

Verse by B. C. Writers

HOUSES

Houses are living things, and so must die;
Years heap up burdens on them; their dry bones
Cry at dead midnight when their inmates lie
Deafened with sleep. These stoop like withered crones
Propped against age, bleary eyes upon the stones
They stumble at; these, hand at mouth, stand shy;
Those, gay with paint and gilded vanes, defy
Like vulgar bullies Chance has raised to thrones.
Each turns with beckoning eyefall towards the street
The ancient mansions welcome weary hearts;
The bowery cot to one its dream imparts;
And base minds find the braggart house complete.
So in this house of flesh our soul will find
A home that grows to match the quickening mind.

A HOUSE DYING

As I passed through the sunburnt street today
I heard the cry of Death, and turning saw
A house, where late men lived, within his maw.
Ere this the bones were white, flesh stripped away;
Within the ribs the sun did shuddering play,
Viewing those cruel rents so new and raw,
For where he saw the Skeleton tear and gnaw
Once he had heard Love singing young and gay.
Not all the sounds of home were yet quite dead;
Not yet forgot young feet upon the floors,
Laughter and tears, sweet whisperings at the doors
Kind hands upon the latch, dear lips once wed.
These are the ghosts of life that Death will keep,
And, having these, will he grow sad and weep?

THE DYING HOUSE SPEAKS

This is our second death; when first we came
From the free forest, sore we wept our doom,
To drink no more the dew, or see the loom
Of Nature weaving beauty with the flame
Of tempests, then the steadfast stars reclaim
The trembling skies from such majestic gloom.
Men hewed our limbs, and in this narrow room
We nigh forgot our own wild music, tame
And broken souled. At last to richer life
We wakened, hearing voices seraph toned,
To mightier kingdoms where Love sat enthroned
By glorious titles, Father, Mother, Wife,
Husband, or Child. Then trembles now my breath?
'Tis that I pant to seek new gifts from Death.

DONALD GRAHAM.

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