

And spake the other : " Lord not I of Life.
 Yet if Another thou abjure, the knife
 That cuts thee free from vassalage so shall give
 Long life and large. A master shalt thou live,
 And reign for fifty years, and pass to me."

Then shuddered the musician ! But to be
 A signer of the bond—why, that was plain :
 He sold himself—mortgaged his own domain.
 But now—to sell his God ! Ay, either way,
 He sold his God : but—grossly thus for pay ?
 With no poor covering of a hoodwinked soul,
 But eyes at large, that looked and saw the whole ?
 He could not do it : something held him back,
 And struck him dumb, the while desire's fell rack,
 Disjointed all his thought, and strove to wring
 Confession of the barter of his King.

" Thou wilt not ? "—so the tempting voice went on.
 " Thou wilt not ? Wherefore, might I say, ' Begone,'
 And spurn thee from my presence. Yet, behold !
 So like a brother art thou cast in mould,
 That other terms I offer. Wilt thou give
 Thine instrument for mine ? So shalt thou live
 A master yet through half a hundred years—
 On one most small condition."

From his fears
 Of forfeit art the mad musician broke,
 And, hurling instant answer, straightway spoke :
 " I give ! Take thou, and thy condition name ! "

" Then draw to me," that other. And he came,
 And stood before the throne of hideous state,
 And saw a horrid shine of eyes elate
 With hell triumphant, while the dwarfed one grew
 A giant gloom through gloom that crushed and drew
 The Titan in, yet held him not at all.
 Too small for him, its grip crushed meanly small.

" Now, open ears, and harken," That went on.
 " My viol shalt thou take, and then begone,
 And lord my viol in the face of men,
 If, when thou close thy door on public ken,
 My viol then may lord it over thee :
 In the world's eye, thine all the mastery,
 But there at home the instrument supreme."

Vague horrors, like the flittings of a dream,
 Rose whirling o'er the listener's clouded mind.
 He heard the words, but of the sense behind