

Gravely thou—"The world is not
Like this ferny hollow :—
Through a rougher, thornier lot
Wilt thou bravely follow ?"
Still the brook, with softer flow,
Called, "Oh hear ! Oh follow !"
"Aye," I said, with bated breath,
"Where thou goest, I will go ;
Holding still thy stronger hand,
Through the dreariest desert land,
True, till death."

Silence fell between us two,
Noiseless as the silver dew ;
Hearts that had no need of speech
In the silence spoke to each ;
And along the sapphire blue,
Shot with shafts of sunset through,
Fell a voice, a bodiless breath—
"True, till death."

Through a mist of smiles and tears,
Doubts and fears, and toils and dreams,
Oh ! how long ago it seems,
Looking back across the year
Silver threads are in my hair