

CAPTIVITY.

Thou, O my soul,
Thou art as an eagle
Caged in this agonized
Iron of earth's gloom ;
Evermore beating
At these confining,
Effort-confounding,
Bars of thy doom.

Evermore chafing,
Restless and longing,
For those far rose-peaks,
Splendid, of light ;—
That large sky-vista,
That unfettered freedom,
Wide for thy flight.

Here thou art caged,
Thy hooded eye darkened,
Thy soaring wings wounded,
Thy splendor curbed fast ;
That somewhere and sometime,
Erstwhile enfranchised,
Met the red sunlance,
Measured the vast.

Here in thy prison
Of fettered contumely,
Environ ignoble,
All high effort wronging ;
Thou canst never soar to
Those vasts of the sunlit,
Far heights of thy longing.

But, thou, O my soul,
Out of these cage-bars,
Forth to thy freedom,
Unshackled, alone,
Thou wilt go outward,
Skyward and sunward,
Vastward and strengthward,
Back to thine own.

Where on those far-peaks,
Thou with thy kindred.
Kinglike and soaring,
Eyeing the sun ;
Thou wilt drink deep of that
Vastness and glory,
Where sky-winds run.

Forgetting this life-curbed,
Prisoned, flesh-shackled,
Earth-enmanacled
Thing that thou wast ;—
There in thine eyrie,
Thou wilt regain thee
All thou hast longed for,
All thou hast lost.