

A comparison of the printed text of the following lyric with that of the MS. shews a striking improvement through revision:

*"Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands;
A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his brood about thy knee;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.*

The first two lines of the MS. copy were recast before publication, "and" inserted at the beginning of the last line, and "them" changed to "thine." The trumpet blare, "Tara ta tantara!" in the MS. does not appear in the printed text.

It will be seen that the lyric "Ask me no more," has been changed in two words only. They are here printed in italics:

*"Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain and of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?
Ask me no more.*

*Ask me no more: what answer should I give!
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.*

*Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:
I strove against the stream and all in vain:
Let the great river take me to the main:
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more."*

Perhaps in none of the examples of revision which I have given from The Princess is that deftness of touch for which the Poet Laureate stands pre-eminent revealed more delicately than in the two slight verbal changes in this song.

II.

*Lady, let the rolling drums
Beat to battle where thy warrior stands:
Now thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands.*

*Lady, let the trumpets blow,
Clasp the little babes about thy knee;
Now thy warrior father meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.*