.

*Philip de Eleemosyna.* My lord, thine ear! I have the ear of the Pope.

As thou hast honor for the Pope our master, Have pity on him, sorely prest upon By the fierce Emperor and his Antipope.

Thou knowest he was forced to fly to France;

He pray'd me to pray thee to pacify Thy King; for if thou go against thy King,

Then must he likewise go against thy King,

And then thy King might join the Antipope,

And that would shake the Papacy as it stands.

Besides, thy King swore to our cardinals

He meant no harm nor damage to the Church.

Smoothe thou his pride—thy signing is but form;

Nay, and should harm come of it, it is the Pope

Will be to blame—not thou. Over and over

He told me thou shouldst pacify the King,

Lest there be battle between Heaven and Earth,

And Earth should get the better—for the time.

Cannot the Pope absolve thee if thou sign?

*Becket.* Have I the orders of the Holy Father?

*Philip de Eleemosyna.* Orders, my lord—why, no; for what am I? The secret whisper of the Holy Father.

Thou, that hast been a statesman, couldst thou always

Blurt thy free mind to the air?

*Becket.* If Rome be feeble, then should I be firm.

*Philip.* Take it not that way—balk not the Pope's will.

When he hath shaken off the Emperor,  
He heads the Church against the King  
with thee.

*Richard de Hastings (kneeling).*  
Becket, I am the oldest of the  
Templars;

I knew thy father; he would be mine  
age

Had he lived now; think of me as  
thy father!

Behold thy father kneeling to thee,  
Becket.

Submit; I promise thee on my salva-  
tion

That thou wilt hear no more o' the  
customs.

*Becket.* What!  
Hath Henry told thee? hast thou  
talk'd with him?

*Another Templar (kneeling).* Father,  
I am the youngest of the Tem-  
plars,

Look on me as I were thy bodily son,  
For, like a son, I lift my hands to  
thee.

*Philip.* Wilt thou hold out for  
ever, Thomas Becket?

Dost thou not hear?

*Becket (signs).* Why—there then—  
there—I sign,

And swear to obey the customs.

*Foliot.* Is it thy will,  
My lord Archbishop, that we too  
should sign?

*Becket.* O ay, by that canonical  
obedience

Thou still hast owed thy father, Gil-  
bert Foliot.

*Foliot.* Loyalty and with good  
faith, my lord Archbishop?

*Becket.* O ay, with all that loyalty  
and good faith

Thou still hast shown thy primate,  
Gilbert Foliot.

[*Becket draws apart with Herbert.*  
Herbert, Herbert, have I betray'd the  
Church?

I'll have the paper back—blot out my  
name.

*Herbert.* Too late, my lord: you  
see they are signing there.

*Becket.* False to myself—it is the  
will of God

To break me, prove me nothing of  
myself!

This Almoner hath tasted Henry's  
gold.

The cardinals have finger'd Henry's  
gold.

And Rome is venal ev'n to rottenness.  
I see it, I see it.

I am no soldier, as he said—at least  
No leader. Herbert, till I hear from

the Pope

I will suspend myself from all my  
functions.

If fast and prayer, the lacerating  
scourge—

*Foliot (from the table).* My lord  
Archbishop, thou hast yet to  
seal.

*Becket.* First, Foliot, let me see  
what I have sign'd. [*Goes to  
the table.*]

What, this! and this!—what! new and  
old together!

Seal? If a seraph shouted from the  
sun,

And bad me seal against the rights of  
the Church,

I would anathematize him. I will not  
seal. [*Exit with Herbert.*]

Enter KING HENRY

*Henry.* Where's Thomas? hath he  
sign'd? show me the papers!

Sign'd and not seal'd! How's that?

*John of Oxford.* He would not  
seal.

And when he sign'd, his face was  
stormy-red—

Shame, wrath, I know not what. He  
sat down there

And dropt it in his hands, and then a  
paleness,

Like the wan twilight after sunset,  
crept

Up even to the tonsure, and he  
groan'd,

'False to myself! It is the will of God!'

*Henry.* God's will be what it will, the man shall seal.  
Or I will seal his doom. My burgher's son—

Nay, if I cannot break him as the prelate,

I'll crush him as the subject. Send for him back.

[*Sits on his throne.*]

Barons and bishops of our realm of England,

After the nineteen winters of King Stephen—

A reign which was no reign, when none could sit

By his own hearth in peace; when murder common

As nature's death, like Egypt's plague, had fill'd

All things with blood; when every doorway blush'd,

Dash'd red with that unhallow'd pass-over;

When every baron ground his blade in blood;

The household dough was kneaded up with blood;

The millwheel turn'd in blood; the wholesome plow

Lay rusting in the furrow's yellow weeds.

Till famine dwarf'd the race—I came, your King!

Nor dwelt alone, like a soft lord of the East,

In mine own hall, and sucking thro' fools' ears

The flatteries of corruption—went abroad

Thro' all my counties, spied my people's ways:

Yea, heard the churl against the baron—yea,

And did him justice; sat in mine own courts

Judging my judges, that had found a King

Who ranged confusions, made the twilight day,

And struck a shape from out the vague, and law

From madness. And the event—our fallows till'd,

Much corn, repeopled towns, a realm again.

So far my course, albeit not glassy-smooth,

Had prosper'd in the main, but suddenly

Jarr'd on this rock. A cleric violated The daughter of his host, and murder'd him.

Bishops—York, London, Chichester, Westminster—

Ye haled this tansured devil into your courts;

But since your canon will not let you take

Life for a life, ye but degraded him Where I had hang'd him. What doth hard murder care

For degradation? and that made me muse,

Being bounden by my coronation oath

To do men justice. Look to it, your own selves!

Say that a cleric murder'd an archbishop,

What could ye do? Degrade, imprison him—

Not death for death.

*John of Oxford.* But I, my liege, could swear,

To death for death.

*Henry.* And, looking thro' my reign,

I found a hundred ghastly murders done

By men, the scum and offal of the Church;

Then, glancing thro' the story of this realm,

I came on certain wholesome usages, Lost in desuetude, of my grandsire's day,

Good royal customs—had them written fair

For John of Oxford here to read to you.

*John of Oxford.* And I can easily swear to these as being

The King's will and God's will and justice; yet

I could but read a part to-day, because—

*Fiturse.* Because my lord of Canterbury—

*De Tracy.* Ay.

This Lord of Canterbury—

*De Brito.* As is his wont  
Too much of late when'er your royal rights

Are mooted in our councils—

*Fiturse.* —made an uproar.

*Henry.* And Becket had my bosom on all this ;

If ever man by bonds of gratefulness—

I raised him from the puddle of the gutter,

I made him porcelain from the clay of the city—

Thought that I knew him, err'd thro' love of him,

Hoped, were he chosen archbishop, Church and Crown,

Two sisters gliding in an equal dance,

Two rivers gently flowing side by side—

But no !

The bird that moults sings the same song again,

The snake that sloughs comes out a snake again.

Snake—ay, but he that look a fangless one,

Issues a venomous adder.

For he, when having doff'd the Chancellor's robe—

Flung the Great Seal of England in my face—

Claim'd some of our crown lands for Canterbury—

My comrade, boon companion, my co-reveller,

The master of his master, the King's king,—

God's eyes ! I had meant to make him all but king.

Chancellor-Archbishop, he might well have sway'd

All England under Henry, the young King,

When I was hence. What did the traitor say ?

False to himself, but ten-fold false to me !

The will of God—why, then it is my will—

Is he coming ?

*Messenger (entering).* With a crowd of worshippers,

And holds his cross before him thro' the crowd,

As one that puts himself in sanctuary.

*Henry.* His cross !

*Roger of York.* His cross ! I'll front him, cross to cross.

[*Exit Roger of York.*

*Henry.* His cross ! it is the traitor that imputes

Treachery to his King !

It is not safe for me to look upon him. Away—with me !

[*Goes in with his Barons to the Council-Chamber, the door of which is left open.*

*Enter BECKET, holding his cross of silver before him. The BISHOPS come round him.*

*Hereford.* The King will not abide thee with thy cross.

Permit me, my good lord, to bear it for thee,

Being thy chaplain.

*Becket.* No : it must protect me.

*Herbert.* As once he bore the standard of the Angles,  
So now he bears the standard of the angels.

*Foliot.* I am the Dean of the province : let me bear it.

Make not thy King a traitorous murderer.

*Becket.* Did not your barons draw their swords against me ?

*Enter ROGER OF YORK, with his cross, advancing to BECKET.*

*Becket.* Wherefore dost thou presume to bear thy cross,

Against the solemn ordinance from Rome,

Out of thy province ?

*Roger of York.* Why dost thou presume,



Arm'd with thy cross, to come before  
the King?

If Canterbury bring his cross to court,  
Let York bear his to mate with Can-  
terbury.

*Foliot (seizing hold of Becket's  
cross).* Nay, nay, my lord, thou  
must not brave the King.

Nay, let me have it. I will have it!

*Becket.* Away!

*[Flinging him off.]*

*Foliot.* He fasts, they say, this  
mitred Hercules!

He fast! is that an arm of fast? My  
lord,

Hadst thou not sign'd, I had gone  
along with thee;

But thou the shepherd hast betray'd  
the sheep,

And thou art perjured, and thou wilt  
not seal.

As Chancellor thou wast against the  
Church,

Now as Archbishop goest against the  
King;

For, like a fool, thou knowest no mid-  
dle way.

Ay, ay! but art thou stronger than the  
King?

*Becket.* Strong—not in mine own  
self, but Heaven; true

To either function, holding it; and  
thou

Fast, scourge thyself, and mortify  
thy flesh,

Not spirit—thou remainest Gilbert  
Foliot,

A worldly follower of the worldly  
strong.

I, bearing this great ensign, make it  
clear

Under what Prince I fight.

*Foliot.* My lord of York,

Let us go into the Council, where our  
bishops

And our great lords will sit in judg-  
ment on him.

*Becket.* Sons sit in judgment on

their father!—then  
The spire of Holy Church may prick  
the graves—

Her crypt among the stars. Sign?  
seal? I promised

The King to obey these customs, not  
yet written,

Saving mine order; true too, that  
when written

I sign'd them—being a fool, as Foliot  
call'd me.

I hold not by my signing. Get ye  
hence,

Tell what I say to the King.

*[Exeunt Hereford, Foliot, and  
other Bishops.]*

*Roger of York.* The Church will  
hate thee. *[Exit.]*

*Becket.* Serve my best friend and  
make him my worst foe;

Fight for the Church, and set the  
Church against me!

*Herbert.* To be honest is to set all  
knaves against thee.

Ah! Thomas, excommunicate them  
all!

*Hereford (re-entering).* I cannot  
brook the turmoil thou hast  
raised.

I would, my lord Thomas of Canter-  
bury,

Thou wert plain Thomas and not  
Canterbury,

Or that thou wouldst deliver Canter-  
bury

To our King's hands again, and be at  
peace.

*Hilary (re-entering).* For hath not  
thine ambition set the Church

This day between the hammer and the  
anvil—

Fealty to the King, obedience to thy-  
self?

*Herbert.* What say the bishops?

*Hilary.* Some have pleaded for  
him,

But the King rages—most are with the  
King;

And some are reeds, that one time  
sway to the current,

And to the wind another. But we  
hold

Thou art foresworn; and no fore-  
sworn Archbishop

Shall helm the Church. We there-  
fore place ourselves

Under the shield and safeguard of the  
Pope,

And cite thee to appear before the  
Pope,  
And answer thine accusers. . . .  
Art thou deaf?

*Becket.* I hear you. [*Clash of arms.*]

*Hilary.* Dost thou hear those others?

*Becket.* Ay!  
*Roger of York (re-entering).* The King's 'God's eyes!' come now so thick and fast,

We fear that we may reave thee of thine own.

Come on, come on! it is not fit for us To see the proud Archbishop mutilated.

Say that he blind thee and tear out thy tongue.

*Becket.* So be it. He begins at top with me:

They crucified St. Peter downward.

*Roger of York.* Nay,  
But for their sake who stagger betwixt thine

Appeal, and Henry's anger, yield.

*Becket.* Hence, Satan!  
[*Exit Roger of York.*]

*Fitzurse (re-entering).* My lord, the King demands three hundred marks,

Due from his castles of Berkhamstead and Eye

When thou thereof wast warden.

*Becket.* Tell the King I spent thrice that in fortifying his castles.

*De Tracy (re-entering).* My lord, the King demands seven hundred marks,

Lent at the siege of Thoulouse by the King.

*Becket.* I led seven hundred knights and fought his wars.

*De Brito (re-entering).* My lord, the King demands five hundred marks,

Advanced thee at his instance by the Jews,

For which the King was bound security.

*Becket.* I thought it was a gift; I thought it was a gift.

*Enter LORD LEICESTER (followed by BARONS and BISHOPS).*

My lord, I come unwillingly. The King

Demands a strict account of all those revenues

From all the vacant sees and abba-cies,

Which came into thy hands when Chancellor.

*Becket.* How much might that amount to, my lord Leicester?

*Leicester.* Some thirty—forty thousand silver marks.

*Becket.* Are these your customs? O my good lord Leicester,

The King and I were brothers. All I had

I lavish'd for the glory of the King; I shone from him, for him, his glory,

his Reflection: now the glory of the Church

Hath swallow'd up the glory of the King;

I am his no more, but hers. Grant me one day

To ponder these demands.

*Leicester.* Hear first thy sentence! The King and all his lords—

*Becket.* Son, first hear me!  
*Leicester.* Nay, nay, canst thou, that holdest thine estates

In fee and barony of the King, decline

The judgment of the King?

*Becket.* The King! I hold Nothing in fee and barony of the King.

Whatever the Church owns—she holds it in

Free and perpetual alms, unsubject to

One earthly sceptre.

*Leicester.* Nay, but hear thy judgment.

The King and all his barons—

*Becket.* Judgment! Barons! Who but the bridegroom dares to judge the bride.

Or he the bridegroom may appoint? Not he

That is not of the house, but from the street  
Stain'd with the mire thereof.

I had been so true  
To Henry and mine office that the King

Would throne me in the great Archbishopric:

And I, that knew mine own infirmity,  
For the King's pleasure rather than God's cause

Took it upon me—err'd thro' love of him.

Now therefore God from me withdraws Himself,  
And the King too.

What! forty thousand marks!  
Why thou, the King, the Pope, the Saints, the world,  
Know that when made Archbishop I was freed,

Before the Prince and chief Justiciary,  
From every bond and debt and obligation  
Incurr'd as Chancellor.

Hear me, son.

As gold  
Outvalues dross, light darkness, Abel Cain,

The soul the body, and the Church the Throne,

I charge thee, upon pain of mine anathema,

That thou obey, not me, but God in me,  
Rather than Henry. I refuse to stand  
By the King's censure, make my cry  
to the Pope,

By whom I will be judged; refer myself,

The King, these customs, all the Church, to him,

And under his authority—I depart.

*[Going.]*

*[Leicester looks at him doubtingly.]*  
Am I a prisoner?

*Leicester.* By St. Lazarus, no!  
I am confounded by thee. Go in peace.

*De Broc.* In peace now—but after.  
Take that for earnest.

*[Flings a bone at him from the rushes.]*

*De Brito, Fitzurse, De Tracy, and others (flinging wisps of rushes).* Ay, go in peace, caitiff, caitiff! And that too, perjured prelate—and that, turncoat shaveling! There, there, there! traitor, traitor, traitor!

*Becket.* Mannerless wolves!

*[Turning and facing them.]*

*Herbert.* Enough, my lord, enough!

*Becket.* Barons of England and of Normandy,

When what ye shake at doth but seem to fly,

True test of coward, ye follow with a yell.

But I that threw the mightiest knight of France,

Sir Engelram de Trie,—

*Herbert.* Enough, my lord.

*Becket.* More than enough. I play the fool again.

*Enter HERALD.*

*Herald.* The King commands you, upon pain of death,  
That none should wrong or injure your Archbishop.

*Foliot.* Deal gently with the young man Absalom.

*[Great doors of the Hall at the back open, and discover a crowd.]*

*They shout:*

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!

SCENE IV.—REFECTORY OF THE MONASTERY AT NORTHAMPTON.

*A banquet on the Tables.*

*Enter BECKET. BECKET'S RETAINERS.*

*1st Retainer.* Do thou speak first.

*2nd Retainer.* Nay, thou! Nay, thou! Hast not thou drawn the short straw?

*1st Retainer.* My lord Archbishop, wilt thou permit us—

*Becket.* To speak without stammering and like a free man? Ay.

*1st Retainer.* My lord, permit us then to leave thy service.

*Becket.* When?

*1st Retainer.* Now.

*Becket.* To-night?

*1st Retainer.* To-night, my lord.

*Becket.* And why?

*1st Retainer.* My lord, we leave thee not without tears.

*Becket.* Tears? Why not stay with me then?

*1st Retainer.* My lord, we cannot yield thee an answer altogether to thy satisfaction.

*Becket.* I warrant you, or your own either. Shall I find you one? The King hath frowned upon me.

*1st Retainer.* That is not altogether our answer, my lord.

*Becket.* No; yet all but all. Go, go! Ye have eaten of my dish and drunken of my cup for a dozen years.

*1st Retainer.* And so we have. We mean thee no wrong. Wilt thou not say, 'God bless you,' ere we go?

*Becket.* God bless you all! God redder your pale blood! But mine is human-red; and when ye shall hear it is poured out upon earth, and see it mounting to Heaven, my God bless you, that seems sweet to you now, will blast and blind you like a curse.

*1st Retainer.* We hope not, my lord. Our humblest thanks for your blessing. Farewell!

[*Exit Retainers.*]

*Becket.* Farewell, friends! farewell, swallows! I wrong the bird; she leaves only the nest she built, they leave the builder. Why? Am I to be murdered to-night?

[*Knocking at the door.*]

*Attendant.* Here is a missive left at the gate by one from the castle.

*Becket.* Cornwall's hand or Leicester's: they write marvellously alike.

[*Reading.*]

'Fly at once to France, to King Louis of France: there be those about our King who would have thy blood.'

Was not my lord of Leicester bidden to our supper?

*Attendant.* Ay, my lord, and divers other earls and barons. But the hour is past, and our brother, Master Cook, he makes moan that all be a-getting cold.

*Becket.* And I make my moan along with him. Cold after warm, winter after summer, and the golden leaves, these earls and barons, that cling to me, frosted off me by the first cold frown of the King. Cold, but look how the table steams, like a heathen altar; nay, like the altar at Jerusalem. Shall God's good gifts be wasted? None of them here! Call in the poor from the streets, and let them feast.

*Herbert.* That is the parable of our blessed Lord.

*Becket.* And why should not the parable of our blessed Lord be acted again? Call in the poor! The Church is ever at variance with the kings, and ever at one with the poor. I marked a group of lazars in the marketplace—half-rag, half-sore—beggars, poor rogues (Heaven bless 'em) who never saw nor dreamed of such a banquet. I will amaze them. Call them in, I say. They shall henceforward be my earls and barons—our lords and masters in Christ Jesus.

[*Exit Herbert.*]

If the King hold his purpose, I am myself a beggar. Forty thousand marks! forty thousand devils—and these craven bishops!

*A POOR MAN (entering) with his dog.*

My lord Archbishop, may I come in with my poor friend, my dog? The King's verdurer caught him a-hunting in the forest, and cut off his paws. The dog followed his calling, my lord. I ha' carried him ever so many miles in my arms, and he licks my face and moans and cries out against the King.

*Becket.* Better thy dog than thee. The King's courts would use thee worse than thy dog—they are too

bloody. Were the Church king, it would be otherwise. Poor beast! poor beast! set him down. I will bind up his wounds with my napkin. Give him a bone, give him a bone! Who misuses a dog would misuse a child—they cannot speak for themselves. Past help! his paws are past help. God help him!

*Enter the BEGGARS (and seat themselves at the Tables). BECKET and HERBERT wait upon them.*

*1st Beggar.* Swine, sheep, ox—here's a French supper. When thieves fall out, honest men—

*2nd Beggar.* Is the Archbishop a thief who gives thee thy supper?

*1st Beggar.* Well, then, how does it go? When honest men fall out, thieves—no, it can't be that.

*2nd Beggar.* Who stole the widow's one sitting hen o' Sunday, when she was at mass?

*1st Beggar.* Come, come! thou hadst thy share on her. Sitting hen! Our Lord Becket's our great sitting-hen cock, and we shouldn't ha' been sitting here if the barons and bishops hadn't been a-sitting on the Archbishop.

*Becket.* Ay, the princes sat in judgment against me, and the Lord hath prepared your table—*Sederunt principes, ederunt pauperes.*

*A Voice.* Becket, beware of the knife!

*Becket.* Who spoke?

*3rd Beggar.* Nobody, my lord. What's that, my lord?

*Becket.* Venison.

*3rd Beggar.* Venison?

*Becket.* Buck; deer, as you call it.

*3rd Beggar.* King's meat! By the Lord, won't we pray for your lordship!

*Becket.* And, my children, your prayers will do more for me in the day of peril that dawns darkly and drearily over the house of God—yea, and in the day of judgment also, than the swords of the craven sycophants

would have done had they remained true to me whose bread they have partaken. I must leave you to your banquet. Feed, feast, and be merry. Herbert, for the sake of the Church itself, if not for my own, I must fly to France to-night. Come with me.

*[Exit with Herbert.]*

*3rd Beggar.* Here—all of you—my lord's health *(they drink)*. Well—if that isn't goodly wine—

*1st Beggar.* Then there isn't a goodly wench to serve him with it: they were fighting for her to-day in the street.

*3rd Beggar.* Peace!

*1st Beggar.* The black sheep baaed to the miller's ewe-lamb, The miller's away for to-night.

Black sheep, quoth she, too black a sin for me.

And what said the black sheep, my masters?

We can make a black sin white.

*3rd Beggar.* Peace!

*1st Beggar.* 'Ewe lamb, ewe lamb, I am here by the dam.'

But the miller came home that night,

And so dusted his back with the meal in his sack,

That he made the black sheep white.

*3rd Beggar.* Be we not of the family? be we not a-supping with the head of the family? be we not in my lord's own refractory? Out from among us; thou art our black sheep.

*Enter the four KNIGHTS.*

*Fiturse.* Sheep, said he? And sheep without the shepherd, too. Where is my lord Archbishop? Thou the lustiest and lousiest of this Cain's brotherhood, answer.

*3rd Beggar.* With Cain's answer, my lord. Am I his keeper? Thou shouldst call him Cain, not me.

*Fiturse.* So I do, for he would murder his brother the State.

*3rd Beggar (rising and advancing).* No, my lord; but because the Lord

hath set his mark upon him that no man should murder him.

*Fitzurse.* Where is he? where is he?

*3rd Beggar.* With Cain belike, in the land of Nod, or in the land of France for aught I know.

*Fitzurse.* France! Ha! De Morville, Tracy, Brito—fled is he? Cross swords all of you! swear to follow him! Remember the Queen!

[*The four Knights cross their swords.*

*De Brito.* They mock us; he is here.

[*All the Beggars rise and advance upon them.*

*Fitzurse.* Come, you filthy knaves, let us pass.

*3rd Beggar.* Nay, my lord, let us pass. We be a-going home after our supper in all humbleness, my lord; for the Archbishop loves humbleness, my lord; and though we be fifty to four, we daren't fight you with our crutches, my lord. There now, if thou hast not laid hands upon me! and my fellows know that I am all one scale like a fish. I pray God I haven't given thee my leprosy, my lord.

[*Fitzurse shrinks from him and another presses upon De Brito.*

*De Brito.* Away, dog!

*4th Beggar.* And I was bit by a mad dog o' Friday, an' I be half dog already by this token, that tho' I can drink wine I cannot bide water, my lord; and I want to bite, I want to bite, and they do say the very breath catches.

*De Brito.* Insolent clown. Shall I smite him with the edge of the sword?

*De Morville.* No, nor with the flat of it either. Smite the shepherd and the sheep are scattered. Smite the sheep and the shepherd will excommunicate thee.

*De Brito.* Yet my fingers itch to beat him into nothing.

*5th Beggar.* So do mine, my lord. I was born with it, and sulphur won't bring it out o' me. But for all that the Archbishop washed my feet o' Tuesday. He likes it, my lord.

*6th Beggar.* And see here, my lord,

this rag fro' the gangrene i' my leg. It's humbling—it smells o' human natur'. Wilt thou smell it, my lord? for the Archbishop likes the smell on it, my lord; for I be his lord and master i' Christ, my lord.

*De Morville.* Faugh! we shall all be poisoned. Let us go.

[*They draw back, Beggars following.*

*7th Beggar.* My lord, I ha' three sisters a-dying at home o' the sweating sickness. They be dead while I be a-supping.

*8th Beggar.* And I ha' nine darters i' the spital that be dead ten times o'er i' one day wi' the putrid fever; and I bring the taint on it along wi' me, for the Archbishop likes it, my lord.

[*Pressing upon the Knights till they disappear thro' the door.*

*3rd Beggar.* Crutches, and itches, and leprosy, and ulcers, and gangrenes, and running sores, praise ye the Lord, for to-night ye have saved our Archbishop!

*1st Beggar.* I'll go back again. I ha'n't half done yet.

*Herbert of Bosham (entering).* My friends, the Archbishop bids you good night. He hath retired to rest, and being in great jeopardy of his life, he hath made his bed between the altars, from whence he sends me to bid you this night pray for him who hath fed you in the wilderness.

*3rd Beggar.* So we will—so we will, I warrant thee. Becket shall be king, and the Holy Father shall be king, and the world shall live by the King's venison and the bread o' the Lord, and there shall be no more poor for ever. Hurrah! Vive le Roy! That's the English of it.

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.—ROSAMUND'S BOWER.

*A Garden of Flowers. In the midst a bank of wild flowers with a bench before it.*

*Voices heard singing among the trees.*

*Duet.*

1. Is it the wind of the dawn that I hear in the pine overhead?
2. No; but the voice of the deep as it hollows the cliffs of the land.
1. Is there a voice coming up with the voice of the deep from the strand,  
One coming up with a song in the flush of the glimmering red?
2. Love that is born of the deep coming up with the sun from the sea.
1. Love that can shape or can shatter a life till the life shall have fled?
2. Nay, let us welcome him, Love that can lift up a life from the dead.
1. Keep him away from the lone little isle. Let us be, let us be.
2. Nay, let him make it his own, let him reign in it—he, it is he,  
Love that is born of the deep coming up with the sun from the sea.

*Enter HENRY and ROSAMUND.*

*Rosamund.* Be friends with him again—I do beseech thee.

*Henry.* With Becket? I have but one hour with thee—  
Sceptre and crozier clashing, and the mitre  
Grappling the crown—and when I flee from this  
For a gasp of freer air, a breathing-while  
To rest upon thy bosom and forget him—  
Why thou, my bird, thou pipest Becket, Becket—  
Yea, thou my golden dream of Love's own bower,  
Must be the nightmare breaking on my peace  
With 'Becket.'

*Rosamund.* O my life's life, not to smile  
Is all but death to me. My sun, no cloud!

Let there not be one frown in this one hour.

Out of the many thine, let this be mine!

Look rather thou all-royal as when first

I met thee.

*Henry.* Where was that?

*Rosamund.* Forgetting that Forgets me too.

*Henry.* Nay, I remember it well. There on the moors.

*Rosamund.* And in a narrow path. A plover flew before thee. Then I saw

Thy high black steed among the flaming furze,

Like sudden night in the main glare of day.

And from that height something was said to me

I knew not what.

*Henry.* I ask'd the way.

*Rosamund.* I think so.

So I lost mine.

*Henry.* Thou wast too shamed to answer.

*Rosamund.* Too scared—so young!  
*Henry.* The rosebud of my rose!

Well, well, no more of *him*—I have sent his folk,

His kin, all his belongings, overseas; Age, orphans, and babe-breasting mothers—all

By hundreds to him—there to beg, starve, die—

So that the fool King Louis feed them not.

The man shall feel that I can strike him yet.

*Rosamund.* Babes, orphans, mothers! is that royal, Sire?

*Henry.* And I have been as royal with the Church.

He shelter'd in the Abbey of Pontigny.

There wore his time studying the canon law

To work it against me. But since he cursed

My friends at Veselay, I have let them know,

That if they keep him longer as their guest,  
I scatter all their cowls to all the hells.

*Rosamund.* And is that altogether royal?

*Henry.* Traitress!

*Rosamund.* A faithful traitress to thy royal fame.

*Henry.* Fame! what care I for fame? Spite, ignorance, envy, Yea, honesty too, paint her what way they will.

Fame of to-day is infamy to-morrow; Infamy of to-day is fame to-morrow; And round and round again. What matters? Royal—

I mean to leave the royalty of my crown

Unlessen'd to mine heirs.

*Rosamund.* Still—thy fame too: I say that should be royal.

*Henry.* And I say, I care not for thy saying.

*Rosamund.* And I say, I care not for thy saying. A greater King

Than thou art, Love, who cares not for the word,

Makes care not care. There have I spoken true?

*Henry.* Care dwell with me for ever, when I cease To care for thee as ever!

*Rosamund.* No need! no need! . . . There is a bench. Come, wilt thou sit? . . . My bank

Of wild-flowers [*he sits*]. At thy feet!

[*She sits at his feet.*]

*Henry.* I had them clear A royal pleasure for thee, in the wood,

Not leave these countryfolk at court.

*Rosamund.* I brought them In from the wood, and set them here.

I love them More than the garden flowers, that seem at most

Sweet guests, or foreign cousins, not half speaking

The language of the land. I love them too,

Yes. But, my liege, I am sure, of all the roses—

Shame fall on those who gave it a dog's name—

This wild one (*picking a briar-rose*)—nay, I shall not prick myself—

Is sweetest. Do but smell!

*Henry.* Thou rose of the world!

Thou rose of all the roses! [*Muttering.*]

I am not worthy of her—this beast-body

That God has plunged my soul in—I, that taking

The Fiend's advantage of a throne, so long

Have wander'd among women,—a foul stream

Thro' fever-breeding levels,—at her side,

Among these happy dales, run clearer, drop

The mud I carried, like yon brook, and glass

The faithful face of heaven—

[*Looking at her, and unconsciously aloud,* —thine! thine!

*Rosamund.* I know it.

*Henry* (*muttering*). Not hers. We have but one bond, her hate of Becket.

*Rosamund* (*half hearing*). Nay! nay! what art thou muttering?

I hate Becket?

*Henry* (*muttering*). A sane and natural loathing for a soul

Purer, and truer and nobler than herself;

And mine a bitterer illegitimate hate, A bastard hate, born of a former love.

*Rosamund.* My fault to name him! O let the hand of one

To whom thy voice is all her music, stay it

But for a breath.

[*Puts her hand before his lips.*]

Speak only of thy love.

Why there—like some loud beggar at thy gate—

The happy boldness of this hand hath won it



Love's alms, thy kiss (*looking at her hand*)—Sacred! I'll kiss it too.  
[*Kissing it.*]

There! wherefore dost thou so peruse it? Nay,  
There may be crosses in my line of life.

*Henry.* Not half *her* hand—no hand to mate with *her*,  
If it should come to that.

*Rosamund.* With her? with whom?

*Henry.* Life on the hand is naked gypsy-stuff;

Life on the face, the brows—clear innocence!

Vein'd marble—not a furrow yet—and hers

Crust and recrost, a venomous spider's web—

*Rosamund* (*springing up*). Out of the cloud, my Sun—out of the eclipse

Narrowing my golden hour!

*Henry.* O Rosamund,  
I would be true—would tell thee all—and something

I had to say—I love thee none the less—

Which will so vex thee.

*Rosamund.* Something against *me*?

*Henry.* No, no, against myself.

*Rosamund.* I will not hear it.

Come, come, mine hour! I bargain for mine hour.

I'll call thee little Geoffrey.

*Henry.* Call him!

*Rosamund.* Geoffrey!

*Enter GEOFFREY.*

*Henry.* How the boy grows!

*Rosamund.* Ay, and his brows are thine;

The mouth is only Clifford, my dear father.

*Geoffrey.* My liege, what hast thou brought me?

*Henry.* Venal imp!  
What say'st thou to the Chancellorship of England?

*Geoffrey.* O yes, my liege.

*Henry.* 'O yes, my liege!' He speaks

As if it were a cake of gingerbread.

Dost thou know, my boy, what it is to be Chancellor of England?

*Geoffrey.* Something good, or thou wouldst not give it me.

*Henry.* It is, my boy, to side with the king when Chancellor, and then to be made Archbishop and go against the King who made him, and turn the world upside down.

*Geoffrey.* I won't have it then. Nay, but give it me, and I promise thee not to turn the world upside down.

*Henry* (*giving him a ball*). Here is a ball, my boy, thy world, to turn anyway and play with as thou wilt—which is more than I can do with mine. Go try it, play. [*Exit Geoffrey.*]

A pretty lusty boy.

*Rosamund.* So like to thee: Like to be liker.

*Henry.* Not in my chin, I hope! That threatens double.

*Rosamund.* Thou art manlike perfect.

*Henry.* Ay, ay, no doubt; and were I humpt behind,

Thou'dst say as much—the goodly way of women

Who love, for which I love them.

May God grant

No ill befall or him or thee when I Am gone.

*Rosamund.* Is *he* thy enemy.

*Henry.* He? who? ay!

*Rosamund.* Thine enemy knows the secret of my bower.

*Henry.* And I could tear him asunder with wild horses

Before he would betray it. Nay—no fear!

More like is he to excommunicate me.

*Rosamund.* And I would creep, crawl over knife-edge flint

Barefoot, a hundred leagues, to stay his hand

Before he flash'd the bolt.

*Henry.* And when he flash'd it Shrink from me, like a daughter of the Church.

*Rosamund.* Ay, but he will not.

*Henry.* Ay! but if he did?  
*Rosamund.* O then! O then! I  
 almost fear to say  
 That my poor heretic heart would  
 excommunicate  
 His excommunication, clinging to  
 thee  
 Closer than ever.

*Henry (raising Rosamund and kissing her).* My brave-hearted  
 Rose!

Hath he ever been to see thee?

*Rosamund.* Here? not he.  
 And it is so lonely here—no confessor.

*Henry.* Thou shalt confess all thy  
 sweet sins to me.

*Rosamund.* Besides, we came away  
 in such a heat,  
 I brought not ev'n my crucifix.

*Henry.* Take this.  
 [Giving her the Crucifix which  
 Eleanor gave him.]

*Rosamund.* O beautiful! May I  
 have it as mine, till mine  
 Be mine again?

*Henry (throwing it round her neck).*  
 Thine—as I am—till death!

