

Where distress and want concealed themselves from the  
 sunlight, 1290  
 Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished neglected.  
 Night after night when the world was asleep, as the watch-  
 man repeated  
 Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well in the  
 city,  
 High at some lonely window he saw the light of her taper.  
 Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow through the  
 suburbs 1295  
 Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits for the  
 market,  
 Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its  
 watchings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the city,  
 Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks of wild  
 pigeons,  
 Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in their  
 craws but an acorn. 1300  
 And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of Sep-  
 tember,  
 Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a lake in the  
 meadow,  
 So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural margin,  
 Spread to a brackish lake the silver stream of existence.  
 Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm, the  
 oppressor; 1305  
 But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his anger; —  
 Only, alas! the poor, who had neither friends nor attend-  
 ants,  
 Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the homeless.  
 Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of meadows and  
 woodlands; —  
 Now the city surrounds it; but still, with its gateway and  
 wicket 1310  
 Meek, in the midst of splendour, its humble walls seem to  
 echo  
 Softly the words of the Lord: — “The poor ye always have  
 with you.”  
 Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of Mercy.  
 The dying