

QUEEN'S QUARTERLY

How long in that same fit I lay,
 I have not to declare;
 But ere my living life returned,
 I heard, and in my soul discerned,
 Two voices in the air.

The two voices, let it be repeated, simply vary the symbols of Law and of Love, of Retribution and of Redemption. The First Voice relates the story of the crime, and shows full kinship and stern sympathy with the wrongs of the Polar Spirit. The Second Voice pleads gently that the Mariner

hath penance done,
 And penance more will do.

The Second Voice also reveals the power of the prime corresponding symbol, the Moon:

Still as a slave before his lord,
 The ocean hath no blast;
 His great bright eye most silently
 Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;
 For she guides him smooth or grim.
 See brother, see! how graciously
 She looketh down on him.

The voices fade away; the Mariner awakens; the Moon is high; the dead men stand on deck with that eerie punitive glitter in their eyes, the spell of which the Mariner, even when redeemed, can never wholly forget. But for the moment the spell is snapped, and the Mariner views the ocean, no longer as slimy, or rotting, or painted, but as fresh and clear and green. "The curse," says the gloss, "is finally expiated." The two motives of Retribution and Redemption are drawing together and a great wind bears the ship towards her haven.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
 Like a meadow-gale of spring—

Dread expresses itself in the next line:

It mingled strangely with my fears,
 and hope in the fourth line:

Yet it felt like a welcoming.