*Rosamund.* Death? no! I'll have  
 it with me in my shroud,  
 And wake with it, and show it to all  
 the Saints.

*Henry.* Nay—I must go; but  
 when thou layest thy lip  
 To this, remembering One who died  
 for thee,

Remember also one who lives for  
 thee

Out there in France; for I must  
 hence to brave

The Pope, King Louis, and this tur-  
 bulent priest.

*Rosamund (kneeling).* O by thy  
 love for me, all mine for thee,  
 Fling not thy soul into the flames of  
 hell:

I kneel to thee—be friends with him  
 again.

*Henry.* Look, look! if little Geof-  
 frey have not tost

His ball into the brook! makes after  
 it too

To find it. Why, the child will  
 drown himself.

*Rosamund.* Geoffrey! Geoffrey!  
 [Exit.

## SCENE II.—MONTMIRAIL.

'The Meeting of the Kings.' JOHN  
 OF OXFORD and HENRY. *Crowd*  
*in the distance.*

*John of Oxford.* You have not  
 crown'd young Henry yet, my  
 liege?

*Henry.* Crown'd! by God's eyes,  
 we will not have him crown'd.

I spoke of late to the boy, he an-  
 swer'd me,

As if he wore the crown already—  
 No,

We will not have him crown'd.

'Tis true what Becket told me, that  
 the mother

Would make him play his kingship  
 against mine.

*John of Oxford.* Not have him  
 crown'd?

*Henry.* Not now—not yet! and  
 Becket—

Becket should crown him were he  
 crown'd at all:

But, since we would be lord of our  
 own manor,

This Canterbury, like a wounded  
 deer,

Has fled our presence and our feed-  
 ing-grounds.

*John of Oxford.* Cannot a smooth  
 tongue lick him whole again

To serve your will?

*Henry.* He hates my will, not me.

*John of Oxford.* There's York, my  
 liege.

*Henry.* But England scarce would  
 hold

Young Henry king, if only crown'd  
 by York,

And that would stilt up York to  
 twice himself.

There is a movement yonder in the  
 crowd—

See if our pious—what shall I call  
 him, John?—  
 Husband-in-law, our smooth-shorn  
 suzerain,

Be yet within the field.

*John of Oxford.* I will. [*Exit.*  
*Henry.* Ay! Ay!

Mince and go back! his politic Holiness

Hath all but climb'd the Roman perch again,

And we shall hear him presently with clapt wing

Crow over Barbarossa—at last tongue-free

To blast my realms with excommunication

And interdict. I must patch up a peace—

A piece in this long-tugged-at, thread-bare-worn

Quarrel of Crown and Church—to rend again.

His Holiness cannot steer straight thro' shoals,

Nor I. The citizen's heir hath conquer'd me

For the moment. So we make our peace with him.

*Enter Louis.*

Brother of France, what shall be done with Becket?

*Louis.* The holy Thomas! Brother, you have traffick'd

Between the Emperor and the Pope, between

The Pope and Antipope—a perilous game

For men to play with God.

*Henry.* Ay, ay, good brother, They call you the Monk-King.

*Louis.* Who calls me? she That was my wife, now yours? You have her Duchy,

The point you aim'd at, and pray God she prove

True wife to you. You have had the better of us

In secular matters.

*Henry.* Come, confess, good brother,

You did your best or worst to keep her Duchy.

Only the golden Leopard printed in it

Such hold-fast claws that you perforce again

Shrank into France. Tut, tut! did we convene

This conference but to babble of our wives?

They are plagues enough in-door.

*Louis.* We fought in the East, And felt the sun of Antioch scald our mail,

And push'd our lances into Saracen hearts.

We never hounded on the State at home

To spoil the Church.

*Henry.* How should you see this rightly?

*Louis.* Well, well, no more! I am proud of my 'Monk-King,'

Whoever named me and, brother, Holy Church

May rock, but will not wreck, nor our Archbishop

Stagger on the slope decks for any rough sea

Blown by the breath of kings. We do forgive you

For aught you wrought against us.

[*Henry holds up his hand.*

Nay, I pray you, Do not defend yourself. You will do much

To rake out all old dying heats, if you,

At my requesting, will but look into

The wrongs you did him, and restore his kin,

Reseat him on his throne of Canterbury,

Be, both, the friends you were.

*Henry.* The friends we were! Co-mates we were, and had our sport together,

Co-kings we were, and made the laws together.

The world had never seen the like before.

You are too cold to know the fashion of it.

Well, well, we will be gentle with him, gracious—

Most gracious.

Enter BECKET, after him, JOHN OF OXFORD, ROGER OF YORK, GILBERT FOLIOT, DE BROC, FITZURSE, etc.

Only that the rift he made  
May close between us, here I am  
wholly king,  
The word should come from him.

*Becket (kneeling).* Then, my dear liege,  
I here deliver all this controversy  
Into your royal hands.

*Henry.* Ah, Thomas, Thomas,  
Thou art thyself again, Thomas again.

*Becket (rising).* Saving God's honor!

*Henry.* Out upon thee, man!  
Saving the Devil's honor, his yes and no.

Knights, bishops, carls, this London  
spawn—by Mahound,

I had sooner have been born a Mussul-  
man—

Less clashing with their priests—  
I am half-way down the slope—will  
no man stay me?

I dash myself to pieces—I stay my-  
self—

Puff—it is gone. You, Master  
Becket, you

That owe to me your power over  
me—

Nay, nay—  
Brother of France, you have taken,  
cherish'd him

Who thief-like fled from his own  
church by night,

No man pursuing. I would have had  
him back.

Take heed he do not turn and rend  
you too:

For whatsoever may displease him—  
that

Is clean against God's honor—a shift,  
a trick

Whereby to challenge, face me out of  
all

My regal rights. Yet, yet—that none  
may dream

I go against God's honor—ay, or  
himself

In any reason, choose

A hundred of the wisest heads from  
England,  
A hundred, too, from Normandy and  
Anjou:

Let these decide on what was custom-  
ary

In olden days, and all the Church of  
France

Decide on their decision, I am con-  
tent.

More, what the mightiest and the  
holiest

Of all his predecessors may have  
done

Ev'n to the least and meanest of my  
own,

Let him do the same to me—I am  
content.

*Louis.* Ay, ay! the King humbles  
himself enough.

*Becket (Aside)* Words! he will  
wiggle out of them like an eel

When the time serves. (*Aloud.*) My  
lieges and my lords,

The thanks of Holy Church are due  
to those

That went before us for their work,  
which we

Inheriting reap an easier harvest.  
Yet—

*Louis.* My lord, will you be greater  
than the Saints,

More than St. Peter? whom—what  
is it you doubt?

Behold your peace at hand.

*Becket.* I say that those  
Who went before us did not wholly  
clear

The deadly growths of earth, which  
Hell's own heat

So dwelt on that they rose and dark-  
en'd Heaven.

Yet they did much. Would God they  
had torn up all

By the hard root, which shoots again;  
our trial

Had so been less; but, seeing they  
were men

Defective or excessive, must we fol-  
low

All that they overdid or underdid?  
Nay, if they were defective as St.  
Peter



MAUD'S OWN LITTLE OAK-ROOM." Page 163.



Denying Christ, who yet defied the tyrant,  
We hold by his defiance, not his defect.

O good son Louis, do not counsel me,  
No, to suppress God's honor for the sake

Of any king that breathes. No, God forbid!

*Henry.* No! God forbid! and turn me Mussulman!

No God but one, and Mahound is his prophet.

But for your Christian, look you, you shall have

None other God but me—me, Thomas, son

Of Gilbert Becket, London merchant. Out!

I hear no more. *[Exit.]*

*Louis.* Our brother's anger puts him,

Poor man, beside himself—not wise. My lord,

We have claspt your cause, believing that our brother

Had wrong'd you; but this day he proffer'd peace.

You will have war; and tho' we grant the Church

King over this world's kings, yet, my good lord,

We that are kings are something in this world,

And so we pray you, draw yourself from under

The wings of France. We shelter you no more. *[Exit.]*

*John of Oxford.* I am glad that France hath scouted him at last:

I told the Pope what manner of man he was. *[Exit.]*

*Roger of York.* Yea, since he flouts the will of either realm,

Let either cast him away like a dead dog! *[Exit.]*

*Foliot.* Yea, let a stranger spoil his heritage,

And let another take his bishopric! *[Exit.]*

*De Broc.* Our castle, my lord, belongs to Canterbury.

I pray you come and take it. *[Exit.]*

*Fitzurse.* When you will. *[Exit.]*

*Becket.* Cursed be John of Oxford, Roger of York,

And Gilbert Foliot! cursed those De Brocs

That hold our Saltwood Castle from our see!

Cursed Fitzurse, and all the rest of them

That sow this hate between my lord and me!

*Voices from the Crowd.* Blessed be the Lord Archbishop, who hath withstood two Kings to their faces for the honor of God.

*Becket.* Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, praise!

I thank you, sons; when kings but hold by crowns,

The crowd that hungers for a crown in Heaven

Is my true king.

*Herbert.* Thy true King bad thee be A fisher of men; thou hast them in thy net.

*Becket.* I am too like the King here; both of us

Too headlong for our office. Better have been

A fisherman at Bosham, my good Herbert,

Thy birthplace—the sea-creek—the petty rill

That falls into it—the green field—the gray church—

The simple lobster-basket, and the mesh—

The more or less of daily labor done—

The pretty gaping bills in the honest

Piping for bread—the daily want supplied—

The daily pleasure to supply it.

*Herbert.* Ah, Thomas, You had not borne it, no, not for a day.

*Becket.* Well, maybe, no,

*Herbert.* But bear with Walter Map,

For here he comes to comment on the time.

*Enter* WALTER MAP.

*Walter Map.* Pity, my lord, that you have quenched the warmth of France toward you, tho' His Holiness, after much smouldering and smoking, be kindled again upon your quarter.

*Becket.* Ay, if he do not end in smoke again.

*Walter Map.* My lord, the fire, when first kindled, said to the smoke, 'Go up, my son, straight to Heaven.' And the smoke said, 'I go;' but anon the North-east took and turned him South-west, then the South-west turned him North-east, and so of the other winds; but it was in him to go up straight if the time had been quieter. Your lordship affects the un-wavering perpendicular; but His Holiness, pushed one way by the Empire and another by England, if he move at all, Heaven stay him, is fain to diagonalize.

*Herbert.* Diagonalize! thou art a word-monger.

Our Thomas never will diagonalize. Thou art a jester and a verse-maker. Diagonalize!

*Walter Map.* Is the world any the worse for my verses if the Latin rhymes be rolled out from a full mouth? or any harm done to the people if my jest be in defence of the Truth?

*Becket.* Ay, if the jest be so done that the people

Delight to wallow in the grossness of it,

Till Truth herself be shamed of her defender.

*Non defensoribus istis,* Walter Map.

*Walter Map.* Is that my case? so if the city be sick, and I cannot call the kennel sweet, your lordship would suspend me from verse-writing, as you suspended yourself after sub-writing to the customs.

*Becket.* I pray God pardon mine infirmity.

*Walter Map.* Nay, my lord, take heart; for tho' you suspended yourself, the Pope let you down again;

and tho' you suspend Foliot or another, the Pope will not leave them in suspense, for the Pope himself is always in suspense, like Mahound's coffin hung between heaven and earth—always in suspense, like the scales, till the weight of Germany or the gold of England brings one of them down to the dust—always in suspense, like the tail of the horologe—to and fro—tick-tack—we make the time, we keep the time, ay, and we serve the time; for I have heard say that if you boxed the Pope's ears with a purse, you might stagger him, but he would pocket the purse. No saying of mine—Jocelyn of Salisbury. But the King hath bought half the College of Redhats. He warmed to you to-day, and you have chilled him again. Yet you both love God. Agree with him quickly again, even for the sake of the Church. My one grain of good counsel which you will not swallow. I hate a split between old friendships as I hate the dirty gap in the face of a Cistercian monk, that will swallow anything. Farewell. [*Exit.*]

*Becket.* Map scoffs at Rome. I all but hold with Map.

Save for myself no Rome were left in England,

All had been his. Why should this Rome, this Rome,

Still choose Barabbas rather than the Christ,

Absolve the left-hand thief and damn the right?

Take fees of tyranny, wink at sacrilege,

Which even Peter had not dared? condemn

The blameless exile?—

*Herbert.* Thee, thou holy Thomas! I would that thou hadst been the Holy Father.

*Becket.* I would have done my most to keep Rome holy,

I would have made Rome know she still is Rome—

Who stands aghast at her eternal self And shakes at mortal kings—her vacillation,



Avarice, craft—O God, how many an innocent  
Has left his bones upon the way to Rome

Unwept, uncared for. Yea—on mine own self

The King had had no power except for Rome.

'Tis not the King who is guilty of mine exile,

But Rome, Rome, Rome!

*Herbert.* My Lord, I see this Louis Returning, ah! to drive thee from his realm.

*Becket.* He said as much before.

Thou art no prophet,

Nor yet a prophet's son.

*Herbert.* Whatever he say,  
Deny not thou God's honor for a king.

The King looks troubled.

*Re-enter KING LOUIS.*

*Louis.* My dear lord Archbishop,  
I learn but now that those poor Poitevins,

That in thy cause were stirr'd against King Henry,

Have been, despite his kingly promise given

To our own self of pardon, evilly used  
And put to pain. I have lost all trust in him.

The Church alone hath eyes—and now I see

That I was blind—suffer the phrase—surrendering

God's honor to the pleasure of a man.

Forgive me and absolve me, holy father. [*Kneels.*]

*Becket.* Son, I absolve thee in the name of God.

*Louis (rising).* Return to Sens, where we will care for you.

The wine and wealth of all our France are yours;

Rest in our realm, and be at peace with all. [*Exeunt.*]

*Voices from the Crowd.* Long live the good King Louis! God bless the great Archbishop!

*Re-enter HENRY and JOHN OF OXFORD.*

*Henry (looking after King Louis and Becket).* Ay, there they go—both backs are turn'd to me—Why then I strike into my former path

For England, crown young Henry there, and make

Our waning Eleanor all but love me! John,

Thou hast served me heretofore with Rome—and well.

They call thee John the Swearer.

*John of Oxford.* For this reason, That, being ever duteous to the King, I evermore have sworn upon his side, And ever mean to do it.

*Henry (claps him on the shoulder).*

Honest John!

To Rome again! the storm begins again.

Spare not thy tongue! be lavish with our coins,

Threaten our junction with the Emperor—flatter

And fright the Pope—bribe all the Cardinals—leave

Lateran and Vatican in one dust of gold—

Swear and unswear, state and misstate thy best!

I go to have young Henry crown'd by York.

### ACT III.

#### SCENE I.—THE BOWER.

HENRY and ROSAMUND.

*Henry.* All that you say is just. I cannot answer it

Till better times, when I shall put away—

*Rosamund.* What will you put away?

*Henry.* That which you ask me Till better times. Let it content you now

There is no woman that I love so well.



Kiss in the bower,  
Tit on the tree!  
Bird mustn't tell,  
Whoop—he can see.

*Enter MARGERY.*

I ha' been but a week here and I ha' seen what I ha' seen, for to be sure it's no more than a week since our old Father Philip that has confessed our mother for twenty years, and she was hard put to it, and to speak truth, nigh at the end of our last crust, and that mouldy, and she cried out on him to put me forth in the world and to make me a woman of the world, and to win my own bread, whereupon he asked our mother if I could keep a quiet tongue i' my head, and not speak till I was spoke to, and I answered for myself that I never spoke more than was needed, and he told me he would advance me to the service of a great lady, and took me ever so far away, and gave me a great pat o' the cheek for a pretty wench, and said it was a pity to blindfold such eyes as mine, and such to be sure they be, but he blinded 'em for all that, and so brought me no-hows as I may say, and the more shame to him after his promise, into a garden and not into the world, and bad me whatever I saw not to speak one word, an' it 'ud be well for me in the end, for there were great ones who would look after me, and to be sure I ha' seen great ones to-day—and then not to speak one word, for that's the rule o' the garden, tho' to be sure if I had been Eve i' the garden I shouldn't ha' minded the apple, for what's an apple, you know, save to a child, and I'm no child, but more a woman o' the world than my lady here, and I ha' seen what I ha' seen—tho' to be sure if I hadn't minded it we should all on us ha' had to go, bless the Saints, wi' bare backs, but the backs 'ud ha' countenanced one another, and belike it 'ud ha' been always summer, and anyhow I am as well-shaped as my

lady here, and I ha' seen what I ha' seen, and what's the good of my talking to myself, for here comes my lady (*enter Rosamund*), and, my lady, tho' I shouldn't speak one word, I wish you joy o' the King's brother.

*Rosamund.* What is it you mean?

*Margery.* I mean your goodman, your husband, my lady, for I saw your ladyship a-parting w' him even now i' the coppice, when I was a-getting o' bluebells for your ladyship's nose to smell on—and I ha' seen the King once at Oxford, and he's as like the King as fingernail to fingernail, and I thought at first it was the King, only you know the King's married, for King Louis—

*Rosamund.* Married!

*Margery.* Years and years, my lady, for her husband, King Louis—

*Rosamund.* Hush!

*Margery.*—And I thought if it were the King's brother he had a better bride than the King, for the people do say that his is bad beyond all reckoning, and—

*Rosamund.* The people lie.

*Margery.* Very like, my lady, but most on 'em know an honest woman and a lady when they see her, and besides they say, she makes songs, and that's against her, for I never knew an honest woman that could make songs, tho' to be sure our mother 'ill sing me old songs by the hour, but then, God help her, she had 'em from her mother, and her mother from her mother back and back for ever so long, but none on 'em ever made songs, and they were all honest.

*Rosamund.* Go, you shall tell me of her some other time.

*Margery.* There's none so much to tell on her, my lady, only she kept the seventh commandment better than some I know on, or I couldn't look your ladyship i' the face, and she brew'd the best ale in all Glo'ster, that is to say in her time when she had the 'Crown.'

*Rosamund.* The crown! who?

*Margery.* Mother.

*Rosamund.* I mean her whom you call—fancy—my husband's brother's wife.

*Margery.* Oh, Queen Eleanor. Yes, my lady; and tho' I be sworn not to speak a word, I can tell you all about her, if—

*Rosamund.* No word now. I am faint and sleepy. Leave me. Nay—go. What! will you anger me?

[*Exit Margery.*  
He charged me not to question any of those

About me. Have I? no! she question'd me.

Did she not slander *him*? Should she stay here?

May she not tempt me, being at my side,

To question *her*? Nay, can I send her hence

Without his kingly leave? I am in the dark.

I have lived, poor bird, from cage to cage, and known

Nothing but him—happy to know no more,

So that he loved me—and he loves me—yes,

And bound me by his love to secrecy

Till his own time.

Eleanor, Eleanor, have I Not heard ill things of her in France?

Oh, she's

The Queen of France. I see it—some confusion,

Some strange mistake. I did not hear aright,

Myself confused with parting from the King.

*Margery (behind scene).* Bee mustn't buzz,

Whoop—but he knows.

*Rosamund.* Yet her—what her? he hinted of some her—

When he was here before—

Something that would displease me.

Hath he stray'd

From love's clear path into the common bush,

And, being scratch'd, returns to his true rose,

Who hath not thorn enough to prick him for it,  
Ev'n with a word?

*Margery (behind scene).* Bird mustn't tell,

Whoop—he can see.

*Rosamund.* I would not hear him.

Nay—there's more—he frown'd 'No mate for her, if it should come to that—'

To that—to what?

*Margery (behind scene).* Whoop—but he knows,

Whoop—but he knows.

*Rosamund.* O God! some dreadful truth is breaking on me—

Some dreadful thing is coming on me.

[*Enter Geoffrey.*

*Geoffrey.* What are you crying for, when the sun shines?

*Rosamund.* Hath not thy father left us to ourselves?

*Geoffrey.* Ay, but he's taken the rain with him. I hear Margery: I'll go play with her.

[*Exit Geoffrey.*

*Rosamund.* Rainbow, stay,

Gleam upon gloom,

Bright as my dream,

Rainbow, stay!

But it passes away,

Gloom upon gleam,

Dark as my doom—

O rainbow stay.

SCENE II.—OUTSIDE THE WOODS  
NEAR ROSAMUND'S BOWER.

ELEANOR. FITZURSE.

*Eleanor.* Up from the salt lips of the land we two

Have track'd the King to this dark inland wood;

And somewhere hereabouts he vanish'd. Here

His turtle builds; his exit is our adit: Watch! he will out again, and presently,

Seeing he must to Westminster and crown

Young Henry there to-morrow.

*Fitzurse.* We have watch'd  
So long in vain, he hath pass'd out  
again,  
And on the other side.

[*A great horn winded.*  
Hark! Madam!

*Eleanor.* Ay,  
How ghostly sounds that horn in the  
black wood!

[*A countryman flying.*  
Whither away, man? what are you  
flying from?

*Countryman.* The witch! the  
witch! she sits naked by a great heap  
of gold in the middle of the wood,  
and when the horn sounds she comes  
out as a wolf. Get you hence! a  
man passed in there to-day: I holla'd  
to him, but he didn't hear me: he'll  
never out again, the witch has got  
him. I daren't stay—I daren't  
stay!

*Eleanor.* Kind of the witch to  
give thee warning tho'.

[*Man flies.*  
Is not this wood-witch of the rustic's  
fear  
Our woodland Circe that hath witch'd  
the King?

[*Horn sounded. Another flying.*  
*Fitzurse.* Again! stay, fool, and  
tell me why thou fliest.

*Countryman.* Fly thou too. The  
King keeps his forest head of game  
here, and when that horn sounds, a  
score of wolf-dogs are let loose that  
will tear thee piecemeal. Linger not  
till the third horn. Fly! [*Exit.*

*Eleanor.* This is the likelier tale.  
We have hit the place.  
Now let the King's fine game look to  
itself. [*Horn.*

*Fitzurse.* Again!—  
And far on in the dark heart of the  
wood  
I hear the yelping of the hounds of  
hell.

*Eleanor.* I have my dagger here  
to still their throats.

*Fitzurse.* Nay, Madam, not to-  
night—the night is falling.  
What can be done to-night?

*Eleanor.* Well—well—away.

SCENE III—TRAITOR'S MEADOW  
AT FRÉTEVAL. PAVILIONS AND  
TENTS OF THE ENGLISH AND  
FRENCH BARONAGE.

BECKET and HERBERT OF BOSHAM.

*Becket.* See here!

*Herbert.* What's here?

*Becket.* A notice from the priest,  
To whom our John of Salisbury com-  
mitted

The secret of the bower, that our wolf-  
Queen

Is prowling round the fold. I should  
be back

In England ev'n for this.

*Herbert.* These are by-things  
In the great cause.

*Becket.* The by-things of the Lord  
Are the wrong'd innocences that will  
cry

From all the hidden by-ways of the  
world

In the great day against the wronger.  
I know

Thy meaning. Perish she, I, all,  
before

The Church should suffer wrong!

*Herbert.* Do you see, my lord,  
There is the King talking with Wal-  
ter Map?

*Becket.* He hath the Pope's last  
letters, and they threaten  
The immediate thunder-blast of inter-  
dict:

Yet he can scarce be touching upon  
those,

Or scarce would smile that fashion.

*Herbert.* Winter sunshine!  
Beware of opening out thy bosom to  
it,

Lest thou, myself, and all thy flock  
should catch

An after-ague-fit of trembling.  
Look!

He bows, he bares his head, he is  
coming hither.

Still with a smile.

Enter KING HENRY and WALTER  
MAP.

*Henry.* We have had so many hours together, Thomas, So many happy hours alone together, That I would speak with you once more alone.

*Becket.* My liege, your will and happiness are mine.

[*Exeunt King and Becket.*]

*Herbert.* The same smile still.

*Walter Map.* Do you see that great black cloud that hath come over the sun and cast us all into shadow?

*Herbert.* And feel it too.

*Walter Map.* And see you yon side-beam that is forced from under it, and sets the church-tower over there all a-hell-fire as it were.

*Herbert.* Ay.

*Walter Map.* It is this black, bell-silencing, anti-marrying, burial-hinder-ing interdict that hath squeezed out this side-smile upon Canterbury, whereof may come conflagration. Were I Thomas, I wouldn't trust it. Sudden change is a house on sand; and tho' I count Henry honest enough, yet when fear creeps in at the front, honesty steals out at the back, and the King at last is fairly scared by this cloud—this interdict. I have been more for the King than the Church in this matter—yea, even for the sake of the Church: for, truly, as the case stood, you had säfelier have slain an archbishop than a she-goat: but our recoverer and upholder of customs hath in this crowning of young Henry by York and London so violated the immemorial usage of the Church, that, like the gravedigger's child I have heard of, trying to ring the bell, he hath half-hanged himself in the rope of the Church, or rather pulled all the Church with the Holy Father astride of it down upon his own head.

*Herbert.* Were you there?

*Walter Map.* In the church rope?—no. I was at the crowning, for I have pleasure in the pleasure of crowds, and to read the faces of men at a great show.

*Herbert.* And how did Roger of York comport himself?

*Walter Map.* As magnificently and archiepiscopally as our Thomas would have done: only there was a dare-devil in his eye—I should say a dare-Becket. He thought less of two kings than of one Roger the king of the occasion. Foliot is the holier man, perhaps the better. Once or twice there ran a twitch across his face as who should say what's to follow? but Salisbury was a calf cowed by Mother Church, and every now and then glancing about him like a thief at night when he hears a door open in the house and thinks 'the master.'

*Herbert.* And the father-king?

*Walter Map.* The father's eye was so tender it would have called a goose off the green, and once he strove to hide his face, like the Greek king when his daughter was sacrificed, but he thought better of it: it was but the sacrifice of a kingdom to his son, a smaller matter; but as to the young crowning himself, he looked so malapert in the eyes, that had I fathered him I had given him more of the rod than the sceptre. Then followed the thunder of the captains and the shouting, and so we came on to the banquet, from whence there puffed out such an incense of unctuousity into the nostrils of our Gods of Church and State, that Lucullus or Apicius might have sniffed it in their Hades of heathenism, so that the smell of their own roast had not come across it—

*Herbert.* Map, tho' you make your butt too big, you overshoot it.

*Walter Map.* —For as to the fish, they de-miracled the miraculous draught, and might have sunk a navy—

*Herbert.* There again, Goliasing and Gollathising!

*Walter Map.* —And as for the flesh at table, a whole Peter's sheet, with all manner of game, and four-footed things, and fowls—

*Herbert.* And all manner of creeping things too?

*Walter Map.* —Well, there were Abbots—but they did not bring their women; and so we were dull enough at first, but in the end we flourished out into a merriment; for the old King would act servitor and hand a dish to his son; whereupon my lord of York—his fine-cut face bowing and beaming with all that courtesy which hath less loyalty in it than the backward scrape of the clown's heel—'great honor,' says he, 'from the King's self to the King's son.' Did you hear the young King's quip?

*Herbert.* No, what was it?

*Walter Map.* Glancing at the days when his father was only Earl of Anjou, he answered:—'Should not an earl's son wait on a king's son?' And when the cold corners of the King's mouth began to thaw, there was a great motion of laughter among us, part real, part childlike, to be freed from the dulness—part royal, for King and kingling both laughed, and so we could not but laugh, as by a royal necessity—part childlike again—when we felt we had laughed too long and could not stay ourselves—many midriff-shaken even to tears, as springs gush out after earthquakes—but from those, as I said before, there may come a conflagration—tho', to keep the figure moist and make it hold water, I should say rather, the lacrymation of a lamentation; but look if Thomas have not flung himself at the King's feet. They have made it up again—for the moment.

*Herbert.* Thanks to the blessed Magdalen, whose day it is.

*Re-enter HENRY and BECKET. (During their conference the BARONS and BISHOPS of FRANCE and ENGLAND come in at back of stage.)*

*Becket.* Ay, King! for in thy kingdom, as thou knowest,  
The spouse of the Great King, thy King, hath fallen—

The daughter of Zion lies beside the way—

The priests of Baal tread her underfoot—

The golden ornaments are stolen from her—

*Henry.* Have I not promised to restore her, Thomas,

And send thee back again to Canterbury?

*Becket.* Send back again those exiles of my kin

Who wander famine-wasted thro' the world.

*Henry.* Have I not promised, man, to send them back?

*Becket.* Yet one thing more. Thou hast broken thro' the pales

Of privilege, crowning thy young son by York,

London and Salisbury—not Canterbury.

*Henry.* York crown'd the Conqueror—not Canterbury.

*Becket.* There was no Canterbury in William's time.

*Henry.* But Hereford, you know, crown'd the first Henry.

*Becket.* But Anselm crown'd this Henry o'er again.

*Henry.* And thou shalt crown my Henry o'er again.

*Becket.* And is it then with thy good-will that I

Proceed against thine evil councilors,

And hurl the dread ban of the Church on those

Who made the second mitre play the first,

And acted me?

*Henry.* Well, well, then—have thy way!

It may be they were evil councilors.

What more, my lord Archbishop?

What more, Thomas?

I make thee full amends. Say all thy say,

But blaze not out before the Frenchmen here.

*Becket.* More? Nothing, so thy promise be thy deed.

*Henry (holding out his hand).*  
Give me thy hand. My Lords  
of France and England,  
My friend of Canterbury and my-  
self

Are now once more at perfect amity.  
Unkingly should I be, and most un-  
knightly,  
Not striving still, however much in  
vain,

To rival him in Christian charity.

*Herbert.* All praise to Heaven,  
and sweet St. Magdalen!

*Henry.* And so farewell until we  
meet in England.

*Becket.* I fear, my liege, we may  
not meet in England

*Henry.* How, do you make me a  
traitor?

*Becket.* No, indeed!  
That be far from thee.

*Henry.* Come, stay with us, then,  
Before you part for England.

*Becket.* I am bound  
For that one hour to stay with good  
King Louis,

Who helpt me when none else.

*Herbert.* He said thy life  
Was not one hour's worth in England  
save

King Henry gave thee first the kiss of  
peace.

*Henry.* He said so? Louis, did  
he? look you, Herbert,

When I was in mine anger with King  
Louis,

I swore I would not give the kiss of  
peace,

Not on French ground, nor any ground  
but English,

Where his cathedral stands. Mine  
old friend, Thomas,

I would there were that perfect  
trust between us,

That health of heart, once ours, ere  
Pope or King

Had come between us! Even now—  
who knows?—

I might deliver all things to thy  
hand—

If . . . but I say no more . . . fare-  
well, my lord.

*Becket.* Farewell, my liege!

[*Exit Henry, then the Barons and  
Bishops.*

*Walter Map.* There again! when  
the full fruit of the royal promise  
might have dropt into thy mouth  
hadst thou but opened it to thank  
him.

*Becket.* He fenced his royal prom-  
ise with an *if*.

*Walter Map.* And is the King's *if*  
too high a stile for your lordship to  
overstep and come at all things in  
the next field?

*Becket.* Ay, if this *if* be like the  
Devil's ' *if*

Thou wilt fall down and worship me.'

*Herbert.* Oh, Thomas,  
I could fall down and worship thee,  
my Thomas,

For thou hast trodden this wine-press  
alone.

*Becket.* Nay, of the people there  
are many with me.

*Walter Map.* I am not altogether  
with you, my lord, tho' I am none of  
those that would raise a storm be-  
tween you, lest ye should draw to-  
gether like two ships in a calm. You  
wrong the King: he meant what he  
said to-day. Who shall vouch for his  
to-morrows? One word further.  
Doth not the *fewness* of anything  
make the fulness of it in estimation?  
Is not virtue prized mainly for its rar-  
ity and great baseness loathed as an  
exception: for were all, my lord, as  
noble as yourself, who would look up  
to you? and were all as base as—who  
shall I say—Fitzurse and his follow-  
ing—who would look down upon  
them? My lord, you have put so  
many of the King's household out of  
communion, that they begin to smile  
at it.

*Becket.* At their peril, at their  
peril—

*Walter Map.* —For tho' the drop  
may hollow out the dead stone, doth  
not the living skin thicken against  
perpetual whippings? This is the  
second grain of good counsel I ever  
proffered thee, and so cannot suffer by  
the rule of frequency. Have I sown it



in salt? I trust not, for before God I promise you the King hath many more wolves than he can tame in his woods of England, and if it suit their purpose to howl for the King, and you still move against him, you may have no less than to die for it; but God and his free wind grant your lordship a happy home-return and the King's kiss of peace in Kent. Farewell! I must follow the King. *[Exit.]*

*Herbert.* Ay, and I warrant the customs. Did the King speak of the customs?

*Becket.* No!—to die for it—I live to die for it, I die to live for it. The State will die, the Church can never die.

The King's not like to die for that which dies;

But I must die for that which never dies.

It will be so—my visions in the Lord:

It must be so, my friend! the wolves of England

Must murder her one shepherd, that the sheep

May feed in peace. False figure, Map would say.

Earth's falses are heaven's truths. And when my voice

Is martyr'd mute, and this man disappears,

That perfect trust may come again between us,

And there, there, there, not here I shall rejoice

To find my stray sheep back within the fold.

The crowd are scattering, let us move away!

And thence to England. *[Exeunt.]*

## ACT IV.

## SCENE I.—THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE BOWER.

*Geoffrey (coming out of the wood).*  
Light again! light again! Margery?

no, that's a finer thing there. How it glitters!

*Eleanor (entering).* Come to me, little one. How camest thou hither?

*Geoffrey.* On my legs.

*Eleanor.* And mighty pretty legs too. Thou art the prettiest child I ever saw. Wilt thou love me?

*Geoffrey.* No; I only love mother.

*Eleanor.* Ay; and who is thy mother?

*Geoffrey.* They call her— But she lives secret, you see.

*Eleanor.* Why?

*Geoffrey.* Don't know why.

*Eleanor.* Ay, but some one comes to see her now and then. Who is he?

*Geoffrey.* Can't tell.

*Eleanor.* What does she call him?

*Geoffrey.* My liege.

*Eleanor.* Pretty one, how camest thou?

*Geoffrey.* There was a bit of yellow silk here and there, and it looked pretty like a glowworm, and I thought if I followed it I should find the fairies.

*Eleanor.* I am the fairy, pretty one, a good fairy to thy mother. Take me to her.

*Geoffrey.* There are good fairies and bad fairies, and sometimes she cries, and can't sleep sound o' nights because of the bad fairies.

*Eleanor.* She shall cry no more; she shall sleep sound enough if thou wilt take me to her. I am her good fairy.

*Geoffrey.* But you don't look like a good fairy. Mother does. You are not pretty, like mother.

