

Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower to his level day by day, 45
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathise 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. 50

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— 55
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! 60

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 un-
worthy proved—

Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was
loved.