

O'er earth and sky, o'er tower and tomb,
Is beauty's gloom.
The deep'ning crimson in the west,
The hush where slumbering waves find
rest

On ocean's breast.

O pensive star, at this sweet hour,
When beauty slumbers in each flower,
Thy gentle power
Would guide each thought to yon blue
sky,

To hear with thee, away on high,
The day's last sigh.

And oft as memory might trace
Some once loved form, or angel face
To this dark place,
Thy holy radiance would appear
Some blissful spirit hovering near
A mortal here.

Stupendous power that bade thee shine,
Fair emblem of that light divine,
Let it be mine
Like thee from earth to linger near
Some luminary like thy sphere,
Like it appear.*

The song was o'er, and Mara felt
As if he were on hallowed ground
And that some being who ONCE had dwelt
In some bright home its way had found
To where he wandered at this hour,
To touch his heart with magic power.
He raised his head and saw a face,
And then a form almost divine,
Of earth there scarcely seemed a trace,
He fancied sacred rays did shine,
Like such as might surround a shrine,
A beauteous woman at him gazed
As if she never saw before
A man whose presence so amazed,
Or one that she could fancy more—
This might, of course, be her own thought,
And then she gently turned her eyes,
While Mara hers still eager sought,
And then both looked in rapt surprise,
As if to look was fresh delight.
Each felt an impulse to remain—
'Twas plainly love at the first sight,
To part they might not meet again.

Tell not of wedded love where gold
Is but the only link to hold

Each heart to heart. When wealth is gone,
For which affection has been sold,
Each then might long to be alone,
Than live where love was bleak and cold.
How oft a title wins its way,
When love without it could not stay.
Such base and mercenary flame,
In after years will seldom fail
To prove such union but the name
For a vile bargain and a sale,
A sordid and degrading tie
Which oft has brought a fatal sigh.

While both thus stood irresolute,
For Mara could not speak a word,
She spoke; her voice was like a flute,
Then he to energy was stirred.
Words came, they know each other soon,
And soon became like old, old friends,
And then beneath the full, bright moon
That friendship grew which never ends—
'Twas more than that, 'twas deep, true
love,

Though neither then avowed the same,
'Twas that alone with which each strove,
Though even called some other name.
Instinctively she yielded trust
In him who sat beside her now,
She felt to doubt would be unjust,
But to sweet destiny would bow.
For did not his calm face declare
That there was nought but candor there.
She had been taught at early age
To sing and dance, to paint and play,
She was intended for the stage,
Her wondrous talent would have sway,
And wealth for whom she must obey;
But more than that, her beauty could
Bring in the mart the highest price
And catch the rich as beauty would—
Her charms the wary could entice.
Cleopa was the favorite name
Which she was called, all who had read
Of Cleopatra's wondrous fame,
The Egyptian queen, for ages dead,
Whose beauty was the world's acclaim,
Said Cleopa's was just the same.
But shame to say, it must be told
That though with Venus' form and face
Cleopa could be bought and sold—
A chattel in the market-place.
Her blood was tainted by that race,
Which to belong was oft disgrace.
And now, alas, here she was brought
Away from friends she would have near,
By a rich planter she was bought,
A dissolute whose foul career
Was one she had much cause to fear,

* These verses to the Vesper Star, and two other
verses, from Mara to Cleopa, were written
several years ago by the author.