*Eleanor.* We can't all of us be as pretty as thou art—*(aside)* little bastard. Come, here is a golden chain I will give thee if thou wilt lead me to thy mother.

*Geoffrey.* No—no gold. Mother says gold spoils all. Love is the only gold.

*Eleanor.* I love thy mother, my pretty boy. Show me where thou camest out of the wood.

*Geoffrey.* By this tree; but I don't know if I can find the way back again.

*Eleanor.* Where's the warden?

*Geoffrey.* Very bad. Somebody struck him.

*Eleanor.* Ay? who was that?

*Geoffrey.* Can't tell. But I heard say he had had a stroke, or you'd have heard his horn before now. Come along, then? we shall see the silk here and there, and I want my supper.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—ROSAMUND'S BOWER.

*Rosamund.* The boy so late; pray God, he be not lost.

I sent this Margery, and she comes not back;

I sent another, and she comes not back.

I go myself—so many alleys, crossings,

Paths, avenues—nay, if I lost him, now

The folds have fallen from the mystery,

And left all naked, I were lost indeed.

[*Enter GEOFFREY and ELEANOR.*]

Geoffrey, the pain thou hast put me to!

[*Seeing Eleanor.* Ha, you!

How came you hither?

*Eleanor.* Your own child brought me hither!

*Geoffrey.* You said you couldn't trust Margery, and I watched her and followed her into the woods, and I lost her and went on and on till I found the light, and the lady, and she says she can make you sleep o' nights.

*Rosamund.* How dared you? Know you not this bower is secret,

Of and belonging to the King of England,

More sacred than his forests for the chase?

Nay, nay, Heaven help you; get you hence in haste

Lest worse befall you.

*Eleanor.* Child, I am mine own self

Of and belonging to the King. The King

Hath divers ofs and ons, ofs and belongings,

Almost as many as your true Mussulman—

Belongings, paramours, whom it pleases him

To call his wives; but so it chances, child,

That I am his main paramour, his sultana.

But since the fondest pair of doves will jar,

Ev'n in a cage of gold, we had words of late,

And thereupon he call'd my children bastards.

Do you believe that you are married to him?

*Rosamund.* I should believe it.

*Eleanor.* You must not believe it, Because I have a wholesome medicine here

Puts that belief asleep. Your answer, beauty!

Do you believe that you are married to him?

*Rosamund.* Geoffrey, my boy, I saw the ball you lost in the fork of the great willow over the brook. Go. See that you do not fall in. Go.

*Geoffrey.* And leave you alone with the good fairv. She calls you beauty, but I don't like her looks. Well, you bid me go, and I'll have my ball anyhow. Shall I find you asleep when I come back?

*Rosamund.* Go. [*Exit Geoffrey.*]

*Eleanor.* He is easily found again.

Do you believe it?

I pray you then to take my sleeping-draught;

But if you should not care to take it—see!

[*Draws a dagger.* What! have I scared the red rose from your face

Into your heart? But this will find it there,

And dig it from the root for ever.

*Rosamund.* Help! help!

*Eleanor.* They say that walls have ears; but these, it seems, Have none! and I have none—to pity thee.

*Rosamund.* I do beseech you—my child is so young, So backward too; I cannot leave him yet.

I am not so happy I could not die myself,

But the child is so young. You have children—his; And mine is the King's child; so, if you love him—

Nay, if you love him, there is great wrong done

Somehow; but if you do not—there are those

Who say you do not love him—let me go

With my young boy, and I will hide my face,

Blacken and gipsyfy it; none shall know me;

The King shall never hear of me again,

But I will beg my bread along the world

With my young boy, and God will be our guide.

I never meant you harm in any way.

See, I can say no more.

*Eleanor.* Will you not say you are not married to him?

*Rosamund.* Ay, Madam, I can say it, if you will.

*Eleanor.* Then is thy pretty boy a bastard?

*Rosamund.* No.

*Eleanor.* And thou thyself a proven wanton?

*Rosamund.* No.

I am none such. I never loved but one.

I have heard of such that range from love to love,

Like the wild beast—if you can call it love.

I have heard of such—yea, even among those

Who sit on thrones—I never saw any such,

Never knew any such, and howsoever You do misname me, match'd with any such,

I am snow to mud.

*Eleanor.* The more the pity then That thy true home—the heavens—cry out for thee

Who art too pure for earth.

*Enter FITZURSE.*

*Fitzurse.* Give her to me.

*Eleanor.* The Judas-lover of our passion-play Hath track'd us hither.

*Fitzurse.* Well, why not? I follow'd

You and the child: he babbled all the way.

Give her to me to make my honey-moon.

*Eleanor.* Ay, as the bears love honey. Could you keep her

Indungeon'd from one whisper of the wind,

Dark even from a side glance of the moon,

And oblietted in the centre—No!

I follow out my hate and thy revenge.

*Fitzurse.* You had me take revenge another way—

To bring her to the dust. . . Come with me, love,

And I will love thee. . . Madam, let her live.

I have a far-off burrow where the King

Would miss her and for ever.

*Eleanor.* How sayst thou, sweetheart?

Wilt thou go with him? he will marry thee.

*Rosamund.* Give me the poison; set me free of him!

[*Eleanor offers the vial*  
No, no! I will not have it.

*Eleanor.* Then this other, The wiser choice, because my sleeping-draught

May bloat thy beauty out of shape, and make

Thy body loathsome even to thy child;

While this but leaves thee with a  
broken heart,  
A doll-face blanch'd and bloodless,  
over which  
If pretty Geoffrey do not break his  
own,  
It must be broken for him.

*Rosamund.* O I see now  
Your purpose is to fright me—a  
troubadour  
You play with words. You had never  
used so many,  
Not if you meant it, I am sure. The  
child . . .  
No . . . mercy! No! (*Kneels.*)

*Eleanor.* Play! . . . that  
bosom never  
Heaved under the King's hand with  
such true passion  
As at this loveless knife that stirs the  
riot,

Which it will quench in blood!  
Slave, if he love thee,  
Thy life is worth the wrestle for it:  
arise,

And dash thyself against me that I  
may slay thee!  
The worm! shall I let her go? But  
ha! what's here?

By very God, the cross I gave the  
King!

His village darling in some lewd caress  
Has wheedled it off the King's neck to  
her own.

By thy leave, beauty. Ay, the same!  
I warrant

Thou hast sworn on this my cross a  
hundred times  
Never to leave him—and that merits  
death,

False oath on holy cross—for thou  
must leave him

To-day, but not quite yet. My good  
Fitzurse,

The running down the chase is kind-  
lier sport

Ev'n than the death. Who knows  
but that thy lover

May plead so pitifully, that I may  
spare thee?

Come hither, man stand there. (*To  
Rosamund*) Take thy one  
chance;

Catch at the last straw. Kneel to  
thy lord Fitzurse;  
Crouch even because thou hatest him;  
fawn upon him  
For thy life and thy son's.

*Rosamund (rising).* I am a Clif-  
ford,  
My son a Clifford and Plantagenet.  
I am to die then, tho' there stand  
beside thee

One who might grapple with thy  
dagger, if he  
Had aught of man, or thou of woman;  
or I

Would bow to such a baseness as  
would make me

Most worthy of it: both of us will die,  
And I will fly with my sweet boy to  
heaven,

And shriek to all the saints among the  
stars.

'Eleanor of Aquitaine, Eleanor of  
England!

Murder'd by that adulteress Eleanor,  
Whose doings are a horror to the east,  
A hissing in the west!' Have we  
not heard

Raymond of Poitou, thine own uncle  
—nav,

Geoffrey Plantagenet, thine own hus-  
band's father—

Nay, ev'n the accursed heathen Salad-  
deen—

Strike!  
I challenge thee to meet me before  
God.

Answer me there.

*Eleanor (raising the dagger).* This  
in thy bosom, fool,  
And after in thy bastard's!

*Enter BECKET from behind. Catches  
hold of her arm.*

*Becket.* Murderess!

[*The dagger falls: they stare at  
one another. After a pause.*

*Eleanor.* My lord, we know you  
proud of your fine hand,  
But having now admired it long  
enough,

We find that it is mightier than it  
seems—

At least mine own is frailer: you are laming it.

*Becket.* And lamed and maim'd to dislocation, better Than raised to take a life which Henry bad me Guard from the stroke that dooms thee after death To wail in deathless flame.

*Eleanor.* Nor you, nor I Have now to learn, my lord, that our good Henry Says many a thing in sudden heats, which he Gainsays by next sunrising—often ready

To tear himself for having said as much.

My lord, Fitzurse—

*Becket.* He too! what dost thou here? Dares the bear slouch into the lion's den?

One downward plunge of his paw would rend away Eyesight and manhood, life itself, from thee.

Go, lest I blast thee with anathema, And make thee a world's horror.

*Fitzurse.* My lord, I shall remember this.

*Becket.* I do remember thee; Lest I remember thee to the lion, go.

[*Exit Fitzurse.*  
Take up your dagger; put it in the sheath.

*Eleanor.* Might not your courtesy stoop to hand it me?

But crowns must bow when mitres sit so high.

Well—well—too costly to be left or lost.

[*Picks up the dagger.*  
I had it from an Arab soldan, who,

When I was there in Antioch, marvel'd at

Our unfamiliar beauties of the west; But wonder'd more at my much constancy

To the monk-king, Louis, our former burthen,

From whom, as being too kin, you know, my lord,

God's grace and Holy Church deliver'd us.

I think, time given, I could have talk'd him out of

His ten wives into one. Look at the hilt.

What excellent workmanship. In our poor west

We cannot do it so well.

*Becket.* We can do worse. Madam, I saw your dagger at her throat;

I heard your savage cry.

*Eleanor.* Well acted, was it? A comedy meant to seem a tragedy— A feint, a farce. My honest lord, you are known

Thro' all the courts of Christendom as one

That mars a cause with over-violence.

You have wrong'd Fitzurse. I speak not of myself.

We thought to scare this minion of the King

Back from her churchless commerce with the King

To the fond arms of her first love, Fitzurse,

Who swore to marry her. You have spoil the farce.

My savage cry? Why, she—she—when I strove

To work against her license for her good,

Bark'd out at me such monstrous charges, that

The King himself, for love of his own sons,

If hearing, would have spurn'd her; whereupon

I menaced her with this, as when we threaten

A yelper with a stick. Nay, I deny not

That I was somewhat anger'd. Do you hear me?

Believe or no, I care not. You have lost

The ear of the King. I have it. . . .

My Lord Paramount, Our great High-priest, will not your Holiness

Vouchsafe a gracious answer to your Queen?

*Becket.* Rosamund hath not answer'd you one word;

Madam, I will not answer you one word

Daughter, the world hath trick'd thee. Leave it, daughter;

Come thou with me to Godstow nunnery,

And live what may be left thee of a life

Saved as by miracle alone with Him Who gave it.

*Re-enter GEOFFREY.*

*Geoffrey.* Mother, you told me a great fib: it wasn't in the willow.

*Becket.* Follow us, my son, and we will find it for thee—  
Or something manlier.

[*Exeun.* Becket, Rosamund, and Geoffrey.

*Eleanor.* The world hath trick'd her—that's the King; if so.

There was the farce, the feint—not mine. And yet

I am all but sure my dagger was a feint

Till the worm turn'd—not life shot up in blood,

But death drawn in;—(looking at the vial) this was no feint then? no.

But can I swear to that, had she but given

Plain answer to plain query? nay, methinks

Had she but bow'd herself to meet the wave

Of humiliation, worshipt whom she loathed,

I should have let her be, scorn'd her too much

To harm her. Henry—Becket tells him this—

To take my life might lose him Aquitaine.

Too politic for that. Imprison me? No, for it came to nothing—only a feint.

Did she not tell me I was playing on her?

I'll swear to mine own self it was a feint.

Why should I swear, Eleanor, who am, or was,

A sovereign power? The King plucks out their eyes

Who anger him, and shall not I, the Queen,

Tear out her heart—kill, kill with knife or venom

One of his slanderous harlots? 'None of such?'

I love her none the more. Tut, the chance gone,

She lives—but not for him; one point is gain'd.

O I, that thro' the Pope divorced King Louis,

Scorning his monkery,—I that wedded Henry,

Honoring his manhood—will he not mock at me

The jealous fool balk'd of her will—with him?

But he and he must never meet again.

Reginald Fitzurse!

*Re-enter FITZURSE.*

*Fitzurse.* Here, Madam, at your p'asure.

*Eleanor.* My pleasure is to have a man about me.

Why did you sink away so like a cur?

*Fitzurse.* Madam, I am as much man as the King.

Madam, I fear Church-censures like your King.

*Eleanor.* He grovels to the Church when he's black-blooded,

But kinglike fought the proud archbishop,—kinglike

Defied the Pope, and, like his kingly sires,

The Normans, striving still to break or bind

The spiritual giant with our island laws

And customs, made me for the moment proud

Ev'n of that stale Church-bond which  
 link'd me with him  
 To bear him kingly sons. I am not  
 so sure  
 But that I love him still. Thou as  
 much man!  
 No more of that; we will to France  
 and be  
 Beforehand with the King, and brew  
 from out  
 This Godstow-Becket intermeddling  
 such  
 A strong hate-philtre as may madden  
 him—madden  
 Against his priest beyond all helle-  
 bore.

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—CASTLE IN NORMANDY.  
 KING'S CHAMBER.HENRY, ROGER OF YORK, FOLIOT,  
 JOCELYN OF SALISBURY.

*Roger of York.* Nay, nay, my liege,  
 He rides abroad with armed followers,  
 Hath broken all his promises to thy-  
 self,  
 Cursed and anathematized us right  
 and left,  
 Stirr'd up a party there against your  
 son—

*Henry.* Roger of York, you always  
 hated him,  
 Even when you both were boys at  
 Theobald's.

*Roger of York.* I always hated  
 boundless arrogance.  
 In mine own cause I strove against  
 him there,  
 And in thy cause I strive against him  
 now.

*Henry.* I cannot think he moves  
 against my son,  
 Knowing right well with what a  
 tenderness  
 He loved my son.

*Roger of York.* Before you made  
 him king.  
 But Becket ever moves against a king.  
 The Church is all—the crime to be a  
 king.

We trust your Royal Grace, lord of  
 more land  
 Than any crown in Europe, will not  
 yield  
 To lay your neck beneath your citi-  
 zen's heel.

*Henry.* Not to a Gregory of my  
 throving! No.

*Foliot.* My royal liege, in aiming  
 at your love,

It may be sometimes I have overshot  
 My duties to our Holy Mother  
 Church,

Tho' all the world allows I fall no  
 inch

Behind this Becket, rather go beyond  
 In scourgings, macerations, mortify-  
 ings,

Fasts, disciplines that clear the spir-  
 itual eye,

And break the soul from earth. Let  
 all that be.

I boast not: but you know thro' all  
 this quarrel

I still have cleaved to the crown, in  
 hope the crown

Would cleave to me that but obey'd  
 the crown,

Crowning your son; for which our  
 loyal service,

And since we likewise swore to obey  
 the customs,

York and myself, and our good Salis-  
 bury here,

Are push'd from out communion of  
 the Church.

*Jocelyn of Salisbury.* Becket hath  
 trodden on us like worms, my  
 liege;

Trodden one half dead; one half, but  
 half-alive,

Cries to the King.

*Henry (aside).* Take care o' thy-  
 self, O King.

*Jocelyn of Salisbury.* Being so  
 crush'd and so humiliated

We scarcely dare to bless the food  
 we eat

Because of Becket.

*Henry.* What would ye have me  
 do?

*Roger of York.* Summon your  
 barons; take their counsel; yet

I know—could swear—as long as  
Becket breathes,  
Your Grace will never have one quiet  
hour.

*Henry.* What? . . . Ay . . . but  
pray you do not work upon  
me.

I see your drift . . . it may be so . . .  
and yet

You know me easily anger'd. Will  
you hence?

He shall absolve you . . . you shall  
have redress.

I have a dizzying headache. Let me  
rest.

I'll call you by and by.

[*Exeunt* Roger of York, Foliot,  
and Jocelyn of Salisbury.

Would he were dead! I have lost all  
love for him.

If God would take him in some sud-  
den way—

Would he were dead. [*Lies down.*

*Page* (*entering*). My liege, the  
Queen of England.

*Henry.* God's eyes! [*Starting up.*

*Enter* ELEANOR.

*Eleanor.* Of England? Say of  
Aquitaine.

I am no Queen of England. I had  
dream'd

I was the bride of England, and a  
queen.

*Henry.* And,—while you dream'd  
you were the bride of Eng-  
land,—

Stirring her baby-king against me?  
ha!

*Eleanor.* The brideless Becket is  
thy king and mine:

I will go live and die in Aquitaine.

*Henry.* Except I clap thee into  
prison here,

Lest thou shouldst play the wanton  
there again.

Ha, you of Aquitaine! O you of  
Aquitaine!

You were but Aquitaine to Louis—  
no wife;

You are only Aquitaine to me—no  
wife.

*Eleanor.* And why, my lord, should  
I be wife to one  
That only wedded me for Aquitaine?  
Yet this no wife—her six and thirty  
sail

Of Provence blew you to your Eng-  
lish throne;

And this no wife has born you four  
brave sons,

And one of them at least is like to  
prove

Bigger in our small world than thou  
art.

*Henry.* Ay—  
Richard, if he be mine—I hope him  
mine.

But thou art like enough to make  
him thine.

*Eleanor.* Becket is like enough to  
make all his.

*Henry.* Methought I had recover'd  
of the Becket,

That all was planed and bevell'd  
smooth again,

Save from some hateful cantrip of  
thine own.

*Eleanor.* I will go live and die in  
Aquitaine.

I dream'd I was the consort of a  
king,

Not one whose back his priest has  
broken.

*Henry.* What!  
Is the end come? You, will you  
crown my foe

My victor in mid-battle? I will be  
Sole master of my house. The end  
is mine.

What game, what juggle, what  
devilry are you playing?

Why do you thrust this Becket on  
me again?

*Eleanor.* Why? for I am true  
wife, and have my fears

Lest Becket thrust you even from  
your throne.

Do you know this cross, my liege?

*Henry* (*turning his head*). Away!  
Not I.

*Eleanor.* Not ev'n the central dia-  
mond, worth, I think,

Half of the Antioch whence I had it.  
*Henry.* That?



*Eleanor.* I gave it you, and you your paramour;  
She sends it back, as being dead to earth,  
So dead henceforth to you.

*Henry.* Dead! you have murder'd her,  
Found out her secret bower and murder'd her.

*Eleanor.* Your Becket knew the secret of your bower.

*Henry* (*calling out*). Ho there! thy rest of life is hopeless prison.

*Eleanor.* And what would my own Aquitaine say to that?  
First, free thy captive from her hopeless prison.

*Henry.* O devil, can I free her from the grave?

*Eleanor.* You are too tragic: both of us are players  
In such a comedy as our court of Provence

Had laugh'd at. That's a delicate Latin lay

Of Walter Map: the lady holds the cleric

Lovelier than any soldier, his poor tonsure

A crown of Empire. Will you have it again?

(*Offering the cross. He dashes it down.*)

St. Cupid, that is too irreverent.

Then mine once more. (*Puts it on.*)

Your cleric hath your lady.  
Nay, what uncomely faces, could he see you!

Foam at the mouth because King Thomas, lord

Not only of your vassals but amours,

Thro' chastest honor of the Decalogue

Hath used the full authority of his Church

To put her into Godstow nunnery.

*Henry.* To put her into Godstow nunnery!

He dared not—liar! yet, yet I remember—

I do remember.

He bad me put her into a nunnery—

Into Godstow, into Hellstow, Devilstow!

The Church! the Church!  
God's eyes! I would the Church were down in hel! [*Exit.*]

*Eleanor.* Aha!

*Enter the four KNIGHTS.*

*Fitzurse.* What made the King cry out so furiously?

*Eleanor.* Our Becket, who will not absolve the Bishops.  
I think ye four have cause to love this Becket.

*Fitzurse.* I hate him for his insolence to all.

*De Tracy.* And I for all his insolence to thee.

*De Brito.* I hate him for I hate him is my reason,

And yet I hate him for a hypocrite.

*De Morville.* I do not love him, for he did his best  
To break the barons, and now braves the King.

*Eleanor.* Strike, then, at once, the King would have him—See!

*Re-enter HENRY.*

*Henry.* No man to love me, honor me, obey me!

Sluggards and fools!  
The slave that eat my bread has kick'd his King!

The dog I cramm'd with dainties worried me!

The fellow that on a lame jade came to court,

A ragged cloak for saddle—he, he, he,

To shake my throne, to push into my chamber—

My bed, where ev'n the slave is private—he—

I'll have her out again, he shall absolve

The bishops—they but did my will—not you—

Sluggards and fools, why do you stand and stare?

You are no King's men—you—you—you are Becket's men.

Down with King Henry! up with  
the Archbishop!

Will no man free me from this pesti-  
lent priest? *[Exit.*

*[The Knights draw their swords.*

*Eleanor.* Are ye king's men? I  
am king's woman, I.

*The Knights.* King's men! King's  
men!

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN CANTER-  
BURY MONASTERY.

BECKET and JOHN OF SALISBURY.

*Becket.* York said so?

*John of Salisbury.* Yes: a man  
may take good counsel

Ev'n from his foe.

*Becket.* York will say anything.  
What is he saying now? gone to the  
King

And taken our anathema with him.  
York!

Can the King de-anathematize this  
York?

*John of Salisbury.* Thomas, I  
would thou hadst return'd to  
England,

Like some wise prince of this world  
from his wars,

With more of olive-branch and am-  
nesty

For foes at home—thou hast raised  
the world against thee.

*Becket.* Why, John, my kingdom  
is not of this world.

*John of Salisbury.* If it were more  
of this world it might be  
More of the next. A policy of wise  
pardon

Wins here as well as there. To bless  
thine enemies—

*Becket.* Ay, mine, not Heaven's.

*John of Salisbury.* And may there  
not be something

Of this world's leaven in thee too,  
when crying

On Holy Church to thunder out her  
rights

And thine own wrong so pitilessly?  
Ah, Thomas,

The lightnings that we think are only  
Heaven's

Flash sometimes out of earth against  
the heavens.

The soldier, when he lets his whole  
self go

Lost in the common good, the com-  
mon wrong,

Strikes truest ev'n for his own self.  
I crave

Thy pardon—I have still thy leave to  
speak.

Thou hast waged God's war against  
the King; and yet

We are self-uncertain creatures, and  
we may,

Yea, even when we know not, mix  
our spites

And private hates with our defence of  
Heaven.

*Enter EDWARD GRIM.*

*Becket.* Thou art but yesterday  
from Cambridge, Grim;

What say ye there of Becket?

*Grim.* I believe him  
The bravest in our roll of Primates  
down

From Austin—there are some—for  
there are men

Of canker'd judgment everywhere—

*Becket.* Who hold  
With York, with York against me.

*Grim.* Well, my lord,  
A stranger monk desires access to  
you.

*Becket.* York against Canterbury,  
York against God!

I am open to him. *[Exit Grim.*

*Enter ROSAMUND as a Monk.*

*Rosamund.* Can I speak with you  
Alone, my father?

*Becket.* Come you to confess?

*Rosamund.* Not now.

*Becket.* Then speak; this  
is my other self,

Who like my conscience never lets  
me be.

*Rosamund (throwing back the coat).*  
I know him; our good John of  
Salisbury.

*Becket.* Breaking already from thy noviciate  
To plunge into this bitter world again—  
These wells of Marah. I am grieved,  
my daughter.  
I thought that I had made a peace for thee.

*Rosamund.* Small peace was mine  
in my noviciate, father.  
Thro' all closed doors a dreadful  
whisper crept  
That thou wouldst excommunicate the King.  
I could not eat, sleep, pray: I had  
with me  
The monk's disguise thou gavest me  
for my bower:  
I think our Abbess knew it and allow'd  
it.

I fled, and found thy name a charm to  
get me  
Food, roof, and rest. I met a robber  
once,  
I told him I was bound to see the  
Archbishop;  
'Pass on,' he said, and in thy name I  
pass'd  
From house to house. In one a son  
stone-blind  
Sat by his mother's hearth: he had  
gone too far  
Into the King's own woods; and the  
poor mother,  
Soon as she learnt I was a friend of  
thine,  
Cried out against the cruelty of the  
King.  
I said it was the King's courts, not  
the King;  
But she would not believe me, and she  
wish'd  
The Church were king: she had seen  
the Archbishop once,  
So mild, so kind. The people love  
thee, father.

*Becket.* Alas! when I was Chan-  
cellor to the King,  
I fear I was as cruel as the King.  
*Rosamund.* Cruel? Oh, no—it is  
the law, not he;  
The customs of the realm.

*Becket.* The customs! customs!

*Rosamund.* My lord, you have not  
excommunicated him?

Oh, if you have, absolve him!  
*Becket.* Daughter, daughter,  
Deal not with things you know not.

*Rosamund.* I know him.  
Then you have done it, and I call you  
cruel.

*John of Salisbury.* No, daughter,  
you mistake our good Arch-  
bishop;  
For once in France the King had  
been so harsh,  
He thought to excommunicate him—  
Thomas,  
You could not—old affection master'd  
you,  
You falter'd into tears.

*Rosamund.* God bless him for  
it.

*Becket.* Nay, make me not a wo-  
man, John of Salisbury,  
Nor make me traitor to my holy office.  
Did not a man's voice ring along the  
aisle,  
'The King is sick and almost unto  
death.'

How could I excommunicate him then?

*Rosamund.* And wilt thou excom-  
municate him now?

*Becket.* Daughter, my time is short,  
I shall not do it.  
And were it longer—well—I should  
not do it.

*Rosamund.* Thanks in this life,  
and in the life to come.

*Becket.* Get thee back to thy nun-  
nery with all haste;  
Let this be thy last trespass. But  
one question—  
How fares thy pretty boy, the little  
Geoffrey?

No fever, cough, croup, sickness?

*Rosamund.* No, but saved  
From all that by our solitude. The  
plagues

That smite the city spare the solitudes.

*Becket.* God save him from all  
sickness of the soul!

Thee too, thy solitude among thy  
nuns.

May that save thee! Doth he remem-  
ber me?

*Rosamund.* I warrant him.

*Becket.* He is marvellously like thee.

*Rosamund.* Likier the King.

*Becket.* No, daughter.

*Rosamund.* Ay, but wait  
Till his nose rises; he will be very king.

*Becket.* Ev'n so: but think not of the King: farewell!

*Rosamund.* My lord, the city is full of armed men.

*Becket.* Ev'n so: farewell!

*Rosamund.* I will but pass to vespers,  
And breathe one prayer for my liege—  
lord the King,  
His child and mine own soul, and so return.

*Becket.* Pray for me too: much need of prayer have I.

[*Rosamund kneels and goes.*  
*Dan John,* how much we lose, we celibates,  
Lacking the love of woman and of child.

*John of Salisbury.* More gain than loss; for of your wives you shall find one a slut whose fairest linen seems

Foul as her dust-cloth, if she used it—  
—one

So charged with tongue, that every thread of thought

Is broken ere it joins—a shrew to boot,

Whose evil song far on into the night

Thrills to the topmost tile—no hope but death;

One slow, fat, white, a burthen of the hearth;

And one that being thwarted ever swoons

And weeps herself into the place of power;

And one an *uxor pauperis Ibyci.*

So rare the household honeymaking bee,

Man's help! but we, we have the Blessed Virgin

For worship, and our Mother Church for bride;

And all the souls we saved and father'd here

Will greet us as our babes in Paradise.

What noise was that? she told us of arm'd men

Here in the city. Will you not withdraw?

*Becket.* I once was out with Henry in the days

When Henry loved me, and we came upon

A wild-fowl sitting on her nest, so still

I reach'd my hand and touch'd; she did not stir;

The snow had frozen round her, and she sat

Stone-dead upon a heap of ice-cold eggs.

Look! how this love, this mother, runs thro' all

The world God made—even the beast—the bird!

*John of Salisbury.* Ay, still a lover of the beast and bird?

But these arm'd men—will you not hide yourself?

Perchance the fierce De Brocs from Saltwood Castle,

To assail our Holy Mother lest she brood

Too long o'er this hard egg, the world, and send

Her whole heart's heat into it, till it break

Into young angels. Pray you, hide yourself.

*Becket.* There was a little fair-hair'd Norman maid

Lived in my mother's house: if Rosamund is

The world's rose, as her name imports her—she

Was the world's lily.

*John of Salisbury.* Ay, and what of her?

*Becket.* She died of leprosy.

*John of Salisbury.* I know not why You call these old things back again, my lord.

*Becket.* The drowning man, they say, remembers all

The chances of his life, just ere he dies.

*John of Salisbury.* Ay—but these arm'd men—will you drown yourself?

He loses half the meed of martyrdom  
Who will be martyr when he might escape.

*Becket.* What day of the week?  
Tuesday?

*John of Salisbury.* Tuesday, my lord.

*Becket.* On a Tuesday was I born,  
and on a Tuesday  
Baptized; and on a Tuesday did I fly  
Forth from Northampton; on a Tuesday  
pass'd  
From England into bitter banishment;

On a Tuesday at Pontigny came to me

The ghostly warning of my martyrdom;

On a Tuesday from mine exile I return'd,

And on a Tuesday—

[*Tracy enters, then Fitzurse, De Brito, and De Morville. Monks following.*

—on a Tuesday— Tracy!  
(*A long silence broken by Fitzurse saying, contemptuously,*  
God help thee!

*John of Salisbury (aside).* How the good Archbishop reddens!  
He never yet could brook the note of scorn.

*Fitzurse.* My lord, we bring a message from the King  
Beyond the water; will you have it alone,

Or with these listeners near you?

*Becket.* As you will.

*Fitzurse.* Nay, as you will.

*Becket.* Nay, as you will.

*John of Salisbury.* Why then  
Better perhaps to speak with them  
apart.

Let us withdraw.

[*All go out except the four Knights and Becket.*

*Fitzurse.* We are all alone with him.

Shall I not smite him with his own cross-staff?

*De Morville.* No, look! the door is open: let him be.

*Fitzurse.* The King condemns your excommunicating—

*Becket.* This is no secret, but a public matter.

In here again!

[*John of Salisbury and Monks return.*

Now, sirs, the King's commands!

*Fitzurse.* The King beyond the water, thro' our voices,  
Commands you to be dutiful and  
leal

To your young King on this side of the water,  
Not scorn him for the foibles of his youth.

What! you would make his coronation void

By cursing those who crown'd him.  
Out upon you!

*Becket.* Reginald, all men know I loved the Prince.

His father gave him to my care, and I became his second father: he had his faults,

For which I would have laid mine own life down

To help him from them, since indeed I loved him,

And love him next after my lord his father.

Rather than dim the splendor of his crown

I fain would treble and quadruple it  
With revenues, realms, and golden provinces

So that were done in equity.

*Fitzurse.* You have broken  
Your bond of peace, your treaty with  
the King—

Wakening such brawls and loud disturbances

In England, that he calls you oversea  
To answer for it in his Norman courts.

*Becket.* Prate not of bonds, for never, oh, never again

Shall the waste voice of the bond-breaking sea

Divide me from the mother church of  
 England,  
 My Canterbury. Loud disturbances!  
 Oh, ay—the bells rang out even to  
 deafening,  
 Organ and pipe, and dulcimer, chants  
 and hymns  
 In all the churches, trumpets in the  
 halls.  
 Sobs, laughter, cries: they spread  
 their raiment down  
 Before me—would have made my  
 pathway flowers,  
 Save that it was mid-winter in the  
 street.  
 But full mid-summer in those honest  
 hearts.

*Fitzurse.* The King commands you  
 to absolve the bishops  
 Whom you have excommunicated.

*Becket.* I?  
 Not I, the Pope. Ask *him* for abso-  
 lution.

*Fitzurse.* But you advised the  
 Pope.

*Becket.* And so I did.  
 They have but to submit.

*The four Knights.* The King com-  
 mands you.

We are all King's men.

*Becket.* King's men at least  
 should know

That their own King closed with me  
 last July

That I should pass the censures of the  
 Church

On those that crown'd young Henry  
 in this realm,

And trampled on the rights of Can-  
 terbury.

*Fitzurse.* What! dare you charge  
 the King with treachery?

*He* sanction thee to excommunicate  
 The prelates whom he chose to crown  
 his son!

*Becket.* I spake no word of treach-  
 ery, Reginald.

But for the truth of this I make  
 appeal

To all the archbishops, bishops, pre-  
 lates, barons,

Monks, knights, five hundred, that  
 were there and heard.

Nay, you yourself were there: you  
 heard yourself.

*Fitzurse.* I was not there.

*Becket.* I saw you there.

*Fitzurse.* I was not.

*Becket.* You were. I never forget  
 anything.

*Fitzurse.* He makes the King a  
 traitor, me a liar.

How long shall we forbear him?

*John of Salisbury* (*drawing Becket  
 aside.*) O my good lord,

Speak with them privately on this  
 hereafter.

You see they have been revelling, and  
 I fear

Are braced and brazened up with  
 Christmas wines

For any murderous brawl.

*Becket.* And yet they prate  
 Of mine, my brawls, when those, that  
 name themselves

Of the King's part, have broken down  
 our barns,

Wasted our diocese, outraged our ten-  
 ants,

Lifted our produce, driven our clerics  
 out—

Why they, your friends, those ruffians,  
 the De Brocs,

They stood on Dover beach to mur-  
 der me,

They slew my stags in mine own  
 manor here,

Mutilated, poor brute, my sumpter-  
 mule,

Plunder'd the vessel full of Gascon  
 wine,

The old King's present, carried off  
 the casks,

Kill'd half the crew, dungeon'd the  
 other half

In Pevensey Castle—

*De Morville.* Why not rather  
 then,

If this be so, complain to your young  
 King,

Not punish of your own authority?

*Becket.* Mine enemies barr'd all  
 access to the boy.

He knew he loved me.

Hugo, Hugh, how proudly you exalt  
 your head!

Nay, when they seek to overturn our rights,  
I ask no leave of king, or mortal man,  
To set them straight again. Alone I do it.

Give to the King the things that are the King's,  
And those of God to God.

*Fitzurse.* Threats! threats!  
ye hear him.

What! will he excommunicate all the world?

[*The Knights come round Becket.*

*De Tracy.* He shall not.

*De Brito.* Well, as yet—  
I should be grateful—

He hath not excommunicated me.

*Becket.* Because thou wast born excommunicate.

I never spied in thee one gleam of grace.

*De Brito.* Your Christian's Christian charity!

*Becket.* By St. Denis—

*De Brito.* Ay, by St. Denis, now will he flame out,

And lose his head as old St. Denis did.

