

Orpheus and Eurydice
and
Other Poems



by
E. A. JENNS

Author of
Evening to Morning and Other Poems

Vancouver Public Library

*For Private Circulation
Only*

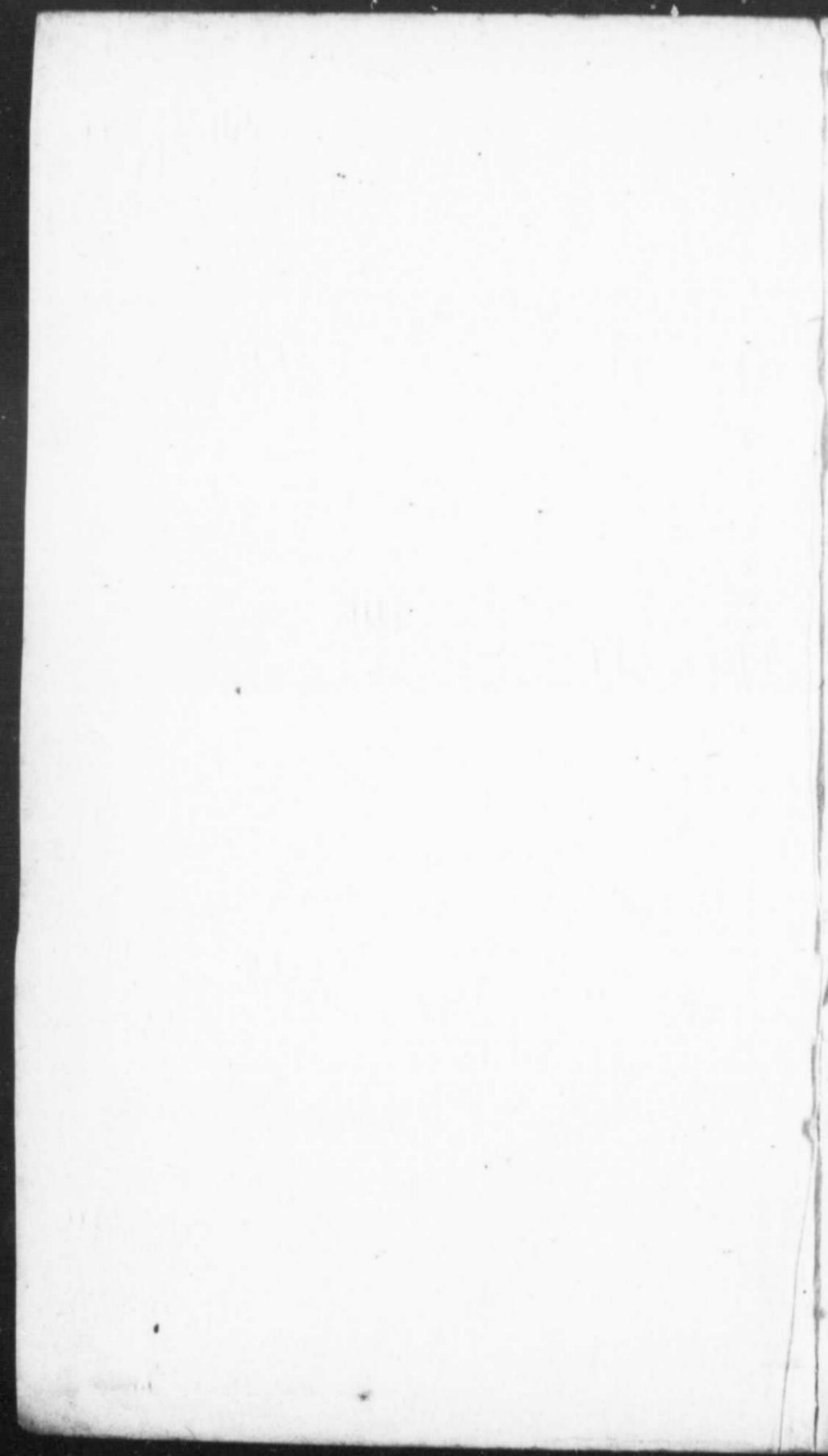
Saepe pater dixit studium quid inutile temptas
Maeonides nullus ipse reliquit opes.

—Ovid.

VANCOUVER, B. C.

1910





Orpheus and Eurydicé and Other Poems



by
E. A. JENNS

Author of
Evening to Morning and Other Poems

*For Private Circulation
Only*

Saepe pater dixit studium quid inutile temptas
Maeonides nullus ipse reliquit opes.
—Ovid.

VANCOUVER, B. C.

1910

75?

of

Chas. A. Haynes

2925

DEDICATION

TO MY FATHER

With all the love and reverence
a son should owe.

33236

PREFACE

The little volume submitted to your judgment contains, only except in a very few instances, things that were written between the years 1881 and 1885 when I finished "Vaneta." Many of the lyrics will appear trivial, yet they may appeal to some, so I have preserved them. Should there be one line only, that remains in the thought of a reader, I shall be well content.

