

Foremost, midst the brave Crusaders,  
Gleams his snowy crest and shield:  
And he bears himself right bravely,  
On that Syrian battlefield.  
But at length, she sees him waver,  
And her sight grows strangely dim;  
Can that be the brave de Spenser,  
Borne down by a fierce Paynim?

Pierced by Moslem's poisoned arrow,  
In the hour of victory,  
Fighting for the Cross: his banner,  
Falls this flower of chivalry.  
And his trembling lips breathe softly  
Midst the shouts that rend the air;  
Her dear name thrice gently whispered,  
Mingling with his final prayer.

There the vision ceased, and Edith  
Trembling—waked in wild affright;  
Through the narrow casement glimmered,  
Silvery streams of pale moonlight.  
And all faint, in haste arising,  
Gazed she, on the ring with dread:  
From the gem, the sheen had vanished  
And the changing tints had fled.

As the fragile flower shivers,  
Borne down by a tropic storm,  
So the heart of this fair maiden,  
Seemed distraught by wild alarm.  
Ah! such anguish is too sacred;  
Who would lightly dare to raise,  
From the stricken soul, the curtain,  
That would hide it from our gaze?

\* \* \* \* \*

Days and weeks dragged slowly onwards,  
And one stormy night there came,  
To the castle lands a pilgrim,  
Asking alms in Heaven's name.