

THE MONK AND THE BIRD.

And so he strove, this monk of ancient days,
Until th' unshriven ghosts of his dead past
Fled like affrighted shadows from the blaze
Of light so piercing cold, his soul at last
Attained :—The pious aged were amaze,
That one who was most nobly framed to give
And take all knightly pleasures, could thus scorn
Disdain the earth which mothered him, and live
As though High Heaven contained life's only boon.

The years roll on, and summers wax and wane,
And now once more the winter yields to spring ;
The dead that sleep stir with a quickening pain,
The living heart of beauty 'gins to sing,
The loveliness of earth returns again ;
And he, who lingers in the wood to hear
The wooing ecstasy of birds, doth feel
A joy unutterable, and draweth near
To knowledge of his soul's eternal weal.