*Becket.* Ye think to scare me from my loyalty

To God and to the Holy Father.  
No!

Tho' all the swords in England flash'd above me

Ready to fall at Henry's word or yours—

Tho' all the loud-lung'd trumpets upon earth

Blared from the heights of all the thrones of her kings,

Blowing the world against me, I would stand

Clothed with the full authority of Rome,

Mail'd in the perfect panoply of faith,  
First of the foremost of their files, who die

For God, to people heaven in the great day

When God makes up his jewels.  
Once I fled—

Never again, and you—I marvel at you—

Ye know what is between us. Ye have sworn

Yourselves my men when I was Chancellor—

My vassals—and yet threaten your Archbishop

In his own house.

*Knights.* Nothing can be between us

That goes against our fealty to the King.

*Fitzurse.* And in his name we charge you that ye keep

This traitor from escaping.

*Becket.* Rest you easy,  
For I am easy to keep. I shall not fly.

Here, here, here will you find me.

*De Morville.* Know you not  
You have spoken to the peril of your life?

*Becket.* As I shall speak again.

*Fitzurse, De Tracy, and De Brito.*  
To arms!

[*They rush out, De Morville lingers.*

*Becket.* De Morville,  
I had thought so well of you; and even now

You seem the least assassin of the four.

Oh, do not damn yourself for company!

Is it too late for me to save your soul?

I pray you for one moment stay and speak.

*De Morville.* Becket, it is too late.

*Becket.* Is it too late?  
Too late on earth may be too soon in hell.

*Knights (in the distance).* Close the great gate—ho, there—  
upon the town.

*Becket's Retainers.* Shut the hall-doors.

[*A pause.*

*Becket.* You hear them, brother John;

Why do you stand so silent, brother John?

*John of Salisbury.* For I was musing on an ancient saw,

*Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re,*  
Is strength less strong when hand-in-  
hand with grace?

*Gratior in pulchra corpore virtus.*  
Thomas,  
Why should you heat yourself for such  
as these?

*Becket.* Methought I answer'd  
moderately enough.

*John of Salisbury.* As one that blows  
the coal to cool the fire.

My lord, I marvel why you never  
lean

On any man's advising but your own.  
*Becket.* Is it so, Dan John? well,  
what should I have done?

*John of Salisbury.* You should have  
taken counsel with your friends  
Before these bandits brake into your  
presence.

They seek—you make—occasion for  
your death.

*Becket.* My counsel is already  
taken, John.

I am prepared to die.

*John of Salisbury.* We are sinners  
all,  
The best of all not all-prepared to  
die.

*Becket.* God's will be done!

*John of Salisbury.* Ay, well,  
God's will be done!

*Grim (re-entering).* My lord, the  
knights are arming in the gar-  
den

Beneath the sycamore.

*Becket.* Good! let them arm.

*Grim.* And one of the De Brocs is  
with them, Robert,

The apostate monk that was with Ran-  
dulf here.

He knows the twists and turnings of  
the place.

*Becket.* No fear!

*Grim.* No fear, my lord.

[*Crashes on the hall-doors. The  
Monks flee.*

*Becket (rising).* Our dovecote  
flows!

I cannot tell why monks should all be  
cowards.

*John of Salisbury.* Take refuge in  
your own cathedral, Thomas.

*Becket.* Do they not fight the  
Great Fiend day by day?

Valor and holy life should go to-  
gether.

Why should all monks be cowards?

*John of Salisbury.* Are they so?  
I say, take refuge in your own cathe-  
dral.

*Becket.* Ay, but I told them I  
would wait them here.

*Grim.* May they not say you dared  
not show yourself

In your old place? and vespers are  
beginning.

[*Bell rings for vespers till end of  
scene.*

You should attend the office, give  
them heart.

They fear you slain: they dread they  
know not what.

*Becket.* Ay, monks, not men.

*Grim.* I am a monk, my lord.  
Perhaps, my lord, you wrong us.

Some would stand by you to the death.

*Becket.* Your pardon.

*John of Salisbury.* He said, 'Attend  
the office.'

*Becket.* Attend the office?  
Why then—The Cross!—who bears  
my Cross before me?

Methought they would have brain'd  
me with it, John. [*Grim takes it.*

*Grim.* I! Would that I could  
bear thy cross indeed!

*Becket.* The Mitre!

*John of Salisbury.* Will you wear  
it?—there!

[*Becket puts on the mitre.*  
*Becket.* The Pall!

I go to meet my King!

[*Puts on the pall.*  
*Grim.* To meet the King?

[*Crashes on the doors as they go out.*

*John of Salisbury.* Why do you  
move with such a stateliness?

Can you not hear them yonder like a  
storm,

Battering the doors, and breaking thro'  
the walls?

*Becket.* Why do the heathen rage?  
My two good friends,

What matters murder'd here, or mur-  
der'd there?



And yet my dream foretold my martyrdom  
In mine own church. It is God's will.  
Go on.  
Nay, drag me not. We must not seem to fly.

SCENE III.—NORTH TRANSEPT OF  
CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

*On the right hand a flight of steps leading to the Choir, another flight on the left, leading to the North Aisle. Winter afternoon slowly darkening. Low thunder now and then of an approaching storm. MONKS heard chanting the service. ROSAMUND kneeling.*

*Rosamund.* O blessed saint, O glorious Benedict,—  
These arm'd men in the city, these fierce faces—  
Thy holy follower founded Canterbury—  
Save that dear head which now is Canterbury,  
Save him, he saved my life, he saved my child,  
Save him, his blood would darken Henry's name;  
Save him till all as saintly as thyself  
He miss the searching flame of purgatory,  
And pass at once perfect to Paradise.  
[*Noise of steps and voices in the cloisters.*  
Hark! Is it they? Coming! He is not here—  
Not yet, thank heaven. O save him!  
[*Goes up steps leading to choir.*  
*Becket* (entering, forced along by *John of Salisbury* and *Grim*).  
No, I tell you!  
I cannot bear a hand upon my person,  
Why do you force me thus against my will?  
*Grim.* My lord, we force you from your enemies.  
*Becket.* As you would force a king from being crown'd.

*John of Salisbury.* We must not force the crown of martyrdom.  
[*Service stops. Monks come down from the stairs that lead to the choir.*

*Monks.* Here is the great Archbishop! He lives! he lives!  
Die with him, and be glorified together.

*Becket.* Together? . . . get you back! go on with the office.

*Monks.* Come, then, with us to vespers.

*Becket.* How can I come  
When you so block the entry? Back, I say!

Go on with the office. Shall not Heaven be served  
Tho' earth's last earthquake clash'd the minster-bells,  
And the great deeps were broken up again,  
And hiss'd against the sun?

[*Noise in the cloisters.*  
*Monks.* The murderers, hark!  
Let us hide! let us hide!

*Becket.* What do these people fear?

*Monks.* Those arm'd men in the cloister.

*Becket.* Be not such cravens!  
I will go out and meet them.

*Grim and others.* Shut the doors!  
We will not have him slain before our face.

[*They close the doors of the transept. Knocking.*

Fly, fly, my lord, before they burst the doors. [*Knocking.*

*Becket.* Why, these are our own monks who follow'd us!

And will you bolt them out, and have them slain?

Undo the doors: the church is not a castle:

Knock, and it shall be open'd. Are you deaf?

What, have I lost authority among you?

Stand by, make way!

*Opens the doors. Enter Monks from cloister.*

Come in, my friends, come in!  
Nay, faster, faster!

*Monks.* Oh, my lord Archbishop,  
A score of knights all arm'd with  
swords and axes—  
To the choir, to the choir!

[*Monks divide, part flying, by the stairs on the right, part by those on the left. The rush of these last bears Becket along with them some way up the steps, where he is left standing alone.*]

*Becket.* Shall I too pass to the choir,  
And die upon the Patriarchal throne  
Of all my predecessors?

*John of Salisbury.* No, to the crypt!

Twenty steps down. Stumble not in the darkness,  
Lest they should seize thee.

*Grim.* To the crypt? no—no,  
To the chapel of St. Blaise beneath the roof!

*John of Salisbury* (*pointing upward and downward*). That way, or this! Save thyself either way.

*Becket.* Oh, no, not either way, nor any way

Save by that way which leads thro' night to light.

Not twenty steps, but one.  
And fear not I should stumble in the darkness,

Not tho' it be their hour, the power of darkness,

But my hour too, the power of light in darkness!

I am not in the darkness but the light,

Seen by the Church in Heaven, the Church on earth—

The power of life in death to make her free!

[*Enter the four Knights. John of Salisbury flies to the altar of St. Benedict.*]

*Fitzurse.* Here, here, King's men!  
[*Catches hold of the last flying Monk.*]

Where is the traitor Becket?

*Monk.* I am not he! I am not he, my lord.

I am not he indeed!

*Fitzurse.* Hence to the heid!  
[*Pushes him away.*]

Where is this' treble traitor to the King?

*De Tracy.* Where is the Archbishop, Thomas Becket?

*Becket.* Here.  
No traitor to the King, but Priest of God,

Primate of England.  
[*Descending into the transept.*]

I am he ye seek.

What would ye have of me?  
*Fitzurse.* Your life.

*De Tracy.* Your life.

*De Morville.* Save that you will absolve the bishops.

*Becket.* Never,—  
Except they make submission to the Church.

You had my answer to that cry before.

*De Morville.* Why, then you are a dead man; flee!

*Becket.* I will not.  
I am readier to be slain, than thou to slay.

Hugh, I know well thou hast but half a heart

To bathe this sacred pavement with my blood.

God pardon thee and these, but God's full curse

Shatter you all to pieces if ye harm One of my flock!

*Fitzurse.* Was not the great gate shut?

They are thronging in to vespers—half the town.

We shall be overwhelm'd. Seize him and carry him!

Come with us—nay—thou art our prisoner—come!

*De Morville.* Ay, make him prisoner, do not harm the man.

[*Fitzurse lays hold of the Archbishop's pall.*]

*Becket.* Touch me not!  
*De Brito.* How the good

priest gods himself!  
He is not yet ascended to the Father.

*Fitzurse.* I will not only touch, but drag thee hence.

Becket. Thou art my man, thou art my vassal. Away!

[Flings him off till he reels, almost to falling.

Tracy (lays hold of the pall). Come; as he said, thou art our prisoner.

Becket. Down!

[Throws him headlong.

Fitzurse (advances with drawn sword). I told thee that I should remember thee!

Becket. Profligate pander!

Fitzurse. Do you hear that? strike, strike.

[Strikes off the Archbishop's mitre, and wounds him in the forehead.

Becket (covers his eyes with his hand).

I do commend my cause to God, the Virgin,

St. Denis of France and St. Alphege of England,

And all the tutelary Saints of Canterbury.

[Grim wraps his arms about the Archbishop.

Spare this defence, dear brother.

[Tracy has arisen, and approaches, hesitatingly, with his sword raised.

Fitzurse. Strike him, Tracy!

Rosamund (rushing down steps from the choir). No, No, No, No!

Fitzurse. This wanton here. De Morville,

Hold her away.

De Morville. I hold her.

Rosamund (held back by De Morville, and stretching out her arms).

Mercy, mercy,

As you would hope for mercy.

Fitzurse. Strike, I say.

Grim. O God, O noble knights, O sacrilege!

Strike our Archbishop in his own cathedral!

The Pope, the King, will curse you—the whole world

Abhor you; ye will die the death of dogs!

Nay, nay, good Tracy.

[Lifts his arm.

Fitzurse. Answer not, but strike.

De Tracy. There is my answer then.

[Sword falls on Grim's arm, and glances from it, wounding

Becket.

Grim. Mine arm is sever'd.

I can no more—fight out the good fight—die

Conqueror.

[Staggers into the chapel of St. Benedict.

Becket (falling on his knees). At the right hand of Power—

Power and great glory—for thy Church, O Lord—

Into Thy hands, O Lord—into Thy hands!— [Sinks prone.

De Brito. This last to rid thee of a world of brawls! (Kill him.)

The traitor's dead, and will arise no more.

Fitzurse. Nay, have we still'd him?

What! the great Archbishop!

Does he breathe? No?

De Tracy. No, Reginald, he is dead. [Storm bursts.<sup>1</sup>

De Morville. Will the earth gape and swallow us?

De Brito. The deed's done—Away!

[De Brito, De Tracy, Fitzurse, rush out, crying 'King's men!'

De Morville follows slowly.

Flashes of lightning thro' the

Cathedral. Rosamund seen

kneeling by the body of Becket.

<sup>1</sup> A tremendous thunderstorm actually broke over the Cathedral as the murderers were leaving it.

THE CUP:  
A TRAGEDY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GALATIANS.

SYNORIX, an *ex-Tetrarch*.  
SINNATUS, a *Tetrarch*.  
Attendant.  
Boy.

Maid.  
PHERE.  
CAMMA, wife of *Sinnatus*, afterwards  
*Priestess in the Temple of Artemis*.

ROMANS.

ANTONIUS, a *Roman General*.  
PUBLIUS.

Nobleman.  
Messenger.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—DISTANT VIEW OF A  
CITY OF GALATIA.

*As the curtain rises, Priestesses are heard singing in the Temple. Boy discovered on a pathway among Rocks, picking grapes. A party of Roman Soldiers, guarding a prisoner in chains, come down the pathway and exeunt.*

*Enter SYNORIX (looking round). Singing ceases.*

*Synorix.* Pine, beech and plane,  
oak, walnut, apricot,  
Vine, cypress, poplar, myrtle, bower-  
ing-in  
The city where she dwells. She past  
me here  
Three years ago when I was flying  
from  
My Tetrarchy to Rome. I almost  
touch'd her—  
A maiden slowly moving on to music  
Among her maidens to this Temple—  
O Gods!  
She is my fate—else wherefore has  
my fate  
Brought me again to her own city?—  
married  
Since—married *Sinnatus*, the Tetrarch  
here—  
But if he be conspirator. Rome will  
chain,

Or slay him. I may trust to gain her  
then  
When I shall have my tetrarchy re-  
stored  
By Rome, our mistress, grateful that  
I show'd her  
The weakness and the dissonance of  
our clans,  
And how to crush them easily.  
Wretched race!  
And once I wish'd to scourge them to  
the bones.  
But in this narrow breathing-time of  
life  
Is vengeance for its own sake worth  
the while,  
If once our ends are gain'd? and now  
this cup—  
I never felt such passion for a woman.  
[Brings out a cup and scroll from  
under his cloak.  
What have I written to her?

[Reading the scroll.  
'To the admired *Camma*, wife of  
*Sinnatus*, the Tetrarch, one who years  
ago, himself an adorer of our great  
goddess, *Artemis*, beheld you afar off  
worshipping in her Temple, and loved  
you for it, sends you this cup rescued  
from the burning of one of her shrines  
in a city thro' which he past with the  
Roman army: it is the cup we use in  
our marriages. Receive it from one  
who cannot at present write himself  
other than

'A GALATIAN SERVING BY FORCE  
IN THE ROMAN LEGION.'

[Turns and looks up to Boy.

Boy, dost thou know the house of  
Sinnatus?

*Boy.* These grapes are for the  
house of Sinnatus—  
Close to the Temple.

*Synorix.* Yonder?

*Boy.* Yes.

*Synorix (aside).* That I  
With all my range of women should  
yet shun

To meet her face to face at once!  
My boy,

[*Boy comes down rocks to him.*  
Take thou this letter and this cup to

Camma,  
The wife of Sinnatus.

*Boy.* Going or gone to-day  
To hunt with Sinnatus.

*Synorix.* That matters not.  
Take thou this cup and leave it at her  
doors.

[*Gives the cup and scroll to the Boy.*

*Boy.* I will, my lord,  
[*Takes his basket of grapes and exit.*

*Enter ANTONIUS.*

*Antonius (meeting the Boy as he goes  
out).* Why, whither runs the  
boy?

Is that the cup you rescued from the  
fire?

*Synorix.* I send it to the wife of  
Sinnatus,

One half besotted in religious rites.  
You come here with your soldiers to  
enforce

The long-withholden trillute: you sus-  
pect

This Sinnatus of plying patriot-  
ism,

Which in your sense is treason. You  
have yet

No proof against him: now this pious  
cup

Is passport to their house, and open  
arms

To him who gave it; and once there  
I warrant

I worm thro' all their windings.

*Antonius.* If you prosper,  
Our Senate, wearied of their tetrarch-  
ies,

Their quarrels with themselves, their  
spites at Rome,

Is like enough to cancel them, and  
throne

One king above them all, who shall be  
true

To the Roman: and from what I  
heard in Rome,

This tributary crown may fall to you.

*Synorix.* The king, the crown!  
their talk in Rome? is it so?

[*Antonius nods.*  
Well—I shall serve Galatia taking it,  
And save her from herself, and be to

Rome  
More faithful than a Roman.

[*Turus and sees Camma coming.*  
Stand aside,

Stand aside; here she comes!  
[*Watching Camma as she enters  
with her Maid.*

*Camma (to Maid).* Where is he,  
girl?

*Maid.* You know the waterfall  
That in the summer keeps the moun-  
tain side,

But after rain o'erleaps a jutting rock  
And shoots three hundred feet.

*Camma.* The stag is there?

*Maid.* Seen in the thicket at the  
bottom there

But yester-even.

*Camma.* Good then, we will climb  
The mountain opposite and watch the  
chase.

[*They descend the rocks and exeunt.*  
*Synorix (watching her).* (*Aside.*)

The bust of Juno and the brows  
and eyes

Of Venus; face and form unmatch-  
able!

*Antonius.* Why do you look at her  
so lingeringly?

*Synorix.* To see if years have  
changed her.

*Antonius (sarcastically).* Love her,  
do you?

*Synorix.* I envied Sinnatus when  
he married her.

*Antonius.* She knows it? Ha!

*Synorix.* She—no, nor ev'n my  
face.

*Antonius.* Nor Sinnatus either?

*Synorix.* No, nor Sinnatus.  
*Antonius.* Hot-blooded! I have  
 heard them say in Rome,  
 That your own people cast you from  
 their bounds,  
 For some unprincely violence to a  
 woman,  
 As Rome did Tarquin.

*Synorix.* Well, if this were so  
 I here return like Tarquin—for a  
 crown.

*Antonius.* And may be foil'd like  
 Tarquin, if you follow  
 Not the dry light of Rome's straight-  
 going policy,  
 But the fool-fire of love or lust, which  
 well  
 May make you lose yourself, may  
 even drown you  
 In the good regard of Rome.

*Synorix.* Tut—fear me not;  
 I ever had my victories among wo-  
 men.  
 I am most true to Rome.

*Antonius (aside).* I hate the man!  
 What filthy tools our Senate works  
 with! Still

I must obey them. (*A loud.*) Fare  
 you well. [*Going.*]

*Synorix.* Farewell!

*Antonius (stopping.)* A moment!  
 If you track this Sinnatus  
 In any treason, I give you here an  
 order [*Produces a paper.*]

To scize upon him. Let me sign it.  
 (*Signs it.*) There

'Antonius leader of the Roman  
 Legion.'

[*Hands the paper to Synorix.*]

*Goes up pathway and exit.*

*Synorix.* Woman again!—but I  
 am wiser now.

No rushing on the game—the net,—  
 the net.

[*Shouts of 'Sinnatus! Sinnatus!'*  
*Then horn.*]

[*Looking off stage.*] He comes, a  
 rough, bluff, simple-looking  
 fellow.

If we may judge the kernel by the  
 husk,

Not one to keep a woman's fealty  
 when

Assailed by Craft and Love. I'll join  
 with him:

I may reap something from him—  
 come upon *her*

Again, perhaps, to-day—*her*. Who  
 are with him?

I see no face that knows me. Shall I  
 risk it?

I am a Roman now, they dare not  
 touch me.

I will.

*Enter Sinnatus, Huntsmen and  
 hounds.*

Fair Sir, a happy day to  
 you!

You reckon but little of the Roman here,  
 While you can take your pastime in  
 the woods.

*Sinnatus.* Ay, ay, why not? What  
 would you with me, man?

*Synorix.* I am a life-long lover of  
 the chase,  
 And thro' a stranger fain would be  
 allow'd

To join the hunt.

*Sinnatus.* Your name?

*Synorix.* Strato, my name.

*Sinnatus.* No Roman name?

*Synorix.* A Greek, my lord; you  
 know

That we Galatians are both Greek  
 and Gaul.

[*Shouts and horns in the distance.*]

*Sinnatus.* Hillo, the stag! (*To  
 Synorix.*) What, you are all  
 unfurnish'd?

Give him a bow and arrows—follow  
 —follow.

[*Exit, followed by Huntsmen.*]

*Synorix.* Slowly but surely—till I  
 see my way.

It is the one step in the dark beyond  
 Our expectation, that amazes us.

[*Distant shouts and horns.*]

Hillo! Hillo!

[*Exit Synorix. Shouts and horns*]

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN THE  
 TETRARCH'S HOUSE.

*Frescoed figures on the walls. Even-  
 ing. Moonlight outside. A couch*

*with cushions on it. A small table with a flagon of wine, cups, plate of grapes, etc., also the cup of Scene I. A chair with drapery on it.*

*Camma enters, and opens curtains of window.*

*Camma.* No Sinnatus yet—and there the rising moon.

*[Takes up a cithern and sits on couch. Plays and sings.*

Moon on the field and the foam,  
Moon on the waste and the wold,  
Moon bring him home, bring him home  
Safe from the dark and the cold,  
Home, sweet moon, bring him home,  
Home with the flock to the fold—  
Safe from the wolf—

*(Listening.)* Is he coming? I thought I heard  
A footstep. No not yet. They say that Rome  
Sprang from a wolf. I fear my dear lord mixt  
With some conspiracy against the wolf.  
This mountain shepherd never dream'd of Rome.  
*(Sings.)* Safe from the wolf to the fold—  
And that great break of precipice that runs  
Thro' all the wood, where twenty years ago  
Huntsman, and hound, and deer were all neck-broken!  
Nay, here he comes.

*Enter SINNATUS followed by SYNORIX.*

*Sinnatus (angrily).* I tell thee, my good fellow,

*My arrow struck the stag.*

*Synorix.* But was it so? Nay, you were further off: besides the wind

Went with *my* arrow.

*Sinnatus.* I am sure I struck him.

*Synorix.* And I am just as sure, my lord, I struck him.

*(Aside.)* And I may strike your game when you are gone.

*Camma.* Come, come, we will not quarrel about the stag.

I have had a weary day in watching you.

Yours must have been a wearier. Sit and eat,  
And take a hunter's vengeance on the meats.

*Sinnatus.* No, no—we have eaten—we are heated. Wine!

*Camma.* Who is our guest?

*Sinnatus.* Strato he calls himself.

*[Camma offers wine to Synorix, while Sinnatus helps himself.*

*Sinnatus.* I pledge you, Strato.

*[Drinks.*

*Synorix.* And I you, my lord.

*[Drinks.*

*Sinnatus (seeing the cup sent to Camma).* What's here?

*Camma.* A strange gift sent to me to-day.

A sacred cup saved from a blazing shrine

Of our great Goddess, in some city where

Antonius past. I had believed that Rome

Made war upon the peoples not the Gods.

*Synorix.* Most like the city rose against Antonius,

Whereon he fired it, and the sacred shrine

By chance was burnt along with it.

*Sinnatus.* Had you then No message with the cup?

*Camma.* Why, yes, see here.

*[Gives him the scroll.*

*Sinnatus (reads).* 'To the admired Camma,—beheld you afar off—loved you—sends you this cup—the cup we use in our marriages—cannot at present write himself other than

'A GALATIAN SERVING BY FORCE IN THE ROMAN LEGION.'

Serving by force! Were there no boughs to hang on,

Rivers to drown in? Serve by force? No force

Could make me serve by force.

*Synorix.* How then, my lord?

The Roman is encamp't without your city—  
The force of Rome a thousand-fold our own.  
Must all Galatia hang or drown herself?  
And you a Prince and Tetrarch in this province—

*Sinnatus.* Province!

*Synorix.* Well, well, they call it so in Rome.

*Sinnatus (angrily).* Province!

*Synorix.* A noble anger! but Antonius

To-morrow will demand your tribute—  
—you,

Can you make war? Have you alliances?

Bithynia, Pontus, Paphlagonia?

We have had our leagues of old with Eastern kings.

There is my hand—if such a league there be.

What will you do?

*Sinnatus.* Not set myself abroad  
And run my mind out to a random guest

Who join'd me in the hunt. You saw my hounds

True to the scent; and we have two-legged dogs

Among us who can smell a true occasion,

And when to bark and how.

*Synorix.* My good Lord Sinnatus,  
I once was at the hunting of a lion.

Roused by the clamor of the chase he woke,

Came to the front of the wood—his monarch mane

Bristled about his quick ears—he stood there

Staring upon the hunter. A score of dogs

Gnaw'd at his ankles: at the last he felt

The trouble of his feet, put forth one paw,

Slew four, and knew it not, and so remain'd

Staring upon the hunter: and this Rome

Will crush you if you wrestle with her; then

Save for some slight report in her own Senate

Scarce know what she has done.

(*Aside.*) Would I could move him,  
Provoke him any way! (*Aloud.*) The

Lady Camma,  
Wise I am sure as she is beautiful,

Will close with me that to submit at once

Is better than a wholly-hopeless war,  
Our gallant citizens murder'd all in vain,

Son, husband, brother gash'd to death in vain,

And the small state more cruelly trampled on

Than had she never moved.

*Camma.* Sir, I had once  
A boy who died a babe: but were he

living  
And grown to man and Sinnatus will'd it, I

Would set him in the front rank of the fight

With scarce a pang. (*Rises.*) Sir, if a state submit

At once, she may be blotted out at once

And swallow'd in the conqueror's chronicle.

Whereas in wars of freedom and defence

The glory and grief of battle won or lost

Solders a race together—yca—tho' they fail.

The names of those who fought and fell are like

A bank'd-up fire that flashes out again  
From century to century, and at last

May lead them on to victory—I hope so—

Like phantoms of the Gods.

*Sinnatus.* Well spoken, wife.

*Synorix (bowing).* Madam, so well I yield.

*Sinnatus.* I should not wonder  
If Synorix, who has dwelt three years

in Rome  
And wrought his worst against his native land,





QUEEN MAUD IN ALL HER SPLENDOR.—Page 168.



Returns with this Antonius.

*Synorix.* What is Synorix?

*Sinnatus.* Galatian, and not know?

This Synorix

Was Tetrarch here, and tyrant also—  
did

Dishonor to our wives.

*Synorix.* Perhaps you judge  
him

With feeble charity: being as you tell  
me

Tetrarch, there might be willing wives  
enough

To feel dishonor, honor.

*Camma.* Do not say so.

I know of no such wives in all  
Galatia.

There may be courtesans for aught I  
know

Whose life is one dishonor.

*Enter ATTENDANT.*

*Attendant (aside).* My lord, the  
men!

*Sinnatus (aside).* Our anti-Roman  
faction?

*Attendant (aside).* Ay, my lord.

*Synorix (overhearing).* *(Aside.)* I  
have enough—their anti-  
Roman faction.

*Sinnatus (aloud).* Some friends of  
mine would speak to me with-  
out.

You, Strato, make good cheer till I  
return. *[Exit.]*

*Synorix.* I have much to say, no  
time to say it in.

First, lady, know myself am that Gala-  
tian

Who sent the cup.

*Camma.* I thank you from my  
heart.

*Synorix.* Then that I serve with  
Rome to serve Galatia.

That is my secret: keep it, or you  
sell me

To torment and to death. *[Coming  
closer.]* For your ear only—

I love you—for your love to the great  
Goddess.

The Romans sent me here a spy  
upon you,

To draw you and your husband to  
your doom.

I'd sooner die than do it.

*[Takes out paper given him by Anto-  
nius.]* This paper sign'd

Antonius—will you take it, read it?  
there!

*Camma. (Reads.)* 'You are to  
seize on Sinnatus,—if—'

*Synorix. (Snatches paper.)* No  
more.

What follows is for no wife's eyes.  
O Camma,

Rome has a glimpse of this con-  
spiracy;

Rome never yet hath spar'd con-  
spirator.

Horrible! flaying, scourging, crucify-  
ing—

*Camma.* I am tender enough.  
Why do you practise on me?

*Synorix.* Why should I practise  
on you? How you wrong me!

I am sure of being every way mal-  
lign'd.

And if you should betray me to your  
husband—

*Camma.* Will you betray him by  
this order?

*Synorix.* See,  
I tear it all to pieces, never dream'd

Of acting on it. *[Tears the paper.]*

*Camma.* I owe you thanks for  
ever.

*Synorix.* Hath Sinnatus never told  
you of this plot?

*Camma.* What plot?

*Synorix.* A child's sand-  
castle on the beach

For the next wave—all seen,—all cal-  
culated,

All known by Rome. No chance for  
Sinnatus.

*Camma.* Why said you not as  
much to my brave Sinnatus?

*Synorix.* Brave—ay—too brave,  
too over-confident,

Too like to ruin himself, and you,  
and me!

Who else, with this black thunderbolt  
of Rome

Above him, would have chased the  
stag to-day

In the full face of all the Roman camp?  
A miracle that they let him home again,  
Not caught, maim'd, blinded him.

[Camma shudders.

(*Aside.*) I have made her tremble.  
(*Aloud.*) I know they mean to torture him to death.

I dare not tell him how I came to know it;

I durst not trust him with—my serving Rome  
To serve Galatia: you heard him on the letter.

Not say as much? I all but said as much.

I am sure I told him that his plot was folly.

I say it to you—you are wiser—Rome knows all,

But you know not the savagery of Rome.

Camma. O—have you power with Rome? use it for him!

Synorix. Alas! I have no such power with Rome. All that lies with Antonius.

[*As if struck by a sudden thought. Comes over to her.*

He will pass to-morrow  
In the gray dawn before the Temple doors.

You have beauty,—O great beauty,—and Antonius,

So gracious toward women, never yet

Flung back a woman's prayer. Plead to him,

I am sure you will prevail.

Camma. Still—I should tell My husband.

Synorix. Will he let you plead for him

To a Roman?

Camma. I fear not.

Synorix. Then do not tell him. Or tell him, if you will, when you return,

When you have charm'd our general into mercy,

And all is safe again. O dearest lady,

[*Murmurs of 'Synorix! Synorix!' heard outside.*

Think,—torture,—death,—and come. Camma. I will, I will.

And I will not betray you.

Synorix (*aside*). (*As Sinnatus enters.*) Stand apart.

Enter SINNATUS and ATTENDANT.

Sinnatus. Thou art that Synorix!

One whom thou hast wrong'd  
Without there, knew thee with Antonius.

They howl for thee, to rend thee head from limb.

Synorix. I am much malign'd. I thought to serve Galatia.

Sinnatus. Serve thyself first, villain! They shall not harm

My guest within my house. There!

(*points to door*) there! this door  
Opens upon the forest! Out, begone!

Henceforth I am thy mortal enemy.

Synorix. However I thank thee (*draws his sword*); thou hast saved my life. [*Exit.*

Sinnatus. (*To Attendant.*) Return and tell them Synorix is not here. [*Exit Attendant.*

What did that villain Synorix say to you?

Camma. Is he—that—Synorix?

Sinnatus. Wherefore should you doubt it?

One of the men there knew him.

Camma. Only one,  
And he perhaps mistaken in the face.

Sinnatus. Come, come, could he deny it? What did he say?

Camma. What should he say?

Sinnatus. What should he say, my wife!

He should say this, that being

Tetrarch once

His own true people cast him from their doors

Like a base coin.

Camma. Not kindly to them?

Sinnatus. Kindly?

O the most kindly Prince in all the world!

Would clap his honest citizens on the back,  
 Bandy their own rude jests with them,  
 be curious  
 About the welfare of their babes,  
 their wives,  
 O ay—their wives—their wives.  
 What should he say?  
 He should say nothing to my wife if I  
 Were by to throttle him! He steep'd  
 himself  
 In all the lust of Rome. How should  
 you guess  
 What manner of beast it is?

*Camma.* Yet he seem'd kindly,  
 And said he loathed the cruelties  
 that Rome

Wrought on her vassals.

*Sinnatus.* Did he, honest man?

*Camma.* And you, that seldom  
 brook the stranger here,  
 Have let him hunt the stag with you  
 to-day.

*Sinnatus.* I warrant you now, he  
 said he struck the stag.

*Camma.* Why no, he never touch'd  
 upon the stag.

*Sinnatus.* Why so I said, my ar-  
 row. Well, to sleep.

[*Goes to close door.*]

*Camma.* Nay, close not yet the  
 door upon a night  
 That looks half day.

*Sinnatus.* True; and my friends  
 may spy him  
 And slay him as he runs.

*Camma.* He is gone already.  
 Oh look,—yon grove upon the moun-  
 tain,—white

In the sweet moon as with a lovelier  
 snow!

But what a blotch of blackness under-  
 neath!

*Sinnatus.* you remember—yea, you  
 must,

That there three years ago—the vast  
 vine-bowers

Ran to the summit of the trees, and  
 dropt

Their streamers earthward, which a  
 breeze of May

Took ever and anon, and open'd out

The purple zone of hill and heaven;  
 there

You told your love; and like the  
 swaying vines—

Yea,—with our eyes,—our hearts, our  
 prophet hopes

Let in the happy distance, and that  
 all

But cloudless heaven which we have  
 found together

In our three married years! You  
 kiss'd me there

For the first time. *Sinnatus*, kiss me  
 now.

*Sinnatus.* First kiss. (*Kisses her.*)

There then. You talk almost  
 as if it

Might be the last.

*Camma.* Will you not eat a little?

*Sinnatus.* No, no, we found a goat-  
 herd's hut and shared

His fruits and milk. Liar! You will  
 believe

Now that he never struck the stag—a  
 brave one

Which you shall see to-morrow.

*Camma.* I rise to-morrow  
 In the gray dawn, and take this holy  
 cup

To lodge it in the shrine of Artemis.

*Sinnatus.* Good!

*Camma.* If I be not back in  
 half an hour,

Come after me.

*Sinnatus.* What! is there danger?

*Camma.* Nay,  
 None that I know: 'tis but a step  
 from here

To the Temple.

*Sinnatus.* All my brain is full of  
 sleep.

Wake me before you go, I'll after  
 you—

After me now! [*Closes door and exit.*]

*Camma* (*drawing curtains*). Your

shadow. *Synorix*—

His face was not malignant, and he  
 said

That men malign'd him. Shall I go?  
 Shall I go?

Death, torture—

'He never yet flung back a woman's  
 prayer'—

I go, but I will have my dagger with me. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—SAME AS SCENE I.  
DAWN.

