

His wayside couch knew him no more when scorching day was  
done,

His fellow-traveller the moon, his curfew-bell, the sun.

His brother tramp's sarcastic cry hung heavy o'er the breeze,  
Unkenn'd by one whose onward march had scorn of leisured ease.

How could he cry a halt, when ev'ry step brought him more near  
To the fair Mecca of his heart,—to the Hope he held most dear ?

And no man guess'd the happy dreams that guil'd his onward way,  
Of parting lost in union, as the shadow'd hour in day.

As the impatient reader flings aside the halting page,  
So in such hours he flung from him the lingering steps of Age.

And, for a season, youth was his, and Fancy's loom did weave  
A future blest for him and his, where none should vex, nor grieve.

Yea ! she should walk in silk attire, and the spoils of many lands  
Would yield glad tribute to her charms, and deck her dainty  
hands.

Days wax'd to weeks, and weeks to months, ere distance knew  
control,

And the toil-worn feet of "Ninety-eight" had reached their  
journey's goal.

And thus it chanced, one winter's night, the wand'rer stood before  
Her lattice pane, and, unseen, gazed upon his child once more.

How beautiful she seem'd, so like another, long since dead  
(She who had won his manhood's love, ere Youth and Honour  
fed).

But not alone ! for "Ninety-eight" could see and almost hear  
One, by her side, who spake of love to her both held so dear.

What mortal sleeper has not known the bitter waking pain  
From pleasant visions of the night, to cold, grey morn again ?