

Than thundery tempests, or the forest-roar.
 Oft had the sound of maiden voices made—
 When, brooding, near the village-green he strayed—
 So clear a music, harmony so fine,
 A soul of sound so like a thing divine,
 That, for the spanning of a summer day,
 On witch'd strings his softening mood might lay
 No harsher tribute to a master-hand
 Than silvern-rippling sounds of laughters planned
 To echo music of the woman-tone.

And now, at earliest flush of manhood, thrown—
 With all the dews of youth upon his heart
 To feed the founts of passion, and of art
 A strong possession shaking all his soul,
 That all its nether fountains burst control,
 And set his heart a bubble on the spin
 Of their great deeps of most melodious din—
 Thrown so to sudden touch with womanhood,
 Ere well aware did fire his throbbing blood
 Through all its courses to a sudden flame,
 Kindling gigantic raptures through his frame,
 Fanned by the breathings of the destined maid
 His heart who singled, and its pulses sway'd.

And, sooth, though but a mountain maid was she,
 Bred in a lowly cottage, at the knee
 Of rustic parents springing, reared to ways
 Of homely labor through industrious days,
 No fairer flower of virgin womanhood
 E'er moved the earth to rapture, from a bud
 Of sweetness blowing to a perfect prime.
 One such she was as God, at random time,
 Alike in lowly station as in high,
 From flowers of Eden culled ere sin could dry
 All primal freshness and all pristine hue
 From petals with a Godhead in the dew,
 Doth seem of blossom all compact to build,
 Still with a soul of Eden-fragrance filled.

Gentle she was as maidens still should be ;
 And of a whiteness of virginity
 To blot the shamed lily in compare ;
 Native to love as is to lips the air,
 Or mother-milk to infant newly born ;
 As blithely fresh as is the dewy Morn
 When breathing summer kisses her awake
 With breath of flowery softness. God did make
 A special sunlight for her crowning hair,
 Where many loves were tangled unaware ;
 And for her cheeks in bedded lilies set