



A PAGAN'S PRAYER.

O Mother, I have loved thee without fear
And looked upon the mystery of change,
Since first, a child, upon the closing year
I saw the snowflakes fall and whispered, "Strange!"

Because in these pale border lands of fate
Grief hath companioned me, I have not quailed;
And when love passed into the outer strait,
I have not faltered and thou hast not failed.

For I have lifted up my heart to thee,
And thou hast ever hearkened and drawn near,
And bowed thy shining face down over me,
Till I could hear thee as the hill-flowers hear.

And I have cried to thee in lonely need,
Being but a child of thine bereft and wrung,
Till all the rivers in the hills gave heed;
And the great hill-winds in thy holy tongue—