

## MY FEATHERED LADY.

WHERE'ER of old my Lady went  
 All art, all nature seemed to be  
 Attuned in soft accompaniment  
 To sing her praise to me.  
 With her all gentleness would move;  
 Her smile was life, her look was love.

Within her bonnet shone the rose,  
 A lily sheltered at her breast,  
 But now where'er my Lady goes  
 No human heart can rest;  
 The very stones beneath her feet  
 Cry "Murder! Murder!" down the  
 street.

For in her bonnet is the plume  
 That waves above her head, to tell  
 She has, within her soul, no room  
 For Pity's self to dwell;  
 That she can see, unmoved of pain,  
 Homes plundered, babes and mothers  
 slain.

Lo! in the hall of dance and song,  
 The maiden, clad with snowy grace;  
 No more she glides like light along,  
 How changed and slow her pace;  
 Knee-deep she seems to wade through  
 death  
 Of white-winged creatures cast beneath!

Now at the altar kneels the bride,  
 Pure joy and spotless womanhood.  
 Ah, pluck that dainty veil aside!  
 Her hair is red with blood!  
 Hark! through the hymn of praise, a  
 cry  
 Of birds in bridal dress that die.

Beside the infant's cot there stands  
 A mother robed for evening rout,  
 The fury in her jewelled hands  
 Would cast her own child out!  
 She has but killed, for fan and lace,  
 A heron's offspring in its place.

There in the land of sun and flowers  
 With orange scent upon the air,  
 When Egrets-build their bridal bowers,  
 They take them plumes to wear,  
 Such plumes as with true love in sight,  
 Will tell the fluttering heart's delight.

They mate, and happy is the breast  
 That feels one day its softness stirr  
 By that new life within the nest,  
 Loud calls the parent bird;  
 The very savage in the wood  
 Must share the joyance of the brood.

But hands, whom Fashion arms w  
 greed  
 And hearts made cruel by the Cha-  
 These know our English ladies need  
 Some little borrowed grace.  
 The merchant unto murder dooms  
 A whole bird-nation for its plumes.

Fierce shouts are heard, and up the  
 springs

A palpitating cloud of sound,  
 The shadows of ten thousand wings  
 Move trembling on the ground,  
 And seem in silence to entreat  
 For mercy round the murderers' feet.

Gun answers gun, the cloud that r  
 Lies warm and wounded undernea  
 In all the heart-appalling throes  
 Of agony and death;  
 From quivering flesh the ruffians to  
 The feathers for my Lady's hair.

There falls a hush upon the wood  
 Where gun made echo unto gun.  
 But still the branches drip with blood  
 And, fainting for the sun,  
 Unfed, unsheltered now by breast,  
 The children perish in the nest.

Wings, meant for flight, that can  
 not fly

Are rotting, high above, in air;  
 Beneath, the carrion bodies lie  
 Whose fault was being fair.  
 And Vanity that wrought this doom,  
 Goes dancing off with Egret-plume.

O English mother, maid, or bride,  
 Who seek for Fashion's feathers to  
 grace,

Come in your beauty and your pride  
 And gaze upon the place:  
 Then say if Love can wear again  
 For Pity's sake, such plumes of pain.

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