

With a sorcery past name or naming;
And a magic charm, a lure and solace,
Steal upon the world-distracted spirit
With a sense of reverie and longing
Pierced by some unmitigated joyance,
Calm, immortal.

It would not surprise me,—
Would it you?—if from the brambly thicket
Two green eyes should peer, and we, a moment
Blessed beyond the common lot of mortals,
In their spell should recognize the wood-god,—
That appealing smile, half gay, half wistful,
And all kindly. Truth we should account it,
Though it proved mere figment of the fancy,
Sense once more subservient to spirit.
Surely soul must have her own dominion
Real as any ranged by outward vision!
Must we to believe behold the presence,—
Doubt the song until we see the singer?
Like enough that thrush's song is magic.
What more would you? Hear and be transported!

So upon the wish, we are in Hellas,
In the purple hills, and it is summer.
The wind wanders through the groves of ilex;
There are sounds of birds and falling water;
The leaves whisper full of wind and shadow;
That red road in the ravine below us
Leads the travelling eye through fields of mallow,
Seeding grass and flame-bright oleander,
Down the meadowy country to the seaboard,
Where the breakers beat their crooning rhythms
On the white sand. There a phantom city,
White and small against the purple distance,
With her looming walls and spars and towers
Gleaming in the sun is Mitylene.
Olive groves and feathery moonlit fountains,
Gardens full of shade and yellow roses,
River beds where glowed the purple iris,
Jonquil and anemone and myrtle,
Temples to the gods in blue-veined marble,
Bronze and gold and ivory and vermillion,
Theatres and baths and noble dwellings,
Lie within her pleasant streets and borders
Where life ran undimmed in happy beauty.
In that long ago no man remembers.

There a people very like us moderns
Wrought and triumphed, loved and joyed and suffered.