

PROLOGUE

Ah mistress fair! and thou wouldst me endow
For just a little while, with thy sweet grace,
And let me speak—as I might to thy face—
Then would I say: I know not when nor how
The blood within my veins did warmer flow
With joyous throb, than when I heard, through
space,

Thy voice interpret choice melodious lays,
In lucid tones of rich and pure alto.

As Heaven hath on each bestowed a gift,
Some talent that may blazon bright a name,
So thou'rt dowered with the power of song,
And charm of mien, and those rare traits that
lift

Man from the clay; which set aglow the flame
Of pure desire, and make him noble, strong.