

TWO VERDICTS

She was a woman, worn and thin,
Whom the world condemned for a single sin,
They cast her out on the King's highway,
And passed her by as they went to pray.

He was a man, and more to blame,
But the world spared him a breath of shame,
Under his feet he saw her lie,
But raised his head and passed her by.

They were the people who went to pray,
At the temple of God on a holy day.
They scorned the woman, forgave the man—
It was ever thus, since the world began.

Time passed on and the woman died,
On the cross of shame she was crucified;
But the world was stern and would not yield,
So they buried her in the Potter's Field.

The man died, too, and they buried him
In a casket of cloth, with a silver rim;
And said, as they turned from his grave away:
"We have buried an honest man to-day."

Two mortals, knocking at heaven's gate,
Stood face to face to enquire their fate;
He carried a passport with earthly sign,
And she a pardon from Love divine.

O, ye, who judge between virtue and vice,
Which, think you, entered Paradise?
Not he whom the world had said would win,
For the woman alone was ushered in.