*Music and Singing in the Temple.*

*Enter SYNORIX watchfully, after him*  
PUBLIUS and SOLDIERS.

*Synorix.* Publius!

*Publius.* Here!

*Synorix.* Do you remember what I told you?

*Publius.* When you cry 'Rome, Rome,' to seize

On whomsoever may be talking with you,

Or man, or woman, as traitors unto Rome.

*Synorix.* Right. Back again.

How many of you are there?

*Publius.* Some half a score.

[*Exeunt Soldiers and Publius.*]

*Synorix.* I have my guard about me.

I need not fear the crowd that hunted me

Across the woods, last night. I hardly gain'd

The camp at midnight. Will she come to me

Now that she knows me *Synorix*?

Not if *Sinnatus*

Has told her all the truth about me. Well,

I cannot help the mould that I was cast in.

I fling all that upon my fate, my star. I know that I am genial, I would be

Happy, and make all others happy so They did not thwart me. Nay, she

will not come.

Yet it she be a true and loving wife She may, perchance, to save this husband. Ay!

See, see, my white bird stepping toward the snare.

Why now I count it all but miracle, That this brave heart of mine should

shake me so,

As helplessly as some unbearded boy's

When first he meets his maiden in a bower.

[*Enter Camma (with cup).*]

The lark first takes the sunlight on his wing,

But you, twin sister of the morning star,

Forelead the sun.

*Camma.* Where is *Antonius*?

*Synorix.* Not here as yet. You are too early for him.

[*She crosses towards Temple.*]

*Synorix.* Nay, whither go you now?

*Camma.* To lodge this cup Within the holy shrine of *Artemis*,

And so return.

*Synorix.* To find *Antonius* here.

[*She goes into the Temple, he looks after her.*]

The loveliest life that ever drew the light

From heaven to brood upon her, and enrich

Earth with her shadow! I trust she will return.

These Romans dare not violate the Temple.

No, I must lure my game into the camp.

A woman I could live and die for. What!

Die for a woman, what new faith is this?

I am not mad, not sick, not old enough

To doat on one alone. Yes, mad for her,

*Camma* the stately, *Camma* the great-hearted,

So mad, I fear some strange and evil chance

Coming upon me, for by the Gods I seem

Strange to myself.

*Re-enter CAMMA.*

*Camma.* Where is *Antonius*?

*Synorix.* Where? As I said before, you are still too early.

*Camma.* Too early to be here alone  
with thee;

For whether men malign thy name, or  
no,

It bears an evil savor among women.  
Where is Antonius? (*Loud.*)

*Synrix.* Madam, as you know  
The camp is half a league without the  
city;

If you will walk with me we needs  
must meet

Antonius coming, or at least shall find  
him

There in the camp.

*Camma.* No, not one step with  
thee.

Where is Antonius? (*Louder.*)

*Synrix* (*advancing towards her*).

Then for your own sake,

Lady, I say it with all gentleness,  
And for the sake of Sinnatus your  
husband,

I must compel you.

*Camma* (*drawing her dagger*).

Stay!—too near is death.

*Synrix* (*disarming her*). Is it not  
easy to disarm a woman?

*Enter SINNATUS* (*seizes him from  
behind by the throat*).

*Synrix* (*throttled and scarce audi-  
ble*). Rome! Rome!

*Sinnatus.* Adulterous dog!

*Synrix* (*stabbing him with Cam-  
ma's dagger*). What! will you have  
it? [*Camma utters a cry and  
runs to Sinnatus.*]

*Sinnatus* (*falls backward*). I have  
it in my heart—to the Temple  
—fly—

For my sake—or they seize on thee.

Remember!

Away—farewell! [*Dies.*]

*Camma* (*runs up the steps into the  
Temple, looking back*). Fare-  
well!

*Synrix* (*seeing her escape*). The  
women of the Temple drag her  
in.

Publius! Publius! No,  
Antonius would not suffer me to  
break

Into the sanctuary. She hath es-  
caped.

[*Looking down at Sinnatus.*  
'Adulterous dog!' that red-faced  
rage at me!

Then with one quick short stab—  
eternal peace.

So end all passions. Then what use  
in passions?

To warm the cold bounds of our dy-  
ing life

And, lest we freeze in mortal apathy,  
Employ us, heat us, quicken us, help

us, keep us  
From seeing all too near that urn,  
those ashes

Which all must be. Well used, they  
serve us well.

I heard a saying in Egypt, that ambi-  
tition

Is like the sea wave, which the more  
you drink,

The more you thirst—yea—drink too  
much, as men

Have done on rafts of wreck—it  
drives you mad.

I will be no such wreck, am no such  
gamester

As, having won the stake, would dare  
the chance

Of double, or losing all. The Roman  
Senate,

For I have always play'd into their  
hands,

Means me the crown. And Camma  
for my bride—

The people love her—if I win her  
love,

They too will cleave to me, as one  
with her.

There then I rest, Rome's tributary  
king.

[*Looking down on Sinnatus.*  
Why did I strike him?—having proof

enough  
Against the man, I surely should have

left  
That stroke to Rome. He saved my

life too. Did he?

It seem'd so. I have play'd the sud-  
den fool.

And that sets her against me—for the  
moment.

Camma—well, well, I never found the woman

I could not force or wheedle to my will.

She will be glad at last to wear my crown.

And I will make Galatia prosperous too,

And we will chirp among our vines, and smile

At bygone things till that (*pointing to Sinnatus*) eternal peace.

Rome! Rome!

[*Enter Publius and Soldiers.*]

Twice I cried Rome. Why came ye not before?

*Publius.* Why come we now? Whom shall we seize upon?

*Synorix* (*pointing to the body of Sinnatus*). The body of that dead traitor Sinnatus.

Bear him away.

*Music and Singing in Temple.*

## ACT II.

### SCENE.—INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS.

*Small gold gates on platform in front of the veil before the colossal statue of the Goddess, and in the centre of the Temple a tripod altar, on which is a lighted lamp. Lamps (lighted) suspended between each pillar. Tripods, vases, garlands of flowers, etc., about stage. Altar at back close to Goddess, with two cups. Solemn music. Priestesses decorating the Temple.*

(*The Chorus of PRIESTESSES sing as they enter.*)

Artemis, Artemis, hear us, O Mother, hear us, and bless us!

Artemis, thou that art life to the wind, to the wave, to the gleebe, to the fire!

Hear thy people who praise thee! O help us from all that oppress us!

Hear thy priestesses hymn thy glory!  
O yield them all their desire!

*Priestess.* Phœbe, that man from Synorix, who has been

So oft to see the Priestess, waits once more

Before the Temple

*Phæbe.* We will let her know.

[*Sings to one of the Priestesses, who goes out.*]

Since Camma fled from Synorix to our Temple,

And for her beauty, stateliness, and power,

Was chosen Priestess here, have you not mark'd

Her eyes were ever on the marble floor?

To-day they are fixt and bright—they look straight out.

Hath she made up her mind to marry him?

*Priestess.* To marry him who stabb'd her Sinnatus.

You will not easily make me credit that.

*Phæbe.* Ask her.

*Enter CAMMA as Priestess (in front of the curtains).*

*Priestess.* You will not marry Synorix?

*Camma.* My girl, I am the bride of Death, and only

Marry the dead.

*Priestess.* Not Synorix then?

*Camma.* My girl,

At times this oracle of great Artemis Has no more power than other oracles To speak directly.

*Phæbe.* Will you speak to him, The messenger from Synorix who waits

Before the Temple?

*Camma.* Why not? Let him enter.

[*Comes forward on to step by tripod.*]

*Enter a MESSENGER.*

*Messenger* (*kneels*). Greeting and health from Synorix! More than once



You have refused his hand. When  
last I saw you,  
You all but yielded. He entreats  
you now  
For your last answer. When he  
struck at Sinnatus—

As I have many a time declared to  
you—

He knew not at the moment who had  
fasten'd  
About his throat—he begs you to for-  
get it

As scarce his act—a random stroke :  
all else

Was love for you: he prays you to  
believe him.

*Camma.* I pray him to believe—  
that I believe him.

*Messenger.* Why that is well.  
You mean to marry him?

*Camma.* I mean to marry him—if  
that be well.

*Messenger.* This very day the  
Romans crown him king  
For all his faithful services to Rome.  
He wills you then this day to marry  
him,

And so be throned together in the  
sight

Of all the people, that the world may  
know

You twain are reconciled, and no  
more feuds

Disturb our peaceful vassalage to  
Rome.

*Camma.* To-day? Too sudden. I  
will brood upon it.

When do they crown him?

*Messenger.* Even now.

*Camma.* And where?

*Messenger.* Here by your temple.

*Camma.* Come once more to me  
before the crowning,—I will answer  
you.

[*Exit Messenger.*]

*Phabe.* Great Artemis! O Cam-  
ma, can it be well,

Or good, or wise, that you should  
clasp a hand

Red with the sacred blood of Sinna-  
tus?

*Camma.* Good! mine own dagger  
driven by Synorix found

All good in the true heart of Sinnatus,

And quench'd it there for ever.  
Wise!

Life yields to death and wisdom bows  
to Fate,

Is wisest, doing so. Did not this  
man

Speak well? We cannot fight impe-  
rial Rome,

But he and I are both Galatian-  
born,

And tributary sovereigns, he and  
I

Might teach this Rome—from knowl-  
edge of our people—

Where to lay on her tribute—heavily  
here

And lightly there. Might I not live  
for that,

And drown all poor self-passion in  
the sense

Of public good?

*Phabe.* I am sure you will not  
marry him.

*Camma.* Are you so sure? I pray  
you wait and see.

[*Shouts (from the distance),*  
'Synorix! Synorix!'

*Camma.* Synorix, Synorix! So  
they cried Sinnatus

Not so long since—they sicken me.  
The One

Who shifts his policy suffers some-  
thing, must

Accuse himself, excuse himself; the  
Many

Will feel no shame to give themselves  
the lie.

*Phabe.* Most like it was the Ro-  
man soldier shouted.

*Camma.* Their shield-borne pa-  
triot of the morning star

Hang'd at mid-day, their traitor of  
the dawn

The clamor'd darling of their after-  
noon!

And that same head they would have  
play'd at ball with

And kick'd it featureless—they now  
would crown.

[*Flourish of trumpets.*]

*Enter a Galatian NOBLEMAN with  
crown on a cushion.*

*Noble (kneels).* Greeting and health from Synorix. He sends you

This diadem of the first Galatian Queen,

That you may feed your fancy on the glory of it,

And join your life this day with his, and wear it

Beside him on his throne. He waits your answer.

*Camma.* Tell him there is one shadow among the shadows, One ghost of all the ghosts—as yet so new,

So strange among them—such an alien there,

So much of husband in it still—that if

The shout of Synorix and Camma sitting

Upon one throne, should reach it, it would rise

*He!* . . . HE, with that red star between the ribs,

And my knife there—and blast the king and me,

And blanch the crowd with horror. I dare not, sir!

Throne him—and then the marriage—ay and tell him

That I accept the diadem of Galatia—  
[*All are amazed.*]

Yea, that ye saw me crown myself withal. [*Puts on the crown.*]

I wait him his crown'd queen.

*Noble.* So will I tell him. [*Exit.*]

*Music.* Two Priestesses go up the steps before the shrine, draw the curtains on either side (discovering the Goddess), then open the gates and remain on steps, one on either side, and kneel. A priestess goes off and returns with a veil of marriage, then assists Phæbe to veil Camma. At the same time Priestesses enter and stand on either side of the Temple. Camma and all the Priestesses kneel, raise their hands to the Goddess, and bow down.

[*Shouts.* 'Synorix! Synorix!' *All rise.*]

*Camma.* Fling wide the doors and let the new-made children

Of our imperial mother see the show.

[*Sunlight pours through the doors.* I have no heart to do it. (*To Phæbe*).

Look for me!

[*Crouches.* Phæbe looks out.

[*Shouts.* 'Synorix! Synorix!'

*Phæbe.* He climbs the throne.

Hot blood, ambition, pride

So bloat and redden his face—O would it were

His third last apoplexy! O bestial!

O how unlike our goodly Sinnatus.

*Camma (on the ground).* You wrong him surely; far as the face goes

A goodlier-looking man than Sinnatus.

*Phæbe (aside).* How dare she say

it? I could hate her for it

But that she is distracted.

[*A flourish of trumpets.*]

*Camma.* Is he crown'd?

*Phæbe.* Ay, there they crown him.

[*Crowd without shout.* 'Synorix! Synorix!'

[*A Priestess brings a box of spices to Camma, who throws them on the altar-flame.*]

*Camma.* Rouse the dead altar-

flame, fling in the spices,

Nard, Cinnamon, amomum, benzoin.

Let all the air reel into a mist of odor,

As in the midmost heart of Paradise.

Lay down the Lydian carpets for the king.

The king should pace on purple to his bride,

And music there to greet my lord the king.

[*Music.* (*To Phæbe*), Dost thou remember when I wedded Sinnatus?

Ay, thou wast there—whether from maiden fears

Or reverential love for him I loved,

Or some strange second-sight, the marriage cup

Wherefrom we make libation to the Goddess

So shook within my hand, that the

red wine

Ran down the marble and lookt like  
blood, like blood.

*Phæbe.* I do remember your first-  
marriage fears.

*Camma.* I have no fears at this  
my second marriage.

See here—I stretch my hand out—  
hold it there.

How steady it is!

*Phæbe.* Steady enough to stab him!  
*Camma.* O hush! O peace! This  
violence ill becomes

The silence of our Temple. Gentle-  
ness,

Low words best chime with this so-  
lemnity.

*Enter a procession of Priestesses and  
Children bearing garlands and  
golden goblets, and strewing flow-  
ers.*

*Enter SYNORIX (as King, with gold  
laurel-wreath crown and purple  
robes), followed by ANTONIUS,  
PUBLIUS, Noblemen, Guards, and  
the Populace.*

*Camma.* Hail, King!

*Synorix.* Hail, Queen!

The wheel of fate has roll'd me to  
the top.

I would that happiness were gold,  
that I

Might cast my largess of it to the  
crowd!

I would that every man made feast  
to-day

Beneath the shadow of our pines and  
planes!

For all my truer life begins to-day.  
The past is like a travell'd land now  
sunk

Below the horizon—like a barren  
shore

That grew salt weeds, but now all  
drown'd in love

And glittering at full tide—the boun-  
teous bays

And havens filling with a blissful sea.  
Nor speak I now too mightily, being  
King

And happy! happiest, Lady, in my  
power

To make you happy.

*Camma.* Yes, sir.

*Synorix.* Our Antonius,  
Our faithful friend of Rome, tho'  
Rome may set

A free foot where she will, yet of his  
courtesy

Entreats he may be present at our  
marriage.

*Camma.* Let him come—a legion  
with him, if he will.

(*To Antonius.*) Welcome, my lord  
Antonius, to our Temple.

(*To Synorix.*) You on this side the  
altar. (*To Antonius.*) You on  
that.

Call first upon the Goddess, Synorix.

[*All face the Goddess. Priestesses,  
Children, Populace, and Guards  
kneel—the others remain stand-  
ing.*

*Synorix.* O Thou, that dost inspire  
the germ with life,

The child, a thread within the house  
of birth,

And give him limbs, then air, and  
send him forth

The glory of his father—Thou whose  
breath

Is balmy wind to robe our hills with  
grass,

And kindle all our vales with myrtle-  
blossom,

And roll the golden oceans of our  
grain,

And sway the long grape-bunches of  
our vines,

And fill all hearts with fatness and  
the lust

Of plenty—make me happy in my  
marriage!

*Chorus (chanting).* Artemis, Arte-  
mis, hear him, Ionian Artemis!

*Camma.* O Thou that slayest the  
babe within the womb

Or in the being born, or after slayest  
him

As boy or man, great Goddess, whose  
storm-voice

Unsockets the strong oak, and rears  
his root

Beyond his head, and strows our fruits,  
and lays

Our golden grain, and runs to sea  
and makes it  
Foam over all the fleeted wealth of  
kings

And peoples, hear.  
Whose arrow is the plague—whose  
quick flash splits

The mid-sea mast, and rifts the tower  
to the rock,  
And hurls the victor's column down  
with him

That crowns it, hear.  
Who causeth the safe earth to shud-  
der and gape,

And gulf and flatten in her closing  
chasm

Domed cities, hear.  
Whose lava-torrents blast and blacken  
a province

To a cinder, hear.  
Whose winter-cataracts find a realm  
and leave it

A waste of rock and ruin, hear. I call  
thee

To make my marriage prosper to my  
wish!

*Chorus.* Artemis, Artemis, hear  
her, Ephesian Artemis!

*Camma.* Artemis, Artemis, hear  
me, Galatian Artemis!

I call on our own Goddess in our own  
Temple.

*Chorus.* Artemis, Artemis, hear  
her, Galatian Artemis!

[*Thunder. All rise.*]

*Synorix (aside).* Thunder! Ay,  
ay, the storm was drawing  
hither

Across the hills when I was being  
crown'd.

I wonder if I look as pale as she?

*Camma.* Art thou—still bent—on  
marrying?

*Synorix.* Surely—yet  
These are strange words to speak to  
Artemis.

*Camma.* Words are not always  
what they seem, my King.

I will be faithful to thee till thou die.

*Synorix.* I thank thee. *Camma.*—I  
thank thee.

*Camma (turning to Antonius).* An-  
tonius,

Much graced are we that our Queen  
Rome in you

Deigns to look in upon our barba-  
risms.

[*Turns, goes up steps to altar be-  
fore the Goddess. Takes a cup  
from off the altar. Holds it  
towards Antonius. Antonius  
goes up to the foot of the steps  
opposite to Synorix.*]

You see this cup, my lord.

[*Gives it to him.*]

*Antonius.* Most curious!

The many-breasted mother Arte-  
mis

Emboss'd upon it.

*Camma.* It is old, I know not  
How many hundred years. Give it  
me again.

It is the cup belonging our own Tem-  
ple.

[*Puts it back on altar and takes up  
the cup of Act I. Showing it  
to Antonius.*]

Here is another sacred to the God-  
dess,

The gift of Synorix; and the God-  
dess, being

For this most grateful, wills, thro' me  
her Priestess,

In honor of his gift and of our mar-  
riage,

That Synorix should drink from his  
own cup.

*Synorix.* I thank thee, *Camma.*—I  
thank thee.

*Camma.* For—my lord—  
It is our ancient custom in Galatia

That ere two souls be knit for life and  
death,

They two should drink together from  
one cup,

In symbol of their married unity,  
Making libation to the Goddess.

Bring me

The costly wines we use in marriages.

[*They bring in a large jar of wine.*]

*Camma pours wine into cup.*

(*To Synorix.*) See here, I fill it. (*To  
Antonius.*) Will you drink, my  
lord?

*Antonius.* I? Why should I? I  
am not to be married.

*Camma.* But that might bring a Roman blessing on us.  
*Antonius (refusing cup).* Thy pardon, Priestess!

*Camma.* Thou art in the right. This blessing is for Synorix and for me.  
See first I make libation to the Goddess, [*Makes libation.*]  
And now I drink.

[*Drinks and fills the cup again.*  
Thy turn, Galatian King.  
Drink and drink deep—our marriage will be fruitful.  
Drink and drink deep, and thou wilt make me happy.

[*Synorix goes up to her. She hands him the cup. He drinks.*  
*Synorix.* There, *Camma!* I have almost drain'd the cup—  
A few drops left.

*Camma.* Libation to the Goddess.  
[*He throws the remaining drops on the altar and gives Camma the cup.*

*Camma (placing the cup on the altar).* Why then the Goddess hears.

[*Comes down and forward to tripod. Antonius follows.*

*Antonius.*  
Where wast thou on that morning when I came  
To plead to thee for Sinnatus's life,  
Beside this temple half a year ago?

*Antonius.* I never heard of this request of thine.

*Synorix (coming forward hastily to foot of tripod steps).* I sought him and I could not find him.  
Pray you,

Go on with the marriage rites.  
*Camma.* Antonius—  
'*Camma!*' who spake?

*Antonius.* Not I.  
*Phabe.* Nor any here.

*Camma.* I am all but sure that some one spake. Antonius,  
If you had found him plotting against Rome,  
Would you have tortured Sinnatus to death?

*Antonius.* No thought was mine of torture or of death,  
But had I found him plotting, I had counsell'd him

To rest from vain resistance. Rome is fated  
To rule the world. Then, if he had not listen'd,  
I might have sent him prisoner to Rome.

*Synorix.* Why do you palter with the ceremony?  
Go on with the marriage rites.

*Camma.* They are finish'd.  
*Synorix.* How!

*Camma.* Thou hast drunk deep enough to make me happy.  
Dost thou not feel the love I bear to thee  
Glow thro' thy veins?

*Synorix.* The love I bear to thee  
Glow thro' my veins since first I look'd on thee.

But wherefore stir the perfect ceremony?  
The sovereign of Galatia weds his Queen.

Let all be done to the fullest in the sight  
Of all the Gods.

Nay, rather than so clip  
The flowery robe of Hymen, we would add  
Some golden fringe of gorgeousness beyond

Old use, to make the day memorial, when

*Synorix, first King, Camma, first Queen o' the Kealm,*  
Drew here the richest lot from Fate, to live

And die together.

This pain—what is it?—again?  
I had a touch of this last year—in—Rome.

Yes, yes. (*To Antonius.*) Your arm—a moment—It will pass.

I reel beneath the weight of utter joy—

This all too happy day, crown—queen at once. [*Suggests.*

O all ye Gods—Jupiter!—Jupiter!  
[*Falls backward.*

*Camma.* Dost thou cry out upon  
the Gods of Rome?  
Thou art Galatian-born. Our Artemis  
Has vanquish'd their Diana.

*Synorix (on the ground).* I am  
poison'd.  
She—close the Temple door. Let  
her not fly.

*Camma (leaning on tripod).* Have  
I not drunk of the same cup  
with thee?

*Synorix.* Ay, by the Gods of Rome  
and all the world,  
She too—she too—the bride! the  
Queen! and I—  
Monstrous! I that loved her.

*Camma.* I loved him.

*Synorix.* O murderous mad-woman!  
I pray you lift me  
And make me walk awhile. I have  
heard these poisons  
May be walk'd down.

[*Antonius and Publius raise him up.*

My feet are tons of lead,  
They will break in the earth—I am  
sinking—hold me—  
Let me alone.

[*They leave him; he sinks down on  
ground.*

Too late—thought myself  
wise—  
A woman's dupe. Antonius, tell the  
Senate

I have been most true to Rome—  
would have been true

To her—if it— [Falls as if dead.  
*Camma (coming and leaning over  
him).* So falls the throne of  
an hour.

*Synorix (half rising).* Throne? is it  
thou? the Fates are throned,  
not we—

Not guilty of ourselves—thy doom  
and mine—

Thou—coming my way too—*Camma*  
—good-night. [Dies.

*Camma (upheld by weeping Priest-  
esses).* Thy way? poor worm,  
crawl down thine own black hole

To the lowest Hell. Antonius, is he  
there?

I meant thee to have follow'd—better  
thus.

Nay, if my people must be thralls of  
Rome,  
He is gentle, tho' a Roman.

[*Sinks back into the arms of the Priest-  
esses.*

*Antonius.* Thou art one  
With thine own people, and though a  
Roman I

Forgive thee, *Camma.*  
*Camma (raising herself).* 'CAMMA!'

—why there again  
I am most sure that some one call'd.

O women,  
Ye will have Roman masters. I am  
glad

I shall not see it. Did not some old  
Greek

Say death was the chief good? He  
had my fate for it,

Poison'd. (*Sinks back again.*) Have  
I the crown on? I will go

To meet him, crown'd! crown'd victor  
of my will—

On my last voyage—but the wind has  
fail'd—

Growing dark too—but light enough  
to row.

Row to the blessed Isles! the blessed  
Isles!—

Sinnatus!  
Why comes he not to meet me? It is  
the crown

Offends him—and my hands are too  
sleepy

To lift it off. [*Phœbe takes the crown  
off.*

Who touch'd me then? I thank  
you.

[*Rises, with outspread arms.*  
There—league on league of ever-shin-  
ing shore

Beneath an ever-rising sun—I see  
him—

'Camma, Camma!' Sinnatus, Sinna-  
tus! [Dies.

# THE FALCON.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE COUNT FEDERIGO DEGLI ALBERIGHI,  
FILIPPO, *Count's foster-brother.*  
THE LADY GIOVANNA,  
ELISABETTA, *the Count's nurse.*

SCENE.—AN ITALIAN COTTAGE.  
CASTLE AND MOUNTAINS SEEN  
THROUGH WINDOW.

ELISABETTA *discovered seated on stool in window darning. The Count with Falcon on his hand comes down through the door at back. A withered wreath on the wall.*

*Elisabetta.* So, my lord, the Lady Giovanna, who hath been away so long, came back last night with her son to the castle.

*Count.* Hear that, my bird! Art thou not jealous of her?

My princess of the cloud, my plumed purveyor,  
My far-eyed queen of the winds—thou that canst soar  
Beyond the morning lark, and how-soe'er

Thy quarry wind and wheel, swoop down upon him  
Eagle-like, lightning-like—strike, make his feathers  
Glance in mid heaven.

*[Crosses to chair.*

I would thou hadst a mate!  
Thy breed will die with thee, and mine with me:  
I am as lone and loveless as thyself.

*[Sits in chair.*

Giovanna here! Ay, ruffle thyself—  
*be jealous!*

Thou should'st be jealous of her.  
Tho' I bred thee  
The full-train'd marvel of all falconry,  
And love thee and thou me, yet if  
Giovanna

Be here again—No, no! Buss me,  
my bird!

The stately widow has no heart for  
me.

Thou art the last friend left me upon  
earth—  
No, no again to that.

*[Rises and turns.*

My good old nurse,  
I had forgotten thou wast sitting  
there.

*Elisabetta.* Ay, and forgotten thy  
foster-brother too.

*Count.* Bird-babble for my falcon!  
Let it pass.

What art thou doing there?

*Elisabetta.* Darning your lordship.  
We cannot flaunt it in new feathers  
now:

Nay, if we will buy diamond neck-  
laces

To please our lady, we must darn, my  
lord.

This old thing here *(points to necklace round her neck)*, they are but  
blue beads—my Piero,

God rest his honest soul, he bought  
'em for me,

Ay, but he knew I meant to marry  
him.

How couldst thou do it, my son?  
How couldst thou do it?

*Count.* She saw it at a dance, upon  
a neck  
Less lovely than her own, and long'd  
for it.

*Elisabetta.* She told thee as much?

*Count.* No, no—a friend of  
hers.

*Elisabetta.* Shame on her that she  
took it at thy hands,  
She rich enough to have bought it for  
herself!

*Count.* She would have robb'd me  
then of a great pleasure.

*Elisabetta.* But hath she yet re-  
turn'd thy love?

*Count.* Not yet!

*Elisabetta.* She should return thy necklace then.

*Count.* Ay, if She knew the giver; but I bound the seller

To silence, and I left it privily At Florence, in her palace.

*Elisabetta.* And sold thine own To buy it for her. She not know? She knows

There's none such other—

*Count.* Madman anywhere. Speak freely, tho' to call a madman mad

Will hardly help to make him sane again.

*Enter FILIPPO.*

*Filippo.* Ah, the women, the women! Ah, Monna Giovanna, you here again! you that have the face of an angel and the heart of a—that's too positive! You that have a score of lovers and have not a heart for any of them—that's positive-negative: you that have not the head of a toad, and not a heart like the jewel in it—that's too negative; you that have a cheek like a peach and a heart like the stone in it—that's positive again—that's better!

*Elisabetta.* Sh—sh—Filippo!

*Filippo (turns half round).* Here has our master been a-glorifying and a-velveting and a-silking himself, and a-peacocking and a-spreading to catch her eye for a dozen year, till he hasn't an eye left in his own tail to flourish among the pea-hens, and all along o' you, Monna Giovanna, all along o' you!

*Elisabetta.* Sh—sh—Filippo! Can't you hear that you are saying behind his back what you see you are saying afore his face?

*Count.* Let him—he never spares me to my face!

*Filippo.* No, my lord, I never spare your lordship to your lordship's face, nor behind your lordship's back, nor to right, nor to left, nor to round about and back to your lordship's

face again, for I'm honest, your lordship.

*Count.* Come, come, Filippo, what is there in the larder?

[*Elisabetta crosses to fireplace and puts on wood.*]

*Filippo.* Shelves and hooks, shelves and hooks, and when I see the shelves I am like to hang myself on the hooks.

*Count.* No bread?

*Filippo.* Half a breakfast for a rat!

*Count.* Milk?

*Filippo.* Three laps for a cat!

*Count.* Cheese?

*Filippo.* A supper for twelve mites.

*Count.* Eggs?

*Filippo.* One, but addled.

*Count.* No bird?

*Filippo.* Half a tit and a hern's bill.

*Count.* Let be thy jokes and thy jerks, man! Anything or nothing?

*Filippo.* Well, my lord, if all-but-nothing be anything, and one plate of dried prunes be all-but-nothing, then there is anything in your lordship's larder at your lordship's service, if your lordship care to call for it.

*Count.* Good mother, happy was the prodigal son,

For he return'd to the rich father; I But add my poverty to thine. And all Thro' following of my fancy. Pray thee make

Thy slender meal out of those scraps and shreds

*Filippo spoke of.* As for him and me, There sprouts a salad in the garden still.

(*To the Falcon.*) Why didst thou miss thy quarry yester-even?

To-day, my beauty, thou must dash us down

Our dinner from the skies. Away. Filippo!

[*Exit, followed by Filippo.*]

*Elisabetta.* I knew it would come to this. She has beggared him. I always knew it would come to this! (*Goes up to table as if to resume darning, and looks out of windows.*) Why, as I live, there is Monna Giovanna coming down the hill from the castle. Stops and stares at our cottage. Ay,



ay! stare at it: it's all you have left us. Shame on you! *She beautiful*: sleek as a miller's mouse! Meal enough, meat enough, well fed; but beautiful—bah! Nay, see, why she turns down the path through our little vineyard, and I sneezed three times this morning. Coming to visit my lord, for the first time in her life too! Why, bless the saints! I'll be bound to confess her love to him at last. I forgive her, I forgive her! I knew it would come to this—I always knew it must come to this! (*Going up to door during latter part of speech and opens it.*) Come in, Madonna, come in. (*Retires to front of table and curtsies as the Lady Giovanna enters, then moves chair towards the hearth.*) Nay, let me place this chair for your ladyship.

[*Lady Giovanna moves slowly down stage, then crosses to chair, looking about her, bows as she sees the Madonna over fireplace, then sits in chair.*

*Lady Giovanna.* Can I speak with the Count?

*Elisabetta.* Ay, my lady, but won't you speak with the old woman first, and tell her all about it and make her happy? for I've been on my knees every day for these half-dozen years in hope that the saints would send us this blessed morning; and he always took you so kindly, he always took the world so kindly. When he was a little one, and I put the bitters on my breast to wean him, he made a wry mouth at it, but he took it so kindly, and your ladyship has given him bitters enough in this world, and he never made a wry mouth at you, he always took you so kindly—which is more than I did, my lady, more than I did—and he so handsome—and bless your sweet face, you look as beautiful this morning as the very Madonna her own self—and better late than never—but come when they will—then or now—it's all for the best, come when they will—they are made by the blessed saints—these marriages.

[*Raises her hands.*

*Lady Giovanna.* Marriages? I shall never marry again!

*Elisabetta (rises and turns).* Shame on her then!

*Lady Giovanna.* Where is the Count?

*Elisabetta.* Just gone  
To fly his falcon.

*Lady Giovanna.* Call him back and say  
I come to breakfast with him.

*Elisabetta.* Holy mother!  
To breakfast! Oh sweet saints! one plate of prunes!

Well, Madam, I will give your message to him. [*Exit.*

*Lady Giovanna.* His falcon, and I come to ask for his falcon,  
The pleasure of his eyes—boast of his hand—

Pride of his heart—the solace of his hours—

His one companion here—nay, I have heard

That, thro' his late magnificence of living

And this last costly gift to mine own self, [*Shows diamond necklace.*

He hath become so beggar'd, that his falcon

Ev'n wins his dinner for him in the field.

That must be talk, not truth, but truth or talk,

How can I ask for his falcon?

[*Rises and moves as she speaks.*

O my sick boy!

My daily fading Florio, it is thou  
Hath set me this hard task, for when

I say

What can I do—what can I get for thee?

He answers, 'Get the Count to give me his falcon,

And that will make me well.' Yet if I ask,

He loves me, and he knows I know he loves me!

Will he not pray me to return his love—

To marry him?—(*pause*)—I can never marry him.

His grandsire struck my grandsire in  
a brawl

At Florence, and my grandsire stabb'd  
him there.

The feud between our houses is the  
bar

I cannot cross; I dare not brave my  
brother,

Break with my kin. My brother  
hates him, scorns

The noblest-natured man alive, and I—  
Who have that reverence for him that  
I scarce

Dare beg him to receive his diamonds  
back—

How can I dare I, ask him for his  
falcon?

[Puts diamonds in her casket.]

Re-enter COUNT and FILIPPO. COUNT  
turns to FILIPPO.

Count. Do what I said; I cannot  
do it myself.

Filippo. Why then, my lord, we  
are pauper'd out and out.

Count. Do what I said!  
[Advances and bows low.]

Welcome to this poor cottage, my  
dear lady.

Lady Giovanna. And welcome  
turns a cottage to a palace.

Count. 'Tis long since we have  
met!

Lady Giovanna. To make amends  
I come this day to break my fast with  
you.

Count. I am much honor'd—yes—  
[Turns to Filippo.]

Do what I told thee. Must I do it  
myself?

Filippo. I will, I will. (Sighs.)  
Poor fellow! [Exit.]

Count. Lady, you bring your light  
into my cottage

Who never deign'd to shine into my  
palace.

My palace wanting you was but a  
cottage;

My cottage, while you grace it, is a  
palace.

Lady Giovanna. In cottage or in  
palace, being still

Beyond your fortunes, you are still the  
king

Of courtesy and liberality.

Count. I trust I still maintain my  
courtesy;

My liberality perforce is dead—

Thro' lack of means of giving.

Lady Giovanna. Yet I come  
To ask a gift.

[Moves toward him a little.]

Count. It will be hard, I fear,  
To find one shock upon the field when  
all

The harvest has been carried.

Lady Giovanna. But my boy—

(Aside.) No, no! not yet—I cannot!

Count. Ay, how is he,

That bright inheritor of your eyes—  
your boy?

