

And what is thy guerdon, O, Vanity Fair
 (For on this I would fain hear the truth)?
 Of the kisses of Love, dost thou offer a share
 To honest, though dowerless, youth?
 May virtue and worth, in those fair halls of thine,
 Hold their own with the ag'd millionaire?
 Can the heart of true love ever rear its fair shrine
 At the altar of Vanity Fair?

"A fig for true lovers," quoths Vanity Fair,
 "Here maidens are bought and are sold,
 Regardless of worth or of youth's golden hair,
 To the purse that is heaviest with gold."
 Then farewell to peace—to the happy fireside—
 And hopeless the heart-broken prayer
 For the blessings of home, whilst fond love is denied
 At the weddings of Vanity Fair.

"NINETY-EIGHT."

"FREE! 'Ninety-eight'! yer free again," Jackson, the warder,
 said,

And "98" went forth once more—a living man, yet dead.

Dead to the world, dead to the past, long agonizing years
 Within yon hateful walls had well nigh dried the fount of tears.

Long, long ago,—one night,—when wine and wassail usher'd
 strife

His arm of ire had stained the altar in the House of Life.

A kindly record blasted by one madd'ning blow,—but he
 Had borne his discipline, and now they told him he was—free!