

Woods.

voices, winters' choir,
bare woods' silent grief;
sky, the tangled brier
the buried leaf.

and flow:
old,
the snow,
the cold.

Keppell Strange.

What comfort was there when the sun was gone,
But darkness, void, and silence as of Death?

'Twas this she dwelt, and later came the news
That he was ill, and nigh to death, alone
In Paris, and they said that he was poor
"Alone! and I not near him!" cried the child,
And with these words she started on her way
Half clad on foot, and after many a day
Of weary travel, and of sleepless nights
She reached the city where he dwelt, herself
In need of succor, more than he, who had
All that the world calls riches, laid in case;
While she who sought him in her simple love
Had braved all hunger and the pangs of thirst
And all the dangers of her helpless state,
That so she might be near him and might tend
His wants with her own hands, for who could tend
Like one who loved him with a love like hers?
At last she found his dwelling, and there saw
In one brief glance what told her more than all
She yet had learned of that great world of his:
For there, surrounded by all luxury,
A woman twined her arms around his neck
And men and women lounged about his rooms,
All clothed in silks, a giddy, careless throng,
Whose only thought the pleasure of the hour,
With those, what place for her so rudely clad?
Heart-stricken, with a shriek she turned and fled
The iron had pierced her soul, she saw the world
And knew it had no place for one who lived
Among the flowers, and toiled for daily bread,
And quickly from the scene, crushed to the soul,
She passed, and would have cast herself
Into the stream. Too hard the ways of life!
But one who loved her (he who told the tale)
Had saved and brought her to her native hut,
But all was vain, she rallied for a day,
Buoyed up with hope, that all was but a dream,
A hideous phantom, and that soon again
His loving smile would banish every doubt,
Then when the neighbors left her for a while,
At close of day, to tend their simple homes,
The truth dawned on her and she knew the past
Was all too true: that he was dead to her:
That life for evermore had lost its charm,
Then placing on her little time-worn shoes,
Stole softly from the hut and sought the stream
Where sixteen years before old Antoine found
Her as a babe, and murmur'ing, "Ah! Dear God,
Thy ways are hard, as are the ways of men,
Yet love him still as Thou dost love the flowers,
And tell him that I also tried to love!"
Then past among the lilies whence she came,
A precious flower by lilies saved, and now
Once more by pure white lilies claimed in Death.

A. G. DOUGHTY.