Lady Giovanna. Alas, my Lord  
Federigo, he hath fallen

Into a sickness, and it troubles me.

Count. Sick! is it so? why, when  
he came last year

To see me hawking, he was well  
enough:

And then I taught him all our hawk-  
ing-phrases.

Lady Giovanna. Oh yes, and once  
you let him fly your falcon.

Count. How charm'd he was!  
what wonder?—A gallant boy,

A noble bird, each perfect of the  
breed.

Lady Giovanna (sinks in chair).

What do you rate her at?

Count. My bird? a hundred  
Gold pieces once were offer'd by the

Duke.

I had no heart to part with her for  
money.

Lady Giovanna. No, not for money.

[Count turns away and sighs.]

Wherefore do you sigh?

Count. I have lost a friend of late.

Lady Giovanna. I could sigh with  
you

For fear of losing more than friend, a  
son;

And if he leave me—all the rest of  
life—

That wither'd wreath were of more  
worth to me.

[Looking at wreath on wall.]  
*Count.* That wither'd wreath is of  
 more worth to me  
 Than all the blossom, all the leaf of  
 this  
 New-wakening year.

[Goes and takes down wreath.]  
*Lady Giovanna.* And yet I never  
 saw  
 The land so rich in blossom as this  
 year.

*Count* (holding wreath toward her).  
 Was not the year when this  
 was gather'd richer?

*Lady Giovanna.* How long ago  
 was that?

*Count.* Alas, ten summers!  
 A lady that was beautiful as day  
 Sat by me at a rustic festival  
 With other beauties on a mountain  
 meadow,  
 And she was the most beautiful of all;  
 Then but fifteen, and still as beauti-  
 ful.

The mountain flowers grew thickly  
 round about.  
 I made a wreath with some of these;  
 I ask'd

A ribbon from her hair to bind it  
 with;

I whisper'd, Let me crown you Queen  
 of Beauty,

And softly placed the chaplet on her  
 head.

A color, which has color'd all my  
 life,

Flush'd in her face; then I was call'd  
 away;

And presently all rose, and so de-  
 parted.

Ah! she had thrown my chaplet on  
 the grass,  
 And there I found it.

[Lets his hands fall, holding  
 wreath despondingly.]

*Lady Giovanna* (after pause). How  
 long since do you say?

*Count.* That was the very year be-  
 fore you married.

*Lady Giovanna.* When I was mar-  
 ried you were at the wars.

*Count.* Had she not thrown my  
 chaplet on the grass,

It may be I had never seen the  
 wars.

[Replaces wreath whence he had  
 taken it.]

*Lady Giovanna.* Ah, but, my lord,  
 there ran a rumor then  
 That you were kill'd in battle. I can  
 tell you

True tears that year were shed for you  
 in Florence.

*Count.* It might have been as well  
 for me. Unhappily  
 I was but wounded by the enemy  
 there

And then imprison'd.

*Lady Giovanna.* Happily, how-  
 ever,

I see you quite recover'd of your  
 wound.

*Count.* No, no, not quite, Madonna,  
 not yet, not yet.

Re-enter FILIPPO.

*Filippo.* My lord, a word with you.

*Count.* Pray, pardon me!

[Lady Giovanna crosses, and  
 passes behind chair and takes  
 down wreath; then goes to chair  
 by table.]

*Count* (to Filippo). What is it, Fi-  
 lippo?

*Filippo.* Spoons, your lordship.

*Count.* Spoons!

*Filippo.* Yes, my lord, for wasn't  
 my lady born with a golden spoon in  
 her ladyship's mouth, and we haven't  
 never so much as a silver one for the  
 golden lips of her ladyship.

*Count.* Have we not half a score  
 of silver spoons?

*Filippo.* Half o' one, my lord!

*Count.* How half of one?

*Filippo.* I trod upon him even now,  
 my lord, in my hurry, and broke him.

*Count.* And the other nine?

*Filippo.* Sold! but shall I not  
 mount with your lordship's leave to  
 her ladyship's castle, in your lord-  
 ship's and her ladyship's name, and  
 confer with her ladyship's seneschal,  
 and so descend again with some of  
 her ladyship's own appurtenances?

*Count.* Why—no, man. Only see your cloth be clean. [*Exit Filippo.*]

*Lady Giovanna.* Ay, ay, this faded ribbon was the mode  
In Florence ten years back. What's here? a scroll  
Pinned to the wreath.

My lord, you have said so much  
Of this poor wreath that I was bold  
enough

To take it down, if but to guess what  
flowers

Had made it; and I find a written  
scroll

That seems to run in rhymings. Might  
I read?

*Count.* Ay, if you will.

*Lady Giovanna.* It should be if  
you can.

(*Reads.*) 'Dead mountain.' Nay, for  
who could trace a hand  
So wild and staggering?

*Count.* This was penn'd, Madonna,  
Close to the grating on a winter  
morn

In the perpetual twilight of a prison,  
When he that made it, having his  
right hand

Lamed in the battle, wrote it with his  
left.

*Lady Giovanna.* O heavens! the  
very letters seem to shake

With cold, with pain perhaps, poor  
prisoner! Well,

Tell me the words—or better—for I  
see

There goes a musical score along  
with them,

Repeat them to their music.

*Count.* You can touch  
No chord in me that would not an-  
swer you

In music.

*Lady Giovanna.* That is musically  
said.

[*Count takes guitar. Lady Gio-  
vanna sits listening with wreath  
in her hand, and quietly re-  
moves scroll and places it on  
table at the end of the song.*]

*Count (sings, playing guitar).*

'Dead mountain flowers, dead  
mountain-meadow flowers,

Dearer than when you made your  
mountain gay,

Sweeter than any violet of to-day.

Richer than all the wide world-wealth  
of May,

To me, tho' all your bloom has died  
away,

You bloom again, dead mountain-  
meadow flowers.'

*Enter ELISABETTA with cloth.*

*Elisabetta.* A word with you, my  
lord!

*Count (singing).* 'O mountain  
flowers!'

*Elisabetta.* A word, my lord!  
(*Louder.*)

*Count (sings).* 'Dead flowers!'

*Elisabetta.* A word, my lord!  
(*Louder.*)

*Count.* I pray you pardon me  
again!

[*Lady Giovanna looking at wreath.*  
*Count (to Elisabetta).* What is it?

*Elisabetta.* My lord, we have but  
one piece of earthenware to serve the  
salad in to my lady, and that cracked!

*Count.* Why then, that flower'd  
bowl my ancestor

Fetch'd from the farthest east—we  
never use it

For fear of breakage—but this day  
has brought

A great occasion. You can take it,  
nurse!

*Elisabetta.* I did take it, my lord,  
but what with my lady's coming that  
had so hurried me, and what with the  
fear of breaking it, I did break it, my  
lord: it is broken!

*Count.* My one thing left of value  
in the world!

No matter! see your cloth be white as  
snow!

*Elisabetta (pointing thro' window).*  
White? I warrant thee, my son, as  
the snow yonder on the very tip-top o'  
the mountain.

*Count.* And yet to speak white  
truth, my good old mother,

I have seen it like the snow on the  
moraine.

*Elisabetta.* How can your lordship say so? There my lord!

[Lays cloth.

O my dear son, be not unkind to me. And one word more. [Going—returns. *Count* (touching guitar). Good! let it be but one.

*Elisabetta.* Hath she return'd thy love?

*Count.* Not yet!

*Elisabetta.* And will she?

*Count* (looking at Lady Giovanna). I scarce believe it!

*Elisabetta.* Shame upon her then!

[Exit.

*Count* (sings). 'Dead mountain flowers'—

Ah well, my nurse has broken The thread of my dead flowers, as she has broken

My china bowl. My memory is as dead.

[Goes and replaces guitar.

Strange that the words at home with me so long

Should fly like bosom friends when needed most.

So by your leave if you would hear the rest,

The writing.

*Lady Giovanna* (holding wreath toward him). There! my lord, you are a poet,

And can you not imagine that the wreath,

Set, as you say, so lightly on her head, Fell with her motion as she rose, and she,

A girl, a child, then but fifteen, however

Flutter'd or flatter'd by your notice of her,

Was yet too bashful to return for it?

*Count.* Was it so indeed? was it so? was it so?

[Leans forward to take wreath, and touches Lady Giovanna's hand, which she withdraws hastily; he places wreath on corner of chair.

*Lady Giovanna* (with dignity). I did not say, my lord, that it was so;

I said you might imagine it was so.

Enter FILIPPO with bowl of salad, which he places on table.

*Filippo.* Here's a fine salad for my lady, for tho' we have been a soldier, and ridden by his lordship's side, and seen the red of the battle-field, yet are we now drill-sergeant to his lordship's lettuces, and profess to be great in green-things and in garden-stuff.

*Lady Giovanna.* I thank thee, good Filippo. [Exit Filippo.

Enter ELISABETTA with bird on a dish which she places on table.

*Elisabetta* (close to table). Here's a fine fowl for my lady; I had scant time to do him in. I hope he be not underdone, for we be undone in the doing of him.

*Lady Giovanna.* I thank you, my good nurse.

*Filippo* (re-entering with plate of prunes). And here are fine fruits for my lady—prunes, my lady, from the tree that my lord himself planted here in the blossom of his boyhood—and so I, Filippo, being, with your ladyship's pardon, and as your ladyship knows, his lordship's own foster-brother, would commend them to your ladyship's most peculiar appreciation.

[Puts plate on table.

*Elisabetta.* Filippo!

*Lady Giovanna* (*Count* leads her to table). Will you not eat with me, my lord?

*Count.* I cannot,

Not a morsel, not one morsel. I have broken

My fast already. I will pledge you

Wine!

Filippo, wine!

[Sits near table. Filippo brings flask, fills the *Count's* goblet, then *Lady Giovanna's*; *Elisabetta* stands at the back of *Lady Giovanna's* chair.

*Count.* It is but thin and cold, Not like the vintage blowing round your castle.

We lie too deep down in the shadow here

Your ladyship lives higher in the sun.

[*They pledge each other and drink.*

*Lady Giovanna.* If I might send you down a flask or two Of that same vintage? There is iron in it.

It has been much commended as a medicine.

I give it my sick son, and if you be Not quite recover'd of your wound, the wine

Might help you. None has ever told me yet

The story of your battle and your wound.

*Filippo (coming forward).* I can tell you, my lady, I can tell you.

*Elisabetta.* Filippo! will you take the word out of your master's own mouth?

*Filippo.* Was it there to take? Put it there, my lord.

*Count.* Giovanna, my dear lady, in this same battle

We had been beaten—they were ten to one.

The trumpets of the fight had echo'd down,

I and Filippo here had done our best,

And, having passed unwounded from the field,

Were seated sadly at a fountain side, Our horses grazing by us, when a troop,

Laden with booty and with a flag of ours

Ta'en in the fight—

*Filippo.* Ay, but we fought for it back,

And kill'd—

*Elisabetta.* Filippo!

*Count.* A troop of horse—

*Filippo.* Five hundred!

*Count.* Say fifty!

*Filippo.* And we kill'd 'em by the score!

*Elisabetta.* Filippo!

*Filippo.* Well, well, well!

I bite my tongue.

*Count.* We may have left their fifty less by five,

However, staying not to count how many,

But anger'd at their flaunting of our flag,

We mounted, and we dash'd into the heart of 'em.

I wore the lady's chaplet round my neck;

It served me for a blessed rosary.

I am sure that more than one brave fellow owed

His death to the charm in it.

*Elisabetta.* Hear that, my lady!

*Count.* I cannot tell how long we strove before

Our horses fell beneath us; down we went

Crush'd, hack'd at, trampled under-foot. The night,

As some cold-manner'd friend may strangely do us

The truest service, had a touch of frost

That help'd to check the flowing of the blood.

My last sight ere I swoon'd was one sweet face

Crown'd with the wreath. *That* seem'd to come and go.

They left us there for dead!

*Elisabetta.* Hear that, my lady!

*Filippo.* Ay, and I left two fingers there for dead. See, my lady!

[*Showing his hand.*]

*Lady Giovanna.* I see, Filippo!

*Filippo.* And I have small hope of the gentleman gout in my great toe.

*Lady Giovanna.* And why, Filippo?

[*Smiling absently.*]  
*Filippo.* I left him there for dead too!

*Elisabetta.* She smiles at him—how hard the woman is!

My lady, if your ladyship were not Too proud to look upon the garland,

you  
Would find it stain'd—

*Count (rising).* Silence, Elisabetta!

*Elisabetta.* Stain'd with the blood of the best heart that ever

Beat for one woman.

[*Points to wreath on chair.*]

*Lady Giovanna (rising slowly).* I can eat no more!

*Count.* You have but trifled with our homely salad, But dallied with a single lettuce-leaf; Not eaten anything.

*Lady Giovanna.* Nay, nay, I cannot.

You know, my lord, I told you I was troubled.

My one child Florio lying still so sick,

I bound myself, and by a solemn vow, That I would touch no flesh till he were well

Here, or else well in Heaven, where all is well.

[*Elisabetta clears table of bird and salad: Filippo snatches up the plate of prunes and holds them to Lady Giovanna.*

*Filippo.* But the prunes, my lady, from the tree that his lordship—

*Lady Giovanna.* Not now, Filippo.

My lord Federigo, Can I not speak with you once more alone?

*Count.* You hear, Filippo? My good fellow, go!

*Filippo.* But the prunes that your lordship—

*Elisabetta.* Filippo!

*Count.* Ay, prune our company of thine own and go!

*Elisabetta.* Filippo!

*Filippo (turning).* Well, well! the women!

*Count.* And thou too leave us, my dear nurse, alone.

*Elisabetta (folding up cloth and going).* And me too! Ay, the dear nurse will leave you alone; but, for all that, she that has eaten the yolk is scarce like to swallow the shell.

[*Turns and curtsies stiffly to Lady Giovanna, then exit.* *Lady Giovanna takes out diamond necklace from casket.*

*Lady Giovanna.* I have anger'd your good nurse; these old-world servants

Are all but flesh and blood with those they serve.

My lord, I have a present to return you, And afterwards a boon to crave of you.

*Count.* No, my most honor'd and long-worshipt lady, Poor Federigo degli Alberighi Takes nothing in return from you except

Return of his affection—can deny Nothing to you that you require of him.

*Lady Giovanna.* Then I require you to take back your diamonds— [Offering necklace.

I doubt not they are yours. No other heart

Of such magnificence in courtesy Beats—out of heaven. They seem'd too rich a prize

To trust with any messenger. I came In person to return them.

[*Count draws back.* If the phrase

'Return' displease you, we will say— exchange them

For you—for you—

*Count (takes a step toward her and then back).* For mine—and what of mine?

*Lady Giovanna.* Well, shall we say this wreath and your sweet rhymes?

*Count.* But have you ever worn my diamonds?

*Lady Giovanna.* No! For that would seem accepting of your love.

I cannot brave my brother—but be sure That I shall never marry again, my lord!

*Count.* Sure?

*Lady Giovanna.* Yes!

*Count.* Is this your brother's order?

*Lady Giovanna.* No! For he would marry me to the richest man

In Florence; but I think you know the saying—

'Better a man without riches, than riches without a man.'

*Count.* A noble saying—and acted  
on would yield

A nobler breed of men and women.

*Lady,*  
I find you a shrewd bargainer. The  
wreath

That once you wore outvalues twenty-  
fold

The diamonds that you never deign'd  
to wear.

But lay them there for a moment!

[*Points to table.* *Lady Giovanna*  
*places necklace on table.*

And be you  
Gracious enough to let me know the  
boon

By granting which, if aught be mine  
to grant,

I should be made more happy than I  
hoped

Ever to be again.

*Lady Giovanna.* Then keep your  
wreath,

But you will find me a shrewd bar-  
gainer still.

I cannot keep your diamonds, for the  
gift

I ask for, to *my* mind and at this  
present

Outvalues all the jewels upon earth.

*Count.* It should be love that thus  
outvalues all.

You speak like love, and yet you love  
me not.

I have nothing in this world but love  
for you.

*Lady Giovanna.* Love? it *is* love,  
love for my dying boy.

Moves me to ask it of you.

*Count.* What? my time?  
Is it my time? Well, I can give my  
time

To him that is a part of you, your son.  
Shall I return to the castle with you?

Shall I

Sit by him, read to him, tell him my  
tales,

Sing him my songs? You know that  
I can touch

The glittern to some purpose

*Lady Giovanna.* No, not that!  
I thank you heartily for that—and  
you,

I doubt not from your nobleness of  
nature,

Will pardon me for asking what I  
ask.

*Count.* Giovanna, dear Giovanna,  
I that once

The wildest of the random youth of  
Florence

Before I saw you—all my nobleness  
Of nature, as you deign to call it,

draws

From you, and from my constancy to  
you.

No more, but speak.

*Lady Giovanna.* I will. You know  
sick people,

More specially sick children, have  
strange fancies,

Strange longings; and to thwart them  
in their mood

May work them grievous harm at  
times, may even

Hasten their end. I would you had a  
son!

It might be easier then for you to  
make

Allowance for a mother—her—who  
comes

To rob you of your one delight on  
earth.

How often has my sick boy yearn'd  
for this!

I have put him off as often; but to-  
day

I dared not—so much weaker, so  
much worse

For last day's journey. I was weep-  
ing for him;

He gave me his hand: 'I should be  
well again

If the good Count would give me—'  
*Count.* Give me.

*Lady Giovanna.* His falcon.

*Count (starts back).* My falcon!

*Lady Giovanna.* Yes, your falcon,  
Federigo!

*Count.* Alas, I cannot!

*Lady Giovanna.* Cannot? Even  
so!

I fear'd as much. O this unhappy  
world!

How shall I break it to him? how  
shall I tell him?



The boy may die : more blessed were  
the rags

Of some pale beggar-woman seeking  
alms

For her sick son, if he were like to  
live,

Than all my childless wealth, if mine  
must die.

I was to blame—the love you said you  
bore me—

My lord, we thank you for your entertain-  
ment. [*With a stately  
curtsey.*]

And so return—Heaven help him!—  
to our son. [*Turns.*]

*Count (rushes forward).* Stay,  
stay, I am most unlucky, most  
unhappy.

You never had look'd in on me be-  
fore,

And when you came and dipt your  
sovereign head

Thro' these low doors, you ask'd to  
eat with me.

I had but emptiness to set before  
you,

No not a draught of milk, no not an  
egg.

Nothing but my brave bird, my noble  
falcon,

My comrade of the house, and of the  
field.

She had to die for it—she died for  
you.

Perhaps I thought with those of old,  
the nobler

The victim was, the more acceptable  
Might be the sacrifice. I fear you  
scarce

Will thank me for your entertainment  
now.

*Lady Giovanna (returning).* I bear  
with him no longer.

*Count.* No, Madonna!  
And he will have to bear with it as  
he may.

*Lady Giovanna.* I break with him  
forever!

*Count.* Yes, Giovanna,

But he will keep his love to you for-  
ever!

*Lady Giovanna.* You? you? not  
you! My brother! my hard  
brother!

O Federigo, Federigo, I love you!  
Spite of ten thousand brothers, Fed-  
erigo. [*Falls at his feet.*]

*Count (impetuously).* Why then  
the dying of my noble bird

Hath served me better than her living  
—then

[*Takes diamonds from table.*]

These diamonds are both yours and  
mine—have won

Their value again—beyond all mar-  
kets—there

I lay them for the first time round  
your neck.

[*Lays necklace round her neck.*]

And then this chaplet—No more  
feuds, but peace,

Peace and conciliation! I will  
make

Your brother love me. See, I tear  
away

The leaves were darken'd by the bat-  
tle—

[*Pulls leaves off and throws them down.*]

—crown you  
Again with the same crown my Queen  
of Beauty.

[*Places wreath on her head.*]

Rise—I could almost think that the  
dead garland

Will break once more into the living  
blossom.

Nay, nay, I pray you rise.  
[*Raises her with both hands.*]

We two together  
Will help to heal your son—your son  
and mine—

We shall do it—we shall do it.  
[*Embraces her.*]

The purpose of my being is accom-  
plish'd,

And I am happy!

*Lady Giovanna.* And I too, Fed-  
erigo.

# THE PROMISE OF MAY.

A surface man of theories, true to none.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

FARMER DOBSON.  
MR. PHILIP EDGAR (*afterwards* MR. HAROLD).  
FARMER STEER (*DORA and EVA's Father*).  
MR. WILSON (*a Schoolmaster*).  
HIGGINS  
JAMES  
DAN SMITH  
JACKSON  
ALLEN  
DORA STEER.  
EVA STEER.  
SALLY ALLEN  
MILLY

} *Farm Laborers.*

} *Farm Servants.*

*Farm Servants, Laborers, etc.*

## ACT I.

### SCENE.—BEFORE FARMHOUSE.

*Farming Men and Women. Farming Men carrying forms, etc., Women carrying baskets of knives and forks, etc.*

*1st Farming Man.* Be thou a-gawin' to the long barn?

*2nd Farming Man.* Ay, to be sewer! Be thou?

*1st Farming Man.* Why, o' coorse, fur it be the owd man's birthdaäy. He be heighty this very daäy, and 'e telled all on us to be i' the long barn by one o'clock, fur he'll gie us a big dinner, and haäfe th' parish 'll be theer, an' Miss Dora, an' Miss Eva, 'an all!

*2nd Farming Man.* Miss Dora be coomed back, then?

*1st Farming Man.* Ay, haäfe an hour ago. She be in theer now. (*Pointing to house.*) Owd Steer wur afeärd she wouldn't be back i' time to keep his birthdaäy, and he wur in a tew about it all the murnin'; and he sent me wi' the gig to Littlechester to fetch 'er; and 'er an' the owd man they 'll a kissin' o' one another like

two sweet'arts i' the poorch as soon as he clapt eyes of 'er.

*2nd Farming Man.* Foälks says he likes Miss Eva the best.

*1st Farming Man.* Naäy, I knaws nowt o' what foälks says, an' I caäres nowt neither. Foälks doesn't hallus knaw thessens; but sewer I be, they be two o' the purtiest gels ye can see of a summer murnin'.

*2nd Farming Man.* Beänt Miss Eva gone off a bit of 'er good looks o' laäte?

*1st Farming Man.* Noä, not a bit.  
*2nd Farming Man.* Why coöm awaäy, then, to the long barn.

[*Exeunt.*]

DORA *looks out of window.* Enter DOBSON.

*Dora (singing).*

The town lay still in the low sunlight,

The hen cluckt late by the white farm gate,

The maid to her dairy came in from the cow,

The stock-dove coo'd at the fall of night,

The blossom had open'd on every bough;

O joy for the promise of May, of  
May,

O joy for the promise of May.

(Nodding at Dobson.) I'm coming  
down, Mr. Dobson. I haven't seen  
Eva yet. Is she anywhere in the  
garden?

Dobson. Noä, Miss. I ha'n't seed  
'er neither.

*Dora (enters singing).*

But a red fire woke in the heart of the  
town,

And a fox from the glen ran away  
with the hen,

And a cat to the cream, and a rat to  
the cheese;

And the stock-dove coo'd, till a kite  
dropt down,

And a salt wind burnt the blossoming  
trees;

O grief for the promise of May, of  
May,

O grief for the promise of May.

I don't know why I sing that song; I  
don't love it.

Dobson. Blessings on your pretty  
voice, Miss Dora. Wheer did they  
larn ye that?

Dora. In Cumberland, Mr. Dob-  
son.

Dobson. An' how did ye leave the  
owd uncle i' Coomberland?

Dora. Getting better, Mr. Dobson.  
But he'll never be the same man again.

Dobson. An' how d'ye find the owd  
man 'ere?

Dora. As well as ever. I came  
back to keep his birthday.

Dobson. Well, I be coomed to keep  
his birthdaäy an' all. The owd man  
be heighty to-daäy, beänt he?

Dora. Yes, Mr. Dobson. And the  
day's bright like a friend, but the wind  
east like an enemy. Help me to move  
this bench for him into the sun.  
(*They move bench.*) No, not that way  
—here, under the apple tree. Thank  
you. Look how full of rosy blossom  
it is. [*Pointing to apple tree.*]

Dobson. They be redder blossoms  
nor them, Miss Dora.

Dora. Where do they blow, Mr.  
Dobson?

Dobson. Under your eyes, Miss  
Dora.

Dora. Do they?

Dobson. And your eyes be as blue  
as—

Dora. What, Mr. Dobson? A  
butcher's frock?

Dobson. Noä, Miss Dora; as blue  
as—

Dora. Bluebell, harebell, speed-  
well, bluebottle, succory, forget-me-  
not?

Dobson. Noä, Miss Dora; as blue  
as—

Dora. The sky? or the sea on a  
blue day?

Dobson. Naäy then. I meän'd  
they be as blue as violets.

Dora. Are they?

Dobson. Their ye goäs ageän,  
Miss, niver believing owt I says to ye  
—hallus a-fobbing ma off, tho' ye  
knows I love ye. I warrants ye'll  
think moor o' this young Squire  
Edgar as ha' coomed among us—the  
Lord knows how—ye'll think more on  
'is little finger than hall my hand at  
the haltar.

Dora. Perhaps, Master Dobson.  
I can't tell, for I have never seen  
him. But my sister wrote that he  
was mighty pleasant, and had no  
pride in him.

Dobson. He'll be arter you now,  
Miss Dora.

Dora. Will he? How can I tell?

Dobson. He's been arter Miss Eva,  
haän't he?

Dora. Not that I know.

Dobson. Didn't I spy 'em a-sitting  
i' the woodbine harbor together?

Dora. What of that? Eva told  
me that he was taking her likeness.  
He's an artist.

Dobson. What's a hartist? I doän't  
believe he's iver a 'eart under his  
waistcoat. And I tells ye what, Miss  
Dora: he's no respect for the Queen,  
or the parson, or the justice o' peace,  
or owt. I ha' heärd 'im a-gawin' on  
'ud make your 'air—God bless it!—

stan' on end. And wuss nor that. When their wur a meeting o' farmers at Littlechester t'other daay, and they was all a-crying out at the bad times, he cooms up, and he calls out among our oän men, 'The land belongs to the people!'

*Dora.* And what did *you* say to that?

*Dobson.* Well, I says, s'pose my pig's the land, and you says it belongs to the parish, and theer be a thousand i' the parish, taäkin' in the women and childer; and s'pose I kills my pig, and gi'es it among 'em, why there wudn't be a dinner for nawbody, and I should ha' lost the pig.

*Dora.* And what did he say to that?

*Dobson.* Nowt—what could he saay? But I taäkes 'im fur a bad lot and a burn fool, and I haätes the very sight on him.

*Dora* (*looking at Dobson*). Master Dobson, you are a comely man to look at.

*Dobson.* I thank you for that, Miss Dora, onyhaw.

*Dora.* Ay, but you turn right ugly when you're in an ill temper; and I promise you that if you forget yourself in your behavior to this gentleman, my father's friend, I will never change word with you again.

*Enter FARMING MAN from barn.*

*Farming Man.* Miss, the farming men 'ull hev their dinner i' the long barn, and the master 'ud be straänge an' pleased if you'd step in fust, and see that all be right and reg'lar fur 'em afoor he coöm. [*Exit.*]

*Dora.* I go. Master Dobson, did you hear what I said?

*Dobson.* Yeas, yeas! I'll not meddle wi' 'im if he doänt meddle wi' meä. (*Exit Dora.*) Coomly, says she. I niver thowt o' mysen i' that waäy; but if she'd taäke to ma i' that waäy, or ony waäy, I'd slaave out my life fur 'er. 'Coomly to look at,' says she—but she said it spiteful-like. To

look at—yeas, 'coomly'; and she mayn't be so fur out theer. But if that be nowt to she, then it be nowt to me. (*Looking off stage.*) Schoolmaster! Why if Steer han't haxed schoolmaster to dinner, thaw'e knaws I was hallus ageän hevving schoolmaster i' the parish! fur him as be handy wi' a book bean't but haäfe a hand at a pitchfork.

*Enter WILSON.*

Well, Wilson. I seed that one cow 'o thine i' the pinfeld ageän as I wur a-coomin' 'ere.

*Wilson.* Very likely, Mr. Dobson. She will break fence. I can't keep her in order.

*Dobson.* An' if tha can't keep thy one cow i' horder, how can tha keep all thy scholards i' horder? But let that goä by. What dost a-know o' this Mr. Hedgar as be a-lodgin' wi' ye? I coom'd upon 'im t'other daay lookin' at the coontry, then a-scrattin upon a bit o' paäper, then a-lookin' ageän; and I taäked 'im fur soom sort of a land-surveyor—but a beänt.

*Wilson.* He's a Somersetshire man, and a very civil-spoken gentleman.

*Dobson.* Gentleman! What be he a-doing here ten mile an' moor (ro' a raäil)? We laävs out o' the waäy fur gentlefoälk altogether—leästwaäys they niver cooms 'ere but fur the trout i' our beck, fur they be knaw'd as far as Littlechester. But 'e doänt fish neither.

*Wilson.* Well, it's no sin in a gentleman not to fish.

*Dobson.* Nuä, but I haätes 'im.

*Wilson.* Better step out of his road, then, for he's walking to us, and with a book in his hand.

*Dobson.* An' I haätes boooks an' all, fur they puts foälk off the owd waäys.

*Enter EDGAR, reading—not seeing DOBSON and WILSON.*

*Edgar.* This author, with his  
charm of simple style  
And close dialectic, all but proving  
man

An automatic series of sensations,  
Has often numb'd me into apathy  
Against the unpleasant jolts of this  
rough road

That breaks off short into the abysses  
—made me

A Quietist taking all things easily.

*Dobson. (Aside.)* There mun be  
summut wrong theer, Wilson, fur I  
doänt understan' it.

*Wilson. (Aside.)* Nor I either,  
Mr. Dobson.

*Dobson (scornfully).* An' thou  
doänt understan' it neither—and thou  
schoolmaster an' all.

*Edgar.* What can a man, then,  
live for but sensations,

Pleasant ones? men of old would under-  
dergo

Unpleasant for the sake of pleasant  
ones

Hereafter, like the Moslem beauties  
waiting

To clasp their lovers by the golden  
gates.

For me, whose cheertless Houris after  
death

Are Night and Silence, pleasant ones  
—the while—

If possible, here! to crop the flower  
and pass.

*Dobson.* Well, I never 'eärd the  
likes o' that afoor.

*Wilson. (Aside.)* But I have, Mr.  
Dobson. It's the old Scripture text,  
' Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow  
we die.' I'm sorry for it, for, tho' he  
never comes to church, I thought bet-  
ter of him.

*Edgar.* 'What are we, says the  
blind old man in Lear?

' As flies to the Gods; they kill us for  
their sport.'

*Dobson. (Aside.)* Then the owd  
man i' Lear should be shaämed of  
hissen, but noän o' the parishes goäs  
by that naäme 'ereabouts.

*Edgar.* The Gods! but they, the  
shadows of ourselves,

Have past for ever. It is Nature  
kills,

And not for *her* sport either. She  
knows nothing.

Man only knows, the worse for him!  
for why

Cannot *he* take his pastime like the  
flies?

And if my pleasure breed another's  
pain,

Well—is not that the course of Na-  
ture too,

From the dim dawn of Being—her  
main law

Whereby she grows in beauty—that  
her flies

Must massacre each other? this poor  
Nature!

*Dobson.* Natur! Natur! Well, it  
be i' *my* natur to knock 'im o' the 'eärd  
now; but I weänt.

*Edgar.* A Quietist taking all  
things easily—why—

Have I been dipping into this again  
To steel myself against the leaving  
her?

[*Closes book, seeing Wilson.*  
Good day!

*Wilson.* Good day, sir.

[*Dobson looks hard at Edgar.*

*Edgar (to Dobson).* Have I the  
pleasure, friend, of knowing you?

*Dobson.* Dobson.

*Edgar.* Good day, then, Dobson.

[*Exit.*  
*Dobson.* 'Good daäy then, Dob-  
son!' Civil-spoken i'deed! Why,  
Wilson, tha 'eärd 'im thysen—the fel-  
ler couldn't find a Myster in his mouth  
fur me, as farms five boonderd  
haäcre.

*Wilson.* You never find one for  
me, Mr. Dobson.

*Dobson.* Noä, fur thou be nobbut  
schoolmaster; but I taäkes 'im for a  
Lannur swindler, and a burn fool.

*Wilson.* He can hardly be both,  
and he pays me regular every Satur-  
day.

*Dobson.* Veas; but I haätes 'im.

*Enter STEER, FARM MEN and  
WOMEN.*

*Steer (goes and sits under apple tree).*  
Hev' ony o' ye seen Eva?

*Dobson.* Noå, Mr. Steer.

*Steer.* Well, I reckons they'll hev' a fine cider-crop to-year if the blossom 'owds. Good murnin', neighbors, and the saåme to you, my men. I taåkes it kindly of all o' you that you be coomed—what's the newspåper word, Wilson?—celebrate—to celebrate my birthdaåy i' this fashion. Niver man 'ed better friends, and I will saåy niver master 'ed better men: fur thaw I may ha' fallen out wi' ye sometimes, the fault, mebbe, wur as much mine as yours; and, thaw I says it mysen, niver men 'ed a better master—and I knaws what men be, and what masters be, fur I wur nobbut a laåborer, and now I be a landlord—burn a plowman, and now, as far as money goås, I be a gentleman, thaw I beånt naw scholar, fur I 'ednt naw time to maåke mysen a scholar while I wur maåkin' mysen a gentleman, but I ha taåen good care to turn out boåth o' my darters right down fine laådies.

*Dobson.* An' soå they be.

*1st Farming Man.* Soå they be!  
soå they be!

*2nd Farming Man.* The Lord bless boath on 'em!

*3rd Farming Man.* An' the saåme to you, Master.

*4th Farming Man.* And long life to boath on 'em. An' the saåme to you, Master Steer, likewise.

*Steer.* Thank ye!

*Enter EVA.*

Wheer 'asta been?

*Eva (timidly).* Many happy returns of the day, father.

*Steer.* They can't be many, my dear, but I oåpes they'll be 'appy.

*Dobson.* Why, tha' looks haåle anew to last to a hoorderd.

*Steer.* An' why shouldn't I last to a hoorderd? Iååle! why shouldn't I be haåle? fur thaw I be heigty this very daåy, I niver 'es sa much as one

pin's prick of paåin; an' I can taåke my glass along wi' the youngest, fur I niver touched a drop of owt till my oån wedding-daåy, an' then I wur turned huppads o' sixty. Why shouldn't I be haåle? I ha' plowed the ten-aåcre—it be mine now—afoor ony o' ye wur burn—ye all knaws the ten-aåcre—I mun ha' plowed it moor nor a hoorderd times; hallus hup at sunrise, and I'd drive the plow straåit as a line right i' the faåce o' the sun, then back ageån, a-follering my oån shadder—then hup ageån i' the faåce o' the sun. Eh! how the sun 'ud shine, and the larks 'ud sing i' them daåys, and the smell o' the mou'd an' all. Eh! if I could ha' gone on wi' the plowin', nobbut the smell o' the mou'd 'ud ha' maåde ma live as long as Jerusalem.

