

THE MONK AND THE BIRD.

Coarse were his garments, and a shirt of hair
Next to his wounded flesh he wore to spurn
The body's pain ; his numbèd feet were bare ;
And dust of martyrs who in fire did burn
Covered his head : no meat nor wine for fare
Had he, but daily filled his brain with lore
Of musty scrolls, and with the richest art
Transcribed rare missals for the hungry poor,
That they might pray unto The Bleeding Heart.

Yet his own heart was cheerless as the stones
He knelt upon ; and often would a tear
Wet the wan cheek, as he besought with groans
The marble saints to slay each secret fear,
And banish from his soul all the sweet tones
Of life's affections, lest the Master's call
To poverty, obeyed for love of God
And Holy Church, should fruitless be, and all
The hope of Heaven die with his mortal clod.