

And light as one that moves in dream
 She seeks the costly cabinet
 Wherein her rarest jewels gleam,
 And stooping, wildly takes from it
 A few poor letters—three or four,
 She had not dared to treasure more—
 And these, why keep them now, she said;
 To keep them were a bitter jest
 On this great lie of life, at best,
 And here they do but mock the dead!

No need has she to scan again
 Those words of passionate power and pain,
 That branded were in heart and brain.

One lingering, clinging kiss—the last—
 And through their leaves the swift flames
 pass'd,

And the grey ashes, one by one,
 Dropt silently, and all was done.
 But as the last gleam o'er them swept,
 Through all her soul a terror crept
 And shook with sobs her shuddering
 breast—

Her hands across her eyes she press'd,
 But that dread face she needs must see—
 And all the yearning Past is there—
 And low she moans, in her despair,
 O Jeff! poor Jeff!—it *had* to be!

