

To stand forsworn in face of plighted troth,
 'Tis vile!—To this, my adored, you answer—nothing?
 Too well I understand you; thanks!—You'd spare me:
 You silent sit, lest you condemn too harshly!
 But you know, and I've said all may condone.

Ott.—(*bending towards him.*)

Is't only so then, that you guess my thoughts?
 Canst read no truer in my heart, e'en when
 All's pure delight and tenderest ravishment?
 In these eyes seest thou but the pride that pardons?
 Rather is't not th' ineffable surprise
 Which first learns *to be loved* is sweet as *loving*?
 Look up!

Rect.—(*Turning his head.*)

I dare not; 't were rank sacrilege;
 Such bliss for me Heaven ne'er ordained.

Ott.— Look up!

Rect.—Oh! tempt me not; 't were death to me.—Beware!

Men such as I are never more consoled.
 Too late!—

Ott.— Look up!

Rect.— Ah me! I must obey!

Here at thy feet full of delicious woe
 I lay me down. Thy hands, O beauteous charmer,
 And eke thy smile,—that sweetly bodes me hope,
 O yield them me.—For so the dewy freshness
 Of thy young life doth meet and close the gap
 Between our years. Now all's effaced, forgotten;
 Days wasted, vain regrets, long melancholy,
 The bitterness of time lost, doubt, distrust,—
 All—alien to thy youth—falls dead before thee.
 “Love is immortal; fond hearts never age!”—
 Such is the truth thy deep eyes prophesy—
 Graven on thy candid brow by God's own finger.
 To love! O that alone is sure, right, noble!
 Dost say thou knewest it all, e'en when I doubted?
 Then, heavenly-witted messenger, instruct
 My ignorance, for all thy words are truth.
 Already where thy hand led I have followed,
 And what thou'st willed I've done—List! the bells chime;