*Eva.* Methusaleh, father.

*Steer.* Ay, lass, but when thou be as owd as me thou'll put one word fur another as I does.

*Dobson.* But, Steer, thaw thou be haåle anew I seed tha a-limpin' up just now with the roomatics i' the knee.

*Steer.* Roomatics! Noå; I laåme't my knee last night running arter a thief. Beånt there house-breakers down i' Littlechester, Dobson—doånt ye hear of ony?

*Dobson.* Ay, that there be. Immanuel Goldsmiths was broke into o' Monday night, and ower a hoorderd pounds worth o' rings stolen.

*Steer.* So I thowt, and I heård the winder—that's the winder at the end o' the passage, that goås by thy chaumber. (*Turning to Eva.*) Why, lass, what maåkes tha sa red? Did 'e git into thy chaumber?

\* *Eva.* Father!

*Steer.* Well, I runned arter thief i' the dark, and fell ageån coalscuttle and my kneea gev waåy or I'd ha' cotched 'im, but afoor I coomed up he got thruff the winder ageån.

*Eva.* Got thro' the winder again?

*Steer.* Ay, but he left the mark of 'is foot i' the flower-bed; now ther be noån o' my men, thinks I to mysen,

'ud ha' done it 'cep' it were Dan Smith, fur I cotched 'im once a-steälin' coäls an' I sent fur im, an' I measured his foot wi' the mark i' the bed, but it wou'dn't fit—secäms to me the mark wur maäde by a Lunnu boot. (*Looks at Eva.*) Why, now, what maakes tha sa white?

*Eva.* Fright, father!

*Steer.* Maäke thysen eäsy. I'll hev the winder naäiled up, and put Towser under it.

*Eva* (*clasp ing her hands*). No, no, father! Towser'll tear him all to pieces.

*Steer.* Let him keep awaäy, then; but coom, coom! let's be gawin. They ha' broached a barrel of aäle i' the long barn, and the fiddler be theer, and the lads and lasses 'ull hev a dance.

*Eva.* (*Aside.*) Dance! small heart have I to dance. I should seem to be dancing upon a grave.

*Steer.* Wheer be Mr. Edgar? about the premises?

*Dobson.* Hallus about the premises!

*Steer.* So much the better, so much the better. I likes 'im, and Eva likes 'im. Eva can do owt wi' 'im; look for 'im, Eva, and bring 'im to the barn. He 'ant naw pride in 'im, and we'll git 'im to speechify for us arter dinner.

*Eva.* Yes, father! [*Exit.*]

*Steer.* Coom along then, all the rest o' ye! Churchwarden be a coomin, thaw me and 'im we niver 'grees about the tithe; and Parson mebbe, thaw he niver mended that gap i' the glebe fence as I telled 'im; and Blacksmith, thaw he niver shoes a horse to my likings; and Baäker, thaw I sticks to hoäm-maäde—but all on 'em welcome, all on 'em welcome; and I've hed the long barn cleared out of all the machines, and the sacks, and the taäters, and the mangles, and theer'll be room anew for all o' ye. Foller me.

*All.* Yeas, yeas! Three cheers for Mr. Steer!

[*All exunt except Dobson into barn.*]

*Enter EDGAR.*

*Dobson* (*who is going, turns*). Squire!—if so be you be a squire.

*Edgar.* Dobbins, I think.

*Dobson.* Dobbins, you thinks; and I thinks ye weärs a Lunnu boot.

*Edgar.* Well?

*Dobson.* And I thinks I'd like to taäke the measure o' your foot.

*Edgar.* Ay, if you'd like to measure your own length upon the grass.

*Dobson.* Coom, coom, that's a good un. Why, I could throw four o' ye; but I promised one of the Misses I wou'dn't meddle wi' ye, and I weänt.

[*Exit into barn.*]

*Edgar.* Jealous of me with Eva!

Is it so?

Well, tho' I grudge the pretty jewel, that I

Have worn, to such a clod, yet that might be

The best way out of it, if the child could keep

Her counsel. I am sure I wish her happy.

But I must free myself from this entanglement.

I have all my life before me—so has she—

Give her a month or two, and her affections

Will flower toward the light in some new face.

Still I am half-afraid to meet her now. She will urge marriage on me. I hate tears.

Marriage is but an old tradition. I hate

Traditions, ever since my narrow father,

After my frolic with his tenant's girl, Made younger elder son, violated the whole

Tradition of our land, and left his heir,

Born, happily, with some sense of art, to live

By brush and pencil. By and by, when Thought

Comes down among the crowd, and man perceives that

The lost gleam of an after-life but  
leaves him  
A beast of prey in the dark, why then  
the crowd  
May wreak my wrongs upon my  
wrongers. Marriage!  
That fine, fat, hook-nosed uncle of  
mine, old Harold,  
Who leaves me all his land at Little-  
chester,  
He, too, would oust me from his will,  
if I  
Made such a marriage. And mar-  
riage in itself—  
The storm is hard at hand will sweep  
away  
Thrones, churches, ranks, traditions,  
customs, marriage  
One of the feeblest! Then the man,  
the woman,  
Following their best affinities, will  
each  
Bid their old bond farewell with  
smiles, not tears;  
Good wishes, not reproaches; with  
no fear  
Of the world's gossiping clamor, and  
no need  
Of veiling their desires.  
Conventionalism,  
Who shrieks by day at what she does  
by night,  
Would call this vice; but one time's  
vice may be  
The virtue of another; and Vice and  
Virtue  
Are but two masks of self; and what  
hereafter  
Shall mark out Vice from Virtue in  
the gulf  
Of never-dawning darkness?

*Enter EVA.*

My sweet Eva,  
Where have you lain in ambush all  
the morning?  
They say your sister, Dora, has  
return'd,  
And that should make you happy, if  
you love her!  
But you look troubled.

*Eva.* Oh, I love her so,

I was afraid of her, and I hid myself.  
We never kept a secret from each  
other;  
She would have seen at once into my  
trouble,  
And ask'd me what I could not  
answer. Oh, Philip,  
Father heard you last night. Our  
savage mastiff,  
That all but kill'd the beggar, will be  
placed  
Beneath the window, I'philip.

*Edgar.* Savage, is he?  
What matters? Come, give me your  
hand and kiss me

This beautiful May-morning.  
*Eva.* The most beautiful  
May we have had for many years!

*Edgar.* And here  
Is the most beautiful morning of this  
May.

Nay, you must smile upon me! There  
—you make  
The May and morning still more  
beautiful,

You, the most beautiful blossom of  
the May.

*Eva.* Dear Philip, all the world is  
beautiful  
If we were happy, and could chime in  
with it.

*Edgar.* True; for the senses, love,  
are for the world;

That for the senses,

*Eva.* Yes.

*Edgar.* And when the man,  
The child of evolution, flings aside  
His swaddling-bands, the morals of  
the tribe,  
He, following his own instincts as his  
God,

Will enter on the larger golden age;  
No pleasure then tabo'd: for when  
the tide

Of full democracy has overwhelm'd  
This Old world, from that flood will  
rise the New,

Like the Love-goddess, with no bridal  
veil,

King, trinket of the Church, but  
naked Nature

In all her loveliness.

*Eva.* What are you saying?



*Edgar.* That, if we did not strain  
to make ourselves  
Better and higher than Nature, we  
might be  
As happy as the bees there at their  
honey  
In these sweet blossoms.

*Eva.* Yes; how sweet they smell!

*Edgar.* There! let me break some  
off for you.

[*Breaking branch off.*

*Eva.* My thanks.  
But, look, how wasteful of the blossom  
you are!

One, two, three, four, five, six—you  
have robb'd poor father  
Of ten good apples. Oh, I forgot  
to tell you

He wishes you to dine along with us,  
And speak for him after—you that  
are so clever!

*Edgar.* I grieve I cannot; but, in-  
deed—

*Eva.* What is it?

*Edgar.* Well, business. I must  
leave you, love, to-day.

*Eva.* Leave me, to-day! And  
when will you return?

*Edgar.* I cannot tell precisely;  
but—

*Eva.* But what?

*Edgar.* I trust, my dear, we shall  
be always friends.

*Eva.* After all that has gone be-  
tween us—friends!

What, only friends? [*Drops branch.*

*Edgar.* All that has gone between  
us

Should surely make us friends.

*Eva.* But keep us lovers.

*Edgar.* Child, do you love me  
now?

*Eva.* Yes, now and ever.

*Edgar.* Then you should wish us  
both to love for ever.

But, if you *will* bind love to one for  
ever,

Altho' at first he take his bonds for  
flowers,

As years go on, he feels them press  
upon him,

Begins to flutter in them, and at  
last

Breaks thro' them, and so flies away  
for ever;

While, had you left him free use of  
his wings,

Who knows that he had ever dream'd  
of flying?

*Eva.* But all that sounds so wicked  
and so strange;

'Till death us part'—those are the  
only words,

The true ones—nay, and those not  
true enough,

For they that love do not believe that  
death

Will part them. Why do you jest  
with me, and try

To fright me? Tho' you are a gentle-  
man,

I but a farmer's daughter—

*Edgar.* Tut! you talk  
Old feudalism. When the great De-  
mocracy

Makes a new world—

*Eva.* And if you be not jesting,  
Neither the old world, nor the new,

nor father,

Sister, nor you, shall ever see me  
more.

*Edgar* (*moved*). Then—(*aside*)  
Shall I say it?—(*aloud*) fly with  
me to-day.

*Eva.* No! Philip, Philip, if you do  
not marry me,

I shall go mad for utter shame and  
die.

*Edgar.* Then, if we needs must be  
conventional,

When shall your parish-parson bawl  
our banns

Before your gaping clowns?

*Eva.* Not in our church—  
I think I scarce could hold my head

up there.

Is there no other way?

*Edgar.* Yes, if you cared  
To see an over-opulent superstition,

Then they would grant you what they  
call a license

To marry. Do you wish it?

*Eva.* Do I wish it?

*Edgar.* In London.

*Eva.* You will write to me?

*Edgar.* I will.

*Eva.* And I will fly to you thro'  
the night, the storm—  
Yes, tho' the fire should run along the  
ground,  
As once it did in Egypt. Oh, you  
see,  
I was just out of school, I had no  
mother—  
My sister far away—and you, a gen-  
tleman,  
Told me to trust you: yes, in every-  
thing—  
*That* was the only true love; and I  
trusted—  
Oh, yes, indeed, I would have died for  
you.  
How could you—Oh, how could you?  
—nay, how could I?  
But now you will set all right again,  
and I  
Shall not be made the laughter of the  
village,  
And poor old father not die misera-  
ble.

*Dora (singing in the distance).*

O joy for the promise of May, of  
May.

O joy for the promise of May.

*Edgar.* Speak not so loudly; that  
must be your sister.

You never told her, then, of what has  
past  
Between us.

*Eva.* Never!

*Edgar.* Do not till I bid you.

*Eva.* No, Philip, no.

[*Turns away.*]

*Edgar (moved).* How gracefully  
there she stands

Weeping—the little Niobe! What!  
we prize

The statue or the picture all the more  
When we have made them ours! Is  
she less loveable,

Less lovely, being wholly mine? To  
stay—

Follow my art among these quiet  
fields,

Live with these honest folk—

And play the fool!

No! she that gave herself to me so  
easily

Will yield herself as easily to another.

*Eva.* Did you speak, Philip?

*Edgar.* Nothing more, farewell.  
[*They embrace.*]

*Dora (coming nearer).*

O grief for the promise of May,  
of May,

O grief for the promise of May.

*Edgar (still embracing her).* Keep  
up your heart until we meet  
again.

*Eva.* If that should break before  
we meet again?

*Edgar.* Break! nay, but call for  
Philip when you will,

And he returns.

*Eva.* Heaven hears you, Philip  
Edgar!

*Edgar (moved).* And he would  
hear you even from the grave.

Heaven curse him if he come not at  
your call! [*Exit.*]

Enter DORA.

*Dora.* Well, Eva!

*Eva.* Oh, Dora, Dora, how long  
you have been away from home! Oh,  
how often I have wished for you! It  
seemed to me that we were parted for  
ever.

*Dora.* For ever, you foolish child!  
What's come over you? We parted  
like the brook yonder about the alder  
island, to come together again in a  
moment and to go on together again,  
till one of us be married. But where  
is this Mr. Edgar whom you praised  
so in your first letters? You haven't  
even mentioned him in your last?

*Eva.* He has gone to London.

*Dora.* Ay, child; and you look  
thin and pale. Is it for his absence?  
Have you fancied yourself in love with  
him? That's all nonsense, you know,  
such a baby as you are. But you  
shall tell me all about it.

*Eva.* Not now—presently. Yes, I  
have been in trouble, but I am happy  
—I think, quite happy now.

*Dora (taking Eva's hand).* Come,  
then, and make them happy in the  
long barn, for father is in his glory,  
and there is a piece of beef like a

house-side, and a plum-pudding as big as the round hay-stack. But see they are coming out for the dance already. Well, my child, let us join them.

*Enter all from barn laughing. EVA sits reluctantly under apple tree. STEER enters smoking, sits by EVA.*

*Dance.*

## ACT II.

*Five years have elapsed between Acts I. and II.*

SCENE.—A MEADOW. ON ONE SIDE A PATHWAY GOING OVER A RUSTIC BRIDGE. AT BACK THE FARMHOUSE AMONG TREES. IN THE DISTANCE A CHURCH SPIRE.

DOBSON and DORA.

*Dobson.* So the owd uncle i' Coomherland be deäd, Miss Dora, beänt he?

*Dora.* Yes, Mr. Dobson, I've been attending on his deathbed and his burial.

*Dobson.* It be five year sin' ye went afoor to him, and it seems to me nobbut t'other day. Hesn't he left ye nowt?

*Dora.* No, Mr. Dobson.

*Dobson.* But he were mighty fond o' ye, warn't he?

*Dora.* Fonder of poor Eva—like everybody else.

*Dobson* (*handing Dora basket of roses*). Not like me, Miss Dora; and I ha' browt these roses to ye—I forgits what they calls 'em, but I hallus gi'ed soom on 'em to Miss Eva at this time o' year. Will ya taäke 'em? fur Miss Eva, she set the bnsh by my dairy winder afoor she went to school at Littlechester—so I allus browt soom on 'em to her; and now she be gone, will ye taäke 'em, Miss Dora?

*Dora.* I thank you. They tell me that yesterday you mentioned her name too suddenly before my father. See that you do not do so again!

*Dobson.* Noä; I knaws a deal better now. I seed how the owd man wur vext.

*Dora.* I take them, then, for Eva's sake.

[*Takes basket, places some in her dress.*

*Dobson.* Eva's saäke. Yeas. Poor gel, poor gel! I can't abear to think on 'er now, fur I'd ha' done owt fur 'er nysen; an' an' ony o' Steer's men, an' ony o' my men 'ud ha' done owt fur 'er, an' all the parish 'ud ha' done owt fur 'er, fur we was all on us prond on 'er, an' them theer be soom of her oän roses, an' she wur as sweet as ony on 'em—the Lord bless 'er—'er oän sen; an' weänt ye taäke 'em now, Miss Dora, fur 'er saäke an' fur my saäke an' all?

*Dora.* De you want them back again?

*Dobson.* Noa, noä! Keep 'em. But I hed a word to saäy to ye.

*Dora.* Why, Farmer, you should be in the hayfield looking after your men; you couldn't have more splendid weather.

*Dobson.* I be a going theer; but I thowt I'd bring tha them roses fust. The weather's well anew, but the glass be a bit shaäky. S'iver we've led moäst on it.

*Dora.* Ay! but you must not be too sudden with it either, as you were last year, when you put it in green, and your stack caught fire.

*Dobson.* I were insured, Miss, an' I lost nowt by it. But I weänt be too sudden wi' it; and I feel sewer, Miss Dora, that I ha' been noän too sudden wi' you, fur I ha' sarved for ye well nigh as long as the man sarved for 'is sweet'art i' Scriptur'. Weänt ye gi'e me a kind answer at last?

*Dora.* I have no thought of marriage, my friend. We have been in such grief these five years, not only on my sister's account, but the ill success of the farm, and the debts, and my father's breaking down, and his blindness. How could I think of leaving him?

*Dobson.* Eh, but I be well to do; and if ye would nobbut hev me, I would taake the owd blind man to my oän fireside. You should hev him allus wi' ye.

*Dora.* You are generous, but it cannot be. I cannot love you; nay, I think I never can be brought to love any man. It seems to me that I hate men, ever since my sister left us. Oh, see here. (*Pulls out a letter.*) I wear it next my heart. Poor sister, I had it five years ago. 'Dearest Dora,—I have lost myself, and am lost for ever to you and my poor father. I thought Mr. Edgar the best of men, and he has proved himself the worst. Seek not for me, or you may find me at the bottom of the river.

EVA.'

*Dobson.* Be that my fault?

*Dora.* No; but how should I, with this grief still at my heart, take to the milking of your cows, the fattening of your calves, the making of your butter, and the managing of your poultry?

*Dobson.* Naäy, but I hev an owd woman as 'ud see to all that; and you should sit i' your oän parlor quite like a laädy, ye should!

*Dora.* It cannot be.

*Dobson.* And plaäy the pianner, if ye liked, all daäy long, like a laädy, ye should an' all.

*Dora.* It cannot be.

*Dobson.* And I would loove tha moor nor ony gentleman 'ud loove tha.

*Dora.* No, no; it cannot be.

*Dobson.* And p'raps ye hears 'at I soomtimes taakes a drop too much; but that be all along o' you, Miss, because ye weänt hev me; but, if ye would, I could put all that o' one side eäsy anew.

*Dora.* Cannot you understand plain words, Mr. Dobson? I tell you, it cannot be.

*Dobson.* Eh, lass! Thy feyther eddicated his darters to marry gentle-folk, and see what's coomed on it.

*Dora.* That is enough, Farmer

*Dobson.* You have shown me that, though fortune had born you into the estate of a gentleman, you would still have been Farmer Dobson. You had better attend to your hay-field. Good afternoon. [*Exit.*]

*Dobson.* 'Farmer Dobson!' Well, I be Farmer Dobson; but I thinks Farmer Dobson's dog 'ud ha' know'd better nor to cast her sister's misfortin inter 'er teeth arter she'd been a-readin' me the letter wi' 'er voice a-shaäkin', and the drop in 'er eye. Theer she goäs! Shall I foller 'er and ax 'er to maäke it up? Noä, not yet. Let 'er cool upon it; I likes 'er all the better fur taäkin' me down, like a laädy, as she be. Farmer Dobson! I be Farmer Dobson, sewer anew; but if iver I cooms upo' Gentleman Hedgar ageän, and doänt laäy my cartwhip athurt 'is shou'ders, why then I beänt Farmer Dobson, but summun else—blaäme't if I beänt!

*Enter HAYMAKERS with a load of hay.*

The last on it, eh?

*1st Haymaker.* Yeas.

*Dobson.* Hoäm wi' it, then.

[*Exit curtilly.*]

*1st Haymaker.* Well, it be the last loäd hoäm.

*2nd Haymaker.* Yeas, an' owd Dobson should be glad on it. What maäkes 'im allus sa glum?

*Sally Allen.* Glum! he be wuss nor glum. He coom'd up to me yister daäy i' the haäyfield, when mea and my sweet'art was a workin' along o' one side wi' one another, and he sent 'im awaäy to t'other end o' the field; and when I axed 'im why, he telled me 'at sweet'arts niver worked well together; and I telled 'im 'at sweet'arts allus worked best together; and then he called me a rude naäme, and I can't abide 'im.

*James.* Why, lass, doänt tha know he be sweet upo' Dora Steer, and she weänt sa much as look at 'im? And wheniver 'e sees two sweet'arts

together like thou and me, Sally, he be fit to bust hissen wi' spites and jealousies.

*Sally.* Let 'im bust hissen, then, for owd I cares.

*1st Haymaker.* Well but, as I said afoor, it be the last load hoäm; do thou and thy sweet'art sing us hoäm to supper—'The Last Load Hoäm.'

*All.* Ay! 'The Last Load Hoäm.'

*Song.*

What did ye do, and what did ye saäy,

Wi' the wild white rose, an' the wood-bine sa gaäy,

An' the midders all mow'd, an' the sky sa blue—

What did ye saäy, and what did ye do,

When ye thowt there were nawbody watchin' o' you,

And you an' your Sally was forkin' the haäy,

At the end of the daäy,  
For the last load hoäm?

What did we do, and what did we saäy,

Wi' the briar sa green, an' the willer sa graäy.

An' the midders all mow'd, an' the sky sa blue—

Do ye think I be gawin' to tell it to you,

What we mowt saäy, and what we mowt do,

When me an' my Sally was forkin' the haäy,

At the end of the daäy,  
For the last load hoäm?

But what did ye saäy, and what did ye do,

Wi' the butterflies out, and the swallers at plaäy,

An' the midders all mow'd, an' the sky sa blue?

Why, coom then, owd feller, I'll tell it to you;

I'or me an' my Sally we sweär'd to be true,

To be true to each other, let 'appen what maäy,

Till the end of the daäy  
And the last load hoäm.

*All.* Well sung!

*James.* Fanny be the naäme i' the song, but I swopt it fur *she*.

[*Pointing to Sally.*

*Sally.* Let ma aloän afoor toäik, wilt tha?

*1st Haymaker.* Ye shall sing that ageän to-night, fur owd Dobson 'll gi'e us a bit o' supper.

*Sally.* I weänt goä to owd Dobson; he wur rude to me i' tha haäy-field, and he'll be rude to me ageän to-night. Owd Steer's gotten all his grass down and wants a hand, and I'll goä to him.

*1st Haymaker.* Owd Steer gi'es nubbut cowd tea to 'is men, and owd Dobson gi'es beer.

*Sally.* But I'd like owd Steer's cowd tea better nor Dobson's beer. Good-bye.

[*Going.*

*James.* Gi'e us a buss fust, lass.

*Sally.* I tell'd tha to let ma aloän!

*James.* Why, wasn't thou and me a-bussin' o' one another t'other side o' the haäycock, when owd Dobson coom'd upo' us? I can't let tha aloän if I would, Sally. [*Offering to kiss her.*

*Sally.* Git along wi' ye, do! [*Exit. All laugh; exeunt singing.*

To be true to each other, let 'appen what maäy,

Till the end o' the daäy  
An' the last load hoäm.

*Enter HAROLD.*

*Harold.* Not Harold! 'Philip Edgar, Philip Edgar!' Her phantom call'd me by the name she loved.

I told her I should hear her from the grave.

Ay! yonder is her casement. I remember

Her bright face beaming starlike down upon me

Thro' that rich cloud of blossom.  
 Since I left her  
 Here weeping, I have ranged the  
 world, and sat  
 Thro' every sensual course of that  
 full feast  
 That leaves but emptiness.

*Song.*

'To be true to each other, let 'appen  
 what maäy.  
 To the end o' the daäy  
 An' the last loäd hoäm.'

*Harold.* Poor Eva! O my God, if  
 man be only  
 A willy-nilly current of sensations—  
 Reaction needs must follow revel—  
 yet—  
 Why feel remorse, he, knowing that  
 he *must* have  
 Moved in the iron grooves of Destiny?  
 Remorse then is a part of Destiny,  
 Nature a liar, making us feel guilty  
 Of her own faults.

My grandfather—of him  
 They say, that women—  
 O this mortal house,  
 Which we are born into, is haunted by  
 The ghosts of the dead passions of  
 dead men;  
 And these take flesh again with our  
 own flesh,  
 And bring us to confusion.

He was only  
 A poor philosopher who call'd the  
 mind  
 Of children a blank page, a *tabula rasa*.  
 There, there, is written in invisible inks  
 'Lust, Prodigality, Covetousness,  
 Craft,  
 Cowardice, Murder'—and the heat and  
 fire  
 Of life will bring them out, and black  
 enough.  
 So the child grow to manhood: better  
 death  
 With our first wail then life—

*Song (further off).*

'Till the end o' the daäy  
 An' the last loäd hoäm,  
 Loäd hoäm.'

This bridge again! (*Steps on the  
 bridge.*)

How often have I stood  
 With Eva here! The brook among  
 its flowers!

Forget-me-not, meadowsweet, willow-  
 herb.

I had some smattering of science then,  
 Taught her the learned names, anat-  
 omized

The flowers for her—and now I only  
 wish

This pool were deep enough, that I  
 might plunge  
 And lose myself for ever.

*Enter DAN SMITH (singing).*

Gee oop! whoä! Gee oop! whoä!  
 Scizzars an' Pumpy was good uns to

goä  
 Thruf slush an' squad  
 When roäds was bad,

But hallus ud stop at the Vine-an'-the-  
 Hop,

Fur boäth on 'em knawed as well as  
 nysen  
 That beer be as good fur 'erses as  
 men.

Gee oop! whoä! Gee oop!  
 whoä!

Scizzars an' Pumpy was good uns to  
 goä.

The beer's gotten oop into my 'ead.  
 S'iver I mun git along back to the  
 farm, fur she tell'd ma to taäke the  
 cart to Littlechester.

*Enter DORA.*

Half an hour late! why are you  
 loitering here? Away with you at  
 once.

[*Exit Dan Smith.*  
 (*Seeing Harold on bridge.*)

Some madman, is it,  
 Gesticulating there upon the bridge?  
 I am half afraid to pass.

*Harold.* Sometimes I wonder,  
 When man has surely learnt at last  
 that all

His old-world faith, the blossom of  
 his youth,

Has faded, falling fruitless—whether  
 then

All of us, all at once, may not be seized  
 With some fierce passion, not so much for Death  
 As against Life! all, all, into the dark—  
 No more!—and science now could drug and balm us  
 Back into nescience with as little pain  
 As it is to fall asleep.

This beggarly life,  
 This poor, flat, hedged-in field—no distance—this  
 Hollow Pandora-box,  
 With all the pleasures flown, not even Hope  
 Left at the bottom!

Superstitious fool,  
 What brought me here? To see her grave? her ghost?

Her ghost is everyway about me here.  
*Dora (coming forward).* Allow me, sir, to pass you.

*Harold.* Eva! Eva!

*Dora.* Eva!

*Harold.* What are you? Where do you come from?

*Dora.* From the farm  
 Here, close at hand.

*Harold.* Are you—you are—that  
 Dora,

The sister. I have heard of you.  
 The likeness

Is very striking.  
*Dora.* You knew Eva, then?

*Harold.* Yes—I was thinking of her when—O yes,  
 Many years back, and never since have met

Her equal for pure innocence of nature,  
 And loveliness of feature.

*Dora.* No, nor I.

*Harold.* Except, indeed, I have found it once again  
 In your own self.

*Dora.* You flatter me. Dear Eva was always thought the prettier.

*Harold.* And her charm  
 Of voice is also yours; and I was brooding

Upon a great unhappiness when you spoke.

*Dora.* Indeed, you seem'd in trouble, sir.

*Harold.* And you  
 Seem my good angel who may help me from it.

*Dora (aside).* How worn he looks, poor man! who is it, I wonder.  
 How can I help him? (*Aloud.*)  
 Might I ask your name?

*Harold.* Harold.

*Dora.* I never heard her mention you.

*Harold.* I met her first at a farm  
 in Cumberland—  
 Her uncle's.

*Dora.* She was there six years ago.

*Harold.* And if she never mention'd me, perhaps  
 The painful circumstances which I heard—

I will not vex you by repeating them—  
 Only last week at Littlechester, drove me

From out her memory. She has disappear'd,

They told me, from the farm—and darker news.

*Dora.* She has disappear'd, poor darling, from the world—

Left but one dreadful line to say, that we

Should find her in the river; and we dragg'd

The Littlechester river all in vain:  
 Have sorrow'd for her all these years in vain.

And my poor father, utterly broken down

By losing her—she was his favorite child—

Has let his farm, all his affairs, I fear,  
 But for the slender help that I can

give,  
 Fall into ruin. Ah! that villain,

Edgar,  
 If he should ever show his face

among us,  
 Our men and boys would hoot him,

stone him, hunt him  
 With pitchforks off the farm, for all

of them  
 Loved her, and she was worthy of all

love.

*Harold.* They say, we should forgive our enemies.

*Dora.* Ay, if the wretch were dead I might forgive him; We know not whether he be dead or living.

*Harold.* What Edgar?

*Dora.* Philip Edgar of Toft Hall In Somerset. Perhaps you know him?

*Harold.* Slightly.  
(*Aside.*) Ay, for how slightly have I known myself.

*Dora.* This Edgar, then, is living?  
*Harold.* Living? well—  
One Philip Edgar of Toft Hall in Somerset  
Is lately dead.

*Dora.* Dead!—is there more than one?

*Harold.* Nay—now—not one,  
(*aside*) for I am Philip Harold.

*Dora.* That one, is he then—dead!

*Harold.* (*Aside.*) My father's death,  
Let her believe it mine; this, for the moment,  
Will leave me a free field.

*Dora.* Dead! and this world  
Is brighter for his absence as that other  
Is darker for his presence.

*Harold.* Is not this  
To speak too pitilessly of the dead?

*Dora.* My five-years' anger cannot die at once,  
Not all at once with death and him.  
I trust

I shall forgive him—by-and-by—not now.

O sir, you seem to have a heart; if you

Had seen us that wild morning when we found

Her bed unslept in, storm and shower lashing

Her casement, her poor spaniel wailing for her,

That desolate letter, blotted with her tears,

Which told us we should never see her more—

Our old nurse crying as if for her own child,

My father stricken with his first paralysis,

And then with blindness—had you been one of us

And seen all this, then you would know it is not

So easy to forgive—even the dead.

*Harold.* But sure am I that of your gentleness

You will forgive him. She, you mourn for, seem'd

A miracle of gentleness—would not blur

A moth's wing by the touching; would not crush

The fly that drew her blood; and, were she living,

Would not—if penitent—have denied him *her*

Forgiveness. And perhaps the man himself,

When hearing of that piteous death, has suffer'd

More than we know. But wherefore waste your heart

In looking on a chill and changeless Past?

Iron will fuse, and marble melt; the Past

Remains the Past. But you are young, and—pardon me—

As lovely as your sister. Who can tell

What golden hours, with what full hands, may be

Waiting you in the distance? Might I call

Upon your father—I have seen the world—

And cheer his blindness with a traveller's tales?

*Dora.* Call if you will, and when you will. I cannot

Well answer for my father; but if you

Can tell me anything of our sweet Eva

When in her brighter girlhood, I at least

Will bid you welcome, and will listen to you.



Now I must go.

*Harold.* But give me first your hand:  
I do not dare, like an old friend, to shake it.

I kiss it as a prelude to that privilege  
When you shall know me better.

*Dora.* (*Aside.*) How beautiful  
His manners are, and how unlike the farmer's!

You are staying here?

*Harold.* Yes, at the wayside inn  
Close by that alder-island in your brook,  
'The Angler's Home.'

*Dora.* Are you one?

*Harold.* No, but I  
Take some delight in sketching, and the country  
Has many charms, altho' the inhabitants  
Seem semi-barbarous.

*Dora.* I am glad it pleases you;  
Yet I, born here, not only love the country,  
But its inhabitants too; and you, I doubt not,  
Would take to them as kindly, if you cared  
To live some time among them.

*Harold.* If I did,  
Then one at least of its inhabitants  
Might have more charm for me than all the country.

*Dora.* That one, then, should be grateful for your preference.

*Harold.* I cannot tell, tho' standing in her presence.

(*Aside.*) She colors!

*Dora.* Sir!

*Harold.* Be not afraid of me.  
For these are no conventional flourishes.

I do most earnestly assure you that  
Your likeness—

[*Shouts and cries without.*]  
*Dora.* What was that? my poor blind father—

*Enter FARMING MAN.*

*Farming Man.* Miss Dora, Dan Smith's cart hes runned ower a laädy

! the holler laäne, and they ha' ta'en the body up inter your chaumber, and they be all a-callin' for ye.

*Dora.* The body!—Heavens! I come!

*Harold.* But you are trembling.  
Allow me to go with you to the farm.  
[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter DOBSON.*

*Dobson.* What fellel wur it as' a' been a-talkin' fur haäfe an hour wi' my Dora? (*Looking after him.*) Seeäms I ommost knaws the back on 'im—drest like a gentleman, too. Damn all gentlemen, says I! I should ha' thowt they'd hed anew o' gentle-foälk, as I telled 'er to-daäy when she fell foul upo' me.

Minds ma o' summun. I could sweär to that; but that be all one, fur I haätes 'im afoor I knaws what 'e be. Theer! he turns round. Philip Hedgar o' Soomerset! Philip Hedgar o' Soomerset!—Noä—yeas—thaw the feller's gone and maäde such a litter of his faäce.

Eh lad, if it be thou, I'll Philip tha! a-plaäyin' the saäme gaäme wi' my Dora—I'll Soomerset tha.

I'd like to drag 'im thruff the herse-pond, and she to be a-lookin' at it. I'd like to leather 'im black and blue, and she to be a-laughin' at it. I'd like to fell 'im as deäd as a bullock! (*Clenching his fist.*)

But what 'ud she saäy to that? She telled me once not to meddle wi' 'im, and now she be fallen out wi' ma, and I can't coom at 'er.

It mun be *him*. Noä! Fur she'd niver 'a been talkin' haäfe an hour wi' the divil 'at killed her oän sister, or she beänt Dora Steer.

Yeas! Fur she niver knawed 'is faäce when 'e wur 'ere afoor; but I'll maäke 'er knaw! I'll maäke 'er knaw!

*Enter HAROLD.*

\* Naäy, but I mun git out on 'is

waay now, or I shall be the death on im. [Exit.]

*Harold.* How the clown glared at me! that Dobbins, is it, With whom I used to jar? but can he trace me Thro' five years' absence, and my change of name, The tan of southern summers and the beard? I may as well avoid him.

Ladylike!  
Lilylike in her stateliness and sweetness!

How came she by it?—a daughter of the fields,

This Dora!

She gave her hand, unask'd, at the farm-gate;

I almost think she half return'd the pressure

Of mine. What, I that held the orange blossom

Dark as the yew? but may not those, who march

Before their age, turn back at times, and make

Courtesy to custom? and now the stronger motive,

Misnamed free-will—the crowd would call it conscience—

Moves me—to what? I am dreaming; for the past

Look'd thro' the present, Eva's eyes thro' hers—

A spell upon me! Surely I loved Eva

More than I knew! or is it but the past

That brightens in retiring? Oh, last night

Tired, pacing my new lands at Littlechester,

I dozed upon the bridge, and the black river

Flow'd thro' my dreams—if dreams they were. She rose

From the foul flood and pointed toward the farm,

And her cry rang to me across the years.

I call you, Philip Edgar, Philip Edgar!

Come, you will set all right again, and father

Will not die miserable.' I could make his age

A comfort to him—so be more at peace

With mine own self. Some of my former friends

Would find my logic faulty; let them. Color

Flows thro' my life again, and I have lighted

On a new pleasure. Anyhow we must

Move in the line of least resistance when

The stronger motive rules.

But she hates Edgar. May not this Dobbins, or some other

spy Edgar in Harold? Well then, I must make her

Love Harold first, and then she will forgive

Edgar for Harold's sake. She said herself

She would forgive him, by-and-by, not now—

For her own sake *then*, if not for mine —not now—

But by-and-by.

*Enter DOBSON behind.*

*Dobson.* By-and-by—eh, #ed, dosta know this paäper? Ye dropt it upo' the road. 'Philip Edgar, Esq.' Ay, you be a pretty squire. I ha' fun' ye out, I hev. Eh, lad, dosta know what tha meäns wi' by-and-by? Fur if ye be goin' to sarve our Dora as ye sarved our Eva—then, by-and-by, if she weänt listen to me when I be a-tryin' to saäve 'er—if she weänt—look to thysen, for, by the Lord, I'd think na moor o' maäkin' an end o' tha nor a carrion crow—noä—thaw they hanged ma at 'Size fur it.

*Harold.* Dobbins, I think!

*Dobson.* I beänt Dobbins.

*Harold.* Nor am I Edgar, my good fellow.

*Dobson.* Tha lies! What hasta been saayin' to my Dora?

*Harold.* I have been telling her of the death of one Philip Edgar of Toft Hall, Somerset.

*Dobson.* Tha lies!

*Harold (pulling out a newspaper).* Well, my man, it seems that you can read. Look there—under the deaths.

*Dobson.* 'O' the 17th, Philip Edgar, o' Toft Hall, Soomerset.' How coom thou to be sa like 'im, then?

*Harold.* Naturally enough; for I am closely related to the dead man's family.

*Dobson.* An' ow coom thou by the letter to 'im?

*Harold.* Naturally again; for as I used to transact all his business for him, I had to look over his letters. Now then, see these (*takes out letters*). Half a score of them, all directed to me—Harold.

*Dobson.* 'Aroid! 'Aroid! 'Aroid, so they be.

*Harold.* My name is Harold! Good-day, Dobbins! [*Exit.*]

*Dobson.* 'Aroid! the feller's cleän daäzed, an' maäzed, an' maätet, an' muddled ma. Deäd! It mun be true, fur it wur i' print as black as owt. Naäy, but 'Good daäy, Dobbins.' Why, that wur the very twang on 'im. Eh, lad, but whether thou be Hedgar, or Hedgar's business man, thou her 't naw business 'ere wi' my Dora, as I knaws on, an' whether thou calls thysen Hedgar or Harold, if thou stick to she I'll stick to thee—stick to tha like a weasel to a rabbit, I will. Ay! and I'd like to shoot tha like a rabbit an' all. 'Good daäy, Dobbins.' Dang tha!

## ACT III.

SCENE.—A ROOM IN STEER'S HOUSE. DOOR LEADING INTO BEDROOM AT THE BACK.

*Dora (ringing a handbell).* Milly!

*Enter MILLY.*

*Milly.* The little 'ymn? Yeäs, Miss; but I wur so ta'en up wi' leädin' the owd man about all the blessed murnin' 'at I ha' nobbut larned mysen haäfe on it.

'O man, forgive thy mortal foe,  
Nor ever strike him blow for blow;  
For all the souls on earth that live  
To be forgiven must forgive.  
Forgive him seventy times and seven;  
For all the blessed souls in Heaven  
Are both forgivers and forgiven.'

But I'll git the book ageän, and larn mysen the rest, and saäy it to ye afoor dark; ye ringed fur that, Miss, didn't ye?

*Dora.* No, Milly; but if the farming-men be come for their wages, to send them up to me.

*Milly.* Yeäs, Miss. [*Exit.*]

*Dora (sitting at desk counting money).* Enough at any rate for the present. (*Enter Farming Men.*) Good afternoon, my friends. I am sorry Mr. Steer still continues too unwell to attend to you, but the schoolmaster looked to the paying you your wages when I was away, didn't he?

*Men.* Yeäs; and thanks to ye.

*Dora.* Some of our workmen have left us, but he sent me an alphabetical list of those that remain, so, Allen, I may as well begin with you.

*Allen (with his hand to his ear).* Halfabitical! Tääke one o' the young 'uns fust, Miss, for I be a bit deaf, and I wur hallus scaäred by a big word; leästwaäys, I should be wi' a lawyer.

*Dora.* I spoke of your names, Allen, as they are arranged here (*shows book*)—according to their first letters.

*Allen.* Letters! Yeas, I sees now. Them be what they larns the childer' at school, but I were burn afoor schoolintime.

*Dora.* But, Allen, tho' you can't

read, you could whitewash that cottage of yours where your grandson had the fever.

*Allen.* I'll hev it done o' Monday.

*Dora.* Else if the fever spread, the parish will have to thank you for it.

*Allen.* Meä? why, it be the Lord's doin', noän o' mine; d'ye think I'd gi'e 'em the fever? But I thanks ye all the saäme, Miss. (*Takes money.*)

*Dora* (*calling out names*). Higgins, Jackson, Luscombe, Nokes, Oldham, Skipworth! (*All take money.*) Did you find that you worked at all the worse upon the cold tea than you would have done upon the beer?

*Higgins.* Noä, Miss; we worked naw wuss upo' the cowd tea; but we'd ha' worked better upo' the beer.

*Dora.* Come, come, you worked well enough, and I am much obliged to all.⁴⁴⁴ you. There's for you, and you, and you. Count the money and see if it's all right.

*Men.* All right, Miss; and thank ye kindly.

[*Exeunt* Luscombe, Nokes, Oldham, Skipworth.

*Dora.* Dan Smith, my father and I forgave you stealing our coals.

[*Dan Smith advances to Dora.*

*Dan Smith* (*bellowing*). Whoy, O lor, Miss! that wur sa long back, and the walls sa thin, and the winders brokken, and the weather sa cowd, and ny missusa-gittin' ower 'er lyin'-in.

*Dora.* Didn't I say that we had forgiven you? But, Dan Smith, they tell me that you—and you have six children—spent all your last Saturday's wages at the ale-house; that you were stupid drunk all Sunday, and so ill in consequence all Monday, that you did not come into the hayfield. Why should I pay you your full wages?

*Dan Smith.* I be ready to taäke the pledge.

*Dora.* And as ready to break it again. Besides it was you that were driving the cart—and I fear you were tipsy then, too—when you lamed the lady in the hollow lane.

*Dan Smith* (*bellowing*). O lor, Miss! noä, noä, noä! Ye sees the holler laäne be hallus sa dark i' the arfternoon, and where the big eshtree cuts athurt it, it gi'es a turn like, and 'ow should I see to laäme the laädy, and meä coomin' along pretty sharp an' all?

*Dora.* Well, there are your wages; the next time you waste them at a pot-house you get no more from me. (*Exit Dan Smith.*) Sally Allen, you worked for Mr. Dobson, didn't you?

*Sally* (*advancing*). Yeäs, Miss; but he wur so rough wi' ma, I couldn't abide 'im.

*Dora.* Why should he be rough with you? You are as good as a man in the hayfield. What's become of your brother?

*Sally.* 'Listed for a soädger, Miss, i' the Queen's Real Hard Tillery.

*Dora.* And your sweetheart—when are you and he to be married?

*Sally.* At Michaelmas, Miss, please God.

*Dora.* You are an honest pair. I will come to your wedding.

*Sally.* An' I thanks ye fur that, Miss, moor nor fur the waäge.

(*Going—returns.*) 'A cotched ma about the waasit, Miss, when 'e wur 'ere afoor, an' axed ma to be' is little sweet-art, an soä I know'd 'im when I seed' im ageän and I telled feyther on 'im.

*Dora.* What is all this, Allen?

*Allen.* Why, Miss Dora, meä and my maätes, us three, we wants to hev three words wi' ye.

*Higgins.* That be 'im, and meä, Miss.

*Jackson.* An' meä, Miss.

*Allen.* An' we weänt mention naw naämes, we'd as lief talk o' the Divil afoor ye as 'im, fur they says the master goäs cleän off his 'eäd when he 'eärs the naäme on 'im; but us three, arter Sally'd telled us on 'im, we fun' 'im out a-walkin' i' West Field wi' a white 'at, nine o'clock, upo' Tuesday murnin', and all on us, wi' your leave, we wants to leather 'im.

*Dora.* Who?

*Allen.* I'im as did the mischief here, five year' sin'.

*Dora.* Mr. Edgar?

*Allen.* Theer, Miss! You ha' naamed 'im—not me.

*Dora.* He's dead, man—dead; gone to his account—dead and buried.

*Allen.* I beänt sa sewer o' that, fur Sally know'd 'im; Now then?

*Dora.* Yes; it was in the Somersetshire papers.

*Allen.* Then you mun be his brother, an' we'll leather 'im.

*Dora.* I never heard that he had a brother. Some foolish mistake of Sally's; but what! would you beat a man for his brother's fault? That were a wild justice indeed. Let by-gones be by-gones. Go home! Good-night! (*All exunt.*) I have once more paid them all. The work of the farm will go on still, but for how long? We are almost at the bottom of the well: little more to be drawn from it—and what then? Encumbered as we are, who would lend us anything? We shall have to sell all the land, which Father, for a whole life, has been getting together, again, and that, I am sure, would be the death of him. What am I to do? Farmer Dobson, were I to marry him, has promised to keep our heads above water; and the man has doubtless a good heart, and a true and lasting love fur me: yet—though I can be sorry for him—as the good Sally says, 'I can't abide him'—almost brutal, and matched with my Harold is like a hedge thistle by a garden rose. But then, he, too—will he ever be of one faith with his wife? which is my dream of a true marriage. Can I fancy him kneeling with me, and uttering the same prayer; standing up side by side with me, and singing the same hymn? I fear not. Have I done wisely, then, in accepting him? But may not a girl's love-dream have too much romance in it to be realized all at once, or altogether, or anywhere but in Heaven? And yet I had once

a vision of a pure and perfect marriage, where the man and the woman, only differing as the stronger and the weaker, should walk hand in hand together down this valley of tears, as they call it so truly, to the grave at the bottom, and lie down there together in the darkness which would seem but for a moment, to be wakened again together by the light of the resurrection, and no more partings for ever and for ever. (*Walks up and down. She sings.*)

'O happy lark, that warblest high  
Above thy lowly nest,  
O brook, that brawlest merrily by  
Thro' fields that once were blest,  
O tower spiring to the sky,  
O grave in daisies drest,  
O Love and Life, how weary am I,  
And how I long for rest.'

There, there, I am a fool! Tears! I have sometimes been moved to tears by a chapter of fine writing in a novel; but what have I to do with tears now? All depends on me—Father, this poor girl, the farm, everything; and they both love me—I am all in all to both; and he loves me too, I am quite sure of that. Courage, courage! and all will go well. (*Goes to bedroom door; opens it.*) How dark your room is! Let me bring you in here where there is still full daylight. (*Brings Eva forward.*) Why, you look better.

*Eva.* And I feel so much better, that I trust I may be able by-and-by to help you in the business of the farm; but I must not be known yet. Has anyone found me out, Dora?

*Dora.* Oh, no; you kept your veil too close for that when they carried you in, since then, no one has seen you but myself.

*Eva.* Yes—this Milly.

*Dora.* Poor blind Father's lull guide, Milly, who came to us three years after you were gone, how should she know you? But now that you have been brought to us as it were from the grave, dearest Eva, and have

been here so long, will you not speak with Father to-day?

*Eva.* Do you think that I may? No, not yet. I am not equal to it yet.

*Dora.* Why? Do you still suffer from your fall in the hollow lane?

*Eva.* Bruised; but no bones broken.

*Dora.* I have always told Father that the huge old ash-tree there would cause an accident some day; but he would never cut it down, because one of the Steers had planted it there in former times.

*Eva.* If it had killed one of the Steers there the other day, it might have been better for her, for him, and for you.

*Dora.* Come, come, keep a good heart! Better for me! That's good. How better for me?

*Eva.* You tell me you have a lover. Will he not fly from you if he learn the story of my shame and that I am still living?

*Dora.* No; I am sure that when we are married he will be willing that you and Father should live with us; for, indeed, he tells me that he met you once in the old times, and was much taken with you, my dear.

*Eva.* Taken with me; who was he? Have you told him I am here?

*Dora.* No; do you wish it?

*Eva.* See, Dora; you yourself are ashamed of me (*sweeps*), and I do not wonder at it.

*Dora.* But I should wonder at myself if it were so. Have we not been all in all to one another from the time when we first peeped into the bird's nest, waded in the brook, ran after the butterflies, and prattled to each other that we would marry fine gentlemen, and played at being fine ladies?

*Eva.* That last was my Father's fault, poor man. And this lover of yours—this Mr. Harold—is a gentleman?

*Dora.* That he is, from head to foot. I do believe I lost my heart to

him the very first time we met, and I love him so much—

*Eva.* Poor Dora!

*Dora.* That I dare not tell him how much I love him.

*Eva.* Better not. Has he offered you marriage, this gentleman?

*Dora.* Could I love him else?

*Eva.* And are you quite sure that after marriage this gentleman will not be shamed of his poor farmer's daughter among the ladies in his drawing-room?

*Dora.* Shamed of me in a drawing-room! Wasn't Miss Vavasour, our schoolmistress at Littlechester, a lady born? Were not our fellow-pupils all ladies? Wasn't dear mother herself at least by one side a lady? Can't I speak like a lady; pen a letter like a lady; talk a little French like a lady; play a little like a lady? Can't a girl when she loves her husband, and he her, make herself anything he wishes her to be! Shamed of me in a drawing-room, indeed! See here! 'I hope your Lordship is quite recovered of your gout?' (*Curtseys.*) 'Will your Ladyship ride to cover to-day?' (*Curtseys.*) 'I can recommend our Voltigeur.' 'I am sorry that we could not attend your Grace's party on the 10th!' (*Curtseys.*) There, I am glad my nonsense has made you smile!

*Eva.* I have heard that 'your Lordship,' and 'your Ladyship,' and 'your Grace' are all growing old-fashioned!

*Dora.* But the love of sister for sister can never be old-fashioned. I have been unwilling to trouble you with questions, but you seem somewhat better to-day. We found a letter in your bedroom torn into bits. I couldn't make it out. What was it?

*Eva.* From him! from him! He said we had been most happy together, and he trusted that some time we should meet again, for he had not forgotten his promise to come when I called him. But that was a mockery, you know, for he gave me no address.

and there was no word of marriage; and, O Dora, he signed himself 'Yours gratefully'—fancy, Dora, 'gratefully'! 'Yours gratefully'!

*Dora.* Infamous wretch! (*Aside.*) Shall I tell her he is dead? No; she is still too feeble.

*Eva.* Hark! Dora, some one is coming. I cannot and will not see anybody.

*Dora.* It is only Milly.

*Enter MILLY with basket of roses.*

*Dora.* Well, Milly, why do you come in so roughly? This sick lady here might have been asleep.

*Milly.* Please, Miss, Mr. Dobson told me to saäy he's browt some of Miss Eva's roses for the sick laädy to smell on.

*Dora.* Take them, dear. Say that the sick lady thanks him! Is he here?

*Milly.* Yeäs, Miss; and he wants to speak to ye partic'lar.

*Dora.* Tell him I cannot leave the sick lady just yet.

*Milly.* Yeäs, Miss; but he says he wants to tell ye summut very partic'lar.

*Dora.* Not to-day. What are you staying for?

*Milly.* Why, Miss, I be afeard I shall set him a-sweäring like onythink.

*Dora.* And what harm will that do you, so that you do not copy his bad manners? Go, child. (*Exit Milly.*) But, Eva, why did you write 'Seek me at the bottom of the river'?

*Eva.* Why? because I meant it!—that dreadful night! that lonely walk to Littlechester, the rain beating in my face all the way, dead midnight when I came upon the bridge; the river, black, slimy, swirling under me in the lamplight, by the rotten wharfs—but I was so mad, that I mounted upon the parapet—

*Dora.* You make me shudder!

*Eva.* To fling myself over, when I heard a voice, 'Girl, what are you doing there?' It was a Sister of Mercy, come from the death-bed of a pauper.

who had died in his misery blessing God, and the Sister took me to her house, and bit by bit—for she promised secrecy—I told her all.

*Dora.* And what then?

*Eva.* She would have persuaded me to come back here, but I couldn't. Then she got me a place as nursery governess, and when the children grew too old for me, and I asked her once more to help me, once more she said, 'Go home;' but I hadn't the heart or face to do it. And then—what would Father say? I sank so low that I went into service—the drudge of a lodging-house—and when the mistress died, and I appealed to the Sister again, her answer—I think I have it about me—yes, there it is!

*Dora (reads).* 'My dear Child,—I can do no more for you. I have done wrong in keeping your secret; your Father must be now in extreme old age. Go back to him and ask his forgiveness before he dies.—SISTER AGATHA.' Sister Agatha is right. Don't you long for Father's forgiveness!

*Eva.* I would almost die to have it!

*Dora.* And he may die before he gives it; may drop off any day, any hour. You must see him at once. (*Rings bell. Enter Milly.*) Milly, my dear, how did you leave Mr. Steer?

*Milly.* He's been a-moänin' and a-groänin' in 'is sleep, but I thinks he be wakkenin' oop.

*Dora.* Tell him that I and the lady here wish to see him. You see she is lamed, and cannot go down to him.

*Milly.* Yeäs, Miss, I will.

[*Exit Milly.*]

*Dora.* I ought to prepare you. You must not expect to find our Father as he was five years ago. He is much altered; but I trust that your return—for you know, my dear, you were always his favorite—will give him, as they say, a new lease of life.

*Eva (clinging to Dora).* Oh, Dora, Dora!



*Enter STEER led by MILLY.*

*Steer.* Hes the cow cawved?

*Dora.* No, Father.

*Steer.* Be the colt dead?

*Dora.* No, Father.

*Steer.* He wur sa bellows'd out wi' the wind this murnin', 'at I tell'd 'em to gallop 'im. Be he dead?

*Dora.* Not that I know.

*Steer.* What hasta sent fur me, then, fur?

*Dora (taking Steer's arm).* Well, Father, I have a surprise for you.

*Steer.* I ha niver been surprised but once i' my life, and I went blind upon it.

*Dora.* Eva has come home.

*Steer.* Hoäm? fro' the bottom o' the river?

*Dora.* No, Father, that was a mistake. She's here again.

*Steer.* The Steers was all gentlefoälks i' the owd times, an' I worked early an' laäte to maäke 'em all gentlefoälks ageän. The land belonged to the Steers i' the owd times, an' it belongs to the Steers ageän: I bowt it back ageän; but I couldn't buy my darter back ageän when she lost hersen, could I? I eddicated boäth on 'em to marry gentlemen, an' one on 'em went an' lost hersen i' the river.

*Dora.* No, Father, she's here.

*Steer.* Here! she moänt coom here. What would her mother saäy? If it be her ghoäst, we mun abide it. We can't keep a ghoäst out.

*Eva (falling at his feet).* O forgive me! forgive me!

*Steer.* Who said that? Taäke me awaäy, little gell. It be one o' my bad daäys. [*Exit Steer led by Milly.*]

*Dora (smoothing Eva's forehead).* Be not so cast down, my sweet Eva. You heard him say it was one of his bad days. He will be sure to know you to-morrow.

*Eva.* It is almost the last of my bad days, I think. I am very faint. I must lie down. Give me your arm. Lead me back again.

[*Dora takes Eva into inner room.*]

*Enter MILLY.*

*Milly.* Miss Dora! Miss Dora!

*Dora (returning and leaving the bedroom door ajar).* Quiet! quiet! What is it?

*Milly.* Mr. 'Aroid, Miss.

*Dora.* Below?

*Milly.* Yeäs, Miss. He be saäyin' a word to the owd man, but he'll coom up if ye lets 'im.

*Dora.* Tell him, then, that I'm waiting for him.

*Milly.* Yeäs, Miss.

[*Exit. Dora sits pensively and waits.*]

*Enter HAROLD.*

*Harold.* You are pale, my Dora! but the ruddiest cheek That ever charm'd the plowman of your wolds

Might wish its rose a lily, could it look

But half as lovely. I was speaking with

Your father, asking his consent—you wish'd me—

That we should marry: he would answer nothing,

I could make nothing of him; but, my flower,

You look so weary and so worn! What is it

Has put you out of heart?

*Dora.* It puts me in heart Again to see you; but indeed the state

Of my poor father puts me out of heart.

Is yours yet living?

*Harold.* No—I told you.

*Dora.* When?

*Harold.* Confusion!—Ah well, well! the state we all Must come to in our spring-and-winter world

If we live long enough! and poor Steer looks

The very type of Age in a picture, bow'd

To the earth he came from, to the grave he goes to,



Beneath the burthen of years.

*Dora.* More like the picture  
Of Christian in my 'Pilgrim's Progress'  
here,  
Bow'd to the dust beneath the burthen  
of sin.

*Harold.* Sin! What sin?

*Dora.* Not his own.

*Harold.* That nursery-tale  
Still read, then?

*Dora.* Yes; our carters and our  
shepherds  
Still find a comfort there.

*Harold.* Carters and shepherds!

*Dora.* Scorn! I hate scorn. A  
soul with no religion—

My mother used to say that such a  
one

Was without rudder, anchor, compass  
—might be

Blown everyway with every gust and  
wreck

On any rock; and tho' you are good  
and gentle,

Yet if thro' any want—

*Harold.* Of this religion?  
Child, read a little history, you will  
find

The common brotherhood of man has  
been

Wrong'd by the cruelties of his relig-  
ions

More than could ever have happen'd  
thro' the want

Of any or all of them.

*Dora.* —But, O dear friend,  
If thro' the want of any—I mean the  
true one—

And pardon me for saying it—you  
should ever

Be tempted into doing what might  
seem

Not altogether worthy of you, I think  
That I should break my heart, for you  
have taught me

To love you.

*Harold.* What is this? some one  
been stirring

Against me? he, your rustic amourist,  
The polish'd Damon of your pastoral  
here,

This Dobson of your idyll?

*Dora.* No, Sir, no!

Did you not tell me he was crazed  
with jealousy,  
Had threaten'd ev'n your life, and  
would say anything?

Did I not promise not to listen to  
him,

Nor ev'n to see the man?

*Harold.* Good; then what is it  
That makes you talk so dolefully?

*Dora.* I told you—  
My father. Well, indeed, a friend

just now,  
One that has been much wrong'd,

whose griefs are mine,  
Was warning me that if a gentleman

Should wed a farmer's daughter, he  
would be

Sooner or later shamed of her among  
The ladies, born his equals.

*Harold.* More fool he!

What I that have been call'd a  
Socialist,

A Communist, a Nihilist—what you  
will!—

*Dora.* What are all these?

*Harold.* Utopian idiotcies.  
They did not last three Junes. Such

rampant weeds  
Strangle each other, die, and make

the soil  
For Cæsars, Cromwells, and Napo-  
leons

To root their power in. I have freed  
myself

From all such dreams, and some will  
say because

I have inherited my Uncle. Let  
them.

But—shamed of you, my Empress! I  
should prize

The pearl of Beauty, even if I found  
it

Dark with the soot of slums.

*Dora.* But I can tell you,  
We Steers are of old blood, tho' we  
be fallen.

See there our shield. (*Pointing to  
arms on mantelpiece.*)

For I have heard the Steers  
Had land in Saxon times; and your

own name

Of Harold sounds so English and so  
old

I am sure you must be proud of it.

*Harold.* Not I!  
As yet I scarcely feel it mine. I took  
it

For some three thousand acres. I  
have land now  
And wealth, and lay both at your  
feet.

*Dora.* And what was  
Your name before?

*Harold.* Come, come, my girl,  
enough

Of this strange talk. I love you and  
you me.

True, I have held opinions, hold  
some still,

Which you would scarce approve of:  
for all that,

I am a man not prone to jealousies,  
Caprices, humors, moods; but very  
ready

To make allowances, and mighty slow  
To feel offences. Nay, I do believe

I could forgive—well, almost any-  
thing—

And that more freely than your for-  
mal priest,

Because I know more fully than *he*  
can

What poor earthworms are all and  
each of us,

Here crawling in this boundless Na-  
ture. *Dora,*

If marriage ever brought a woman  
happiness

I doubt not I can make you happy.

*Dora.* You make me  
Happy already.

*Harold.* And I never said  
As much before to any woman living.

*Dora.* No?

*Harold.* No! by this true kiss,  
*you* are the first

I ever have loved truly.

[*They kiss each other.*]

*Eva* (with a wild cry). Philip  
Edgar!

*Harold.* The phantom cry! *You*  
—did you hear a cry?

*Dora.* She must be crying out  
'Edgar' in her sleep.

*Harold.* Who must be crying out  
'Edgar' in her sleep.

*Dora.* Your pardon for a minute.  
She must be waked.

*Harold.* Who must be waked?

*Dora.* I am not deaf: you fright  
me.

What ails you?

*Harold.* Speak.

*Dora.* You know her, *Eva.*

*Harold.* *Eva!*

[*Eva opens the door and stands in  
the entry.*]

She!

*Eva.* Make her happy, then, and I  
forgive you. [*Falls dead.*]

*Dora.* Happy! What? *Edgar?*  
Is it so? Can it be?

They told me so. Yes, yes! I see it  
all now.

O she has fainted. Sister, *Eva,* sis-  
ter!

He is yours again—he will love *you*  
again;

I give him back to you again. Look  
up!

One word, or do but smile! Sweet,  
do you hear me?

[*Puts her hand on Eva's heart.*]

There, there—the heart, O God!—the  
poor young heart

Broken at last—all still—and noth-  
ing left

To live for.

[*Falls on the body of her sister.*]

*Harold.* Living . . . dead . . .  
She said 'all still.

Nothing to live for.'

She—she knows me—now . . .

(*A pause.*)

She knew me from the first, she jugh-  
gled with me,

She hid this sister, told me she was  
dead—

I have wasted pity on her—not dead  
now—

No! acting, playing on me, both of  
them.

They drag the river for her! no, not  
they!

Playing on me—not dead now—a  
swoon—a scene—

Yet—how she made her wail as for  
the dead!

Enter MILLY.

Milly. Please, Mister 'Arold.

Harold (roughly). Well?

Milly. The owd man's coom'd agean to 'issen, an' wants To hev a word wi' ye about the marriage.

Harold. The what?

Milly. The marriage.

Harold. The marriage?

Milly. Yeas, the marriage. Granny says marriages be maade i' 'eaven.

Harold. She lies! They are made in Hell. Child, can't you see? Tell them to fly for a doctor.

Milly. O law—yeas, Sir! I'll run for 'im mysen. [Exit.

Harold. All silent there, Yes, deathlike! Dead? I dare not look: if dead, Were it best to steal away, to spare myself, And her too, pain, pain, pain?

My curse on all This world of mud, on all its idiot gleams Of pleasure, all the foul fatalities That blast our natural passions into pains!

Enter DOBSON.

Dobson. You, Master Hedgar, Harold, or whatever They calls ye, for I warrants that ye goäs By haäfe a scoor o' naämes—out o' the chaumber.

[Dragging him past the body.

Harold. Not that way, man! Curse on your brutal strength! I cannot pass that way.

Dobson. Out o' the chaumber! I'll mash tha into nowt.

Harold. The mere wild-beast!

Dobson. Out o' the chaumber, dang tha!

Harold. Lout, churl, clown!

[While they are shouting and struggling Dora rises and comes between them.

Dora (to Dobson). Peace, let him be: it is the chamber of Death! Sir, you are tenfold more a gentleman, A hundred times more worth a woman's love,

Than this, this—but I waste no words upon him:

His wickedness is like my wretchedness—

Beyond all language.

(To Harold.)

You—you see her there! Only fifteen when first you came on her,

And then the sweetest flower of all the wolds,

So lovely in the promise of her May, So winsome in her grace and gaiety, So loved by all the village people here,

So happy in herself and in her home—

Dobson (agitated). Theer, theer! ha' done. I can't abear to see her. [Exit.

Dora. A child, and all as trustful as a child!

Five years of shame and suffering broke the heart

That only beat for you; and he, the father,

Thro' that dishonor which you brought upon us,

Has lost his health, his eyesight, even his mind.

Harold (covering his face). Enough!

Dora. It seem'd so; only there was left

A second daughter, and to her you came

Veiling one sin to act another.

Harold. No!

You wrong me there! hear, hear me! I wish'd, if you— [Pauses.

Dora. If I—

Harold. Could love me, could be brought to love me

As I loved you—

Dora. What then?

Harold. I wish'd, I hoped To make, to make—

Dora. What did you hope to make?

*Harold.* 'Twere best to make an  
end of my lost life.

O Dora, Dora!

*Dora.* What did you hope to  
make?

*Harold.* Make, make! I cannot  
find the word—forgive it—

Amends.

*Dora.* For what? to whom?

*Harold.* To him, to you!

*Dora.* To him! to me!  
[*Falling at her feet.*]

No, not with all your wealth,  
Your land, your life! Out in the  
fiercest storm

That ever made earth tremble—he,  
nor I—

The shelter of *your* roof—not for one  
moment—

Nothing from *you*!

Sunk in the deepest pit of pauperism,  
Push'd from all doors as if we bore  
the plague,

Smitten with fever in the open field,  
Laid famine-stricken at the gates of  
Death—

Nothing from you!

But she there—her last word  
Forgave—and I forgive you. If you  
ever

Forgive yourself, you are even lower  
and baser

Than even I can well believe you. Go!  
[*He lies at her feet. Curtain falls.*]

## INDEX TO FIRST LINES OF VOLUME II.

A CITY clerk, but gently born and bred, 143.  
 Altho' I be the basest of mankind, 65.  
 A still small voice spake unto me, 4.  
 At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Gren-  
 ville lay, 184.  
 At Francis Allen's on the Christmas  
 Eve, 44

BANNER of England, not for a season, O  
 banner of Britain, hast thou, 107.  
 He thou a-gawin' to the loog barn, 422.  
 Break, break, break, 106.

CHAINS, my good lord : in your raised  
 brows I read, 203.  
 Come not, when I am dead, 101.  
 Comrades, leave me here a little, while as  
 yet 'tis early morn, 78.  
 ' Courage!' he said, and pointed toward  
 the land, 29.

DEAD Princess, living Power, if that,  
 which lived, 107.  
 Deep on the convent-roof the snows, 90.  
 Dust are our frames; and, gilded dust,  
 our pride, 127.

FLOW down, cold rivulet, to the sea, 100.  
 Full knee-deep lies the winter snow, 38.

HALLOWED be Thy name—Halleluia! 212.  
 He clasps the crag with crooked hands,  
 101.  
 Her arms across her breast she laid, 101.  
 Here, by this brook, we parted: I to the  
 East, 123.  
 He that only rules by terror, 97.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-house, 20.  
 I had a vision when the night was late,  
 102.  
 I hate the dreadful hollow behind the little  
 wood, 153.  
 I knew an old wife lean and poor, 43.  
 Illyrian woodlands, echoing falls, 106.  
 I'm glad I walked. How fresh the mead-  
 ows look, 60.  
 In her ear he whispers gaily, 97.

I read, before my eyelids dropt their  
 shade, 33.  
 I see the wealthy miller yet, 11.  
 I send you here a sort of allegorv, 19.  
 It little profits that an idle king, 75.  
 It was the time when lilies blow, 95.  
 I waited for the train at Coventry, 84.  
 I was the chief of the race—he had stricken  
 my father dead, 208.

LADY Clara Vere de Vere, 25.  
 Like souls that balance joy and pain, 100.  
 Lo! there once more—This is the seventh  
 night, 293.  
 Long lines of cliff breaking have left a  
 chasm, 107.  
 Love thou thy land, with love far-brought,  
 41.  
 Lucilia, wedded to Lucretius, found, 148.

MOVE eastward, happy earth, and leave,  
 101.  
 My father left a park to me, 89.  
 My friend should meet me somewhere  
 hereabout, 200.  
 My good blade carves the casques of  
 men, 91.

NATURE, so far as in her lies, 40.

O BLACKBIRD! sing me something well, 38.  
 Of love that never found his earthly close,  
 72.  
 Of old sat Freedom on the heights, 41.  
 O Lady Flora, let me speak, 85.  
 O Love, Love, Love! O withering might!  
 14  
 O me, my pleasant rambles by the lake, 62.  
 Once more the gate behind me falls, 69.  
 On either side the river lie, 1.  
 O plump head-waiter at The Cock, 02.  
 O thou, that send'st out the man, 43.  
 Our doctor had 'lived in another, I never  
 had seen him before, 105.  
 ' Ouse-keeper sent the my lass, fur New  
 Square com'd last night, 102.  
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
 212.

- PINE, beech and plane, oak, walnut, apricot, 394.
- So all day long the noise of battle roll'd, 45.
- So, my lord, the Lady Giovanna, who hath been away, 411.
- So then our good Archbishop Theobald, 335.
- Stand back, keep a clear lane! 213.
- Still on the tower stood the WAVE, 101.
- Sweet Emma Moreland of yonder town, 92.
- 'THE Bull, the Fleece are cramm'd, and not a room, 58.
- The rain had fallen, the Poet arose, 106.
- There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier, 14.
- The wind, that beats the mountain, blows, 39.
- The woods decay, the woods decay and fall, 77.
- They have left the doors ajar; and by their clash, 186.
- This morning is the morning of the day, 50.
- WAÄIT till our Sally cooms in, fur thou mun a' sights to tell, 181.
- Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wiod dver land and sea, 178.
- 'Wait a little,' you say, 'you are sure it 'll all come right,' 176.
- We left behind the painted buoy, 98.
- Well, you shall have that song which Leonard wrote, 74.
- We were two daughters of one race, 19.
- YOU ask me, why, tho' ill at ease, 41.
- You might have wud the Poet's oame, 105.
- You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear, 26.









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