E. A. JENNS.

Orpheus and Eurydicé



Scene—A garden. In the foreground a clump of shrubs, which, overhanging, form a small arbour

Enter Eurydice holding boughs of the bay tree in her hand.

Eurydice—

Not long the sun is up, and yet the dew
Shines like a thousand diamonds from the grass,
Or bosomed in some purple flower its light
Excels the brilliant ruby's crimson rays.
The morning breeze low whispers o'er the earth,
And courts the nodding flowers that with the night
Have gained more glorious beauty. O'er the banks
Of fragrant violets light it hovers now,
Then heavy with their scent it wanders on,
Bequeathing joy to all. Among the trees
Lo! all the summer birds exult in song;
Sweet song; and yet not one of all their notes
Can equal Orpheus' silver stringed lyre.
My Orpheus, whom so late I left asleep,
One hand upon his lyre, that half himself,
And until now the other clasped in mine.

(Seats herself in arbour.)

Here in this myrtle bower, I'll sit me down,
And twine from this Apollo's sacred bay
A glorious wreath with which to deck his brows.
Then having crowned, I'll hail him, music's king,
The favorite of the gods, Apollo's friend,
And pray for one sweet tune. For when he sweeps
His fingers through the swift vibrating chords
All sounds of earth, in all her various moods,
The violent thunderstorm when crash on crash
Zeus from his canopy of inky clouds
Sends down his bolts to blast the trembling earth,
When torrents from the mountains echoing roar,
And riven trees fall with a deadened thud,
When the great avalanche of earth and stones
Leaps from the hill towards the level plain,
And mocks the voice of Heaven's artillery,

And shakes the groaning earth with bitter fear,
 Salute the trembling ear with dread. Again
 Calm has returned, no more the sounds affright,
 But through the leafy trees the pleasant wind
 Goes whispering faint and low, and from afar
 Among the boughs, the turtle to his mate
 Coos out its tale of love. The tinkling brook
 Goes rippling through the meadows, and the fall
 Heard in the distance, yields a pleasant sound,
 A drowsy murmuring roar. All these sweet tones
 He echoes and excels. But most I love
 The strains that Great Apollo to him taught.
 So sad, so low, so strange they wind about
 In hazy circles, till with greater strength
 The mournful music echoes to the clouds,
 And all who hear must weep; so weirdly sweet,
 The spell exerts its power on those who hear.
 No song of charmer chanted to the snake,
 No swan's last paean as he fluttered down,
 With weakened wings to die among the reeds,
 Had ever half the sweetness, half the power
 To thrill and hold the listener like to these.
 When these he plays, the fiercest forest brute
 Comes tame and harmless from his hidden lair
 To fawn about his feet. The singing lark
 Drops from mid-heav'n to hear a sweeter tune
 Than e'er he heard before, and flies beside
 The keen-eyed hawk, unfeared and unhurt.
 The raven sits beside the dove, the stag
 Stands 'neath the barren rock, from which the lion
 Lists with delighted ears. The hungry hound
 Beside the hare lies panting in the shade,
 Which harks unmindful of its foe. All these
 Know not each other's presence, only know
 The sounds that soothe and tame their savage hearts.
 Even the brook will halt its flashing waves,
 And roll them back to the musician's feet,
 To listen spellbound to his strains awhile,
 Ere yet it leaps to meet the restless sea:
 But see, here comes my love.

(Enter Orpheus.)

Orpheus—

Eurydice.

At last, my love, I've found thee. I awoke
 And saw thee not beside me, then I arose,
 And long have searched through all the garden trees,
 Breathing the fresh'ning air, and calling oft
 Upon thy own dear name, Eurydice.

Why did'st thou leave me thus? 'Tis not thy wont,
Although thou lovst to breathe the purer air,
When, after night, the sun resumes his sway,
And every dew-dropt flower, sweet odors yields,

Eurydice—

Ah me, sweet Orpheus, in the silent night
A fearful dream beset my wandering sense,
And when the morn brought back the brilliant sun
It freed me not from terror, such a weight
Of silent horror brooded in my heart;
Thou still slept on and though I could not rest
I could not wake thee from thy calm repose,
To list to me disturbed by horrid fear.

Orpheus—

Wast troubled so? Thou shouldst have wakened me,
I might have lulled thy terror by a word,
Or charmed it from thee with melodious sounds,
E'en now some simple meaning I might find;
Tell me the dream.

Eurydice—

Methought at noon I stood
With thee among the springtime's thousand flowers,
The faint breeze fanned my brow and stirred my locks,
And the warm sun rode through unclouded sky.
Thy fingers wandered through the silver strings
Of thy sweet lyre, the lyre Apollo gave,
Creating skilful tones; all nature round
Gladdened beneath the spellbound thrill of power
Welling out from the chords; and through my heart
The swift blood glanced in quick'ning whirls of joy
And rushed through tingling veins, and in I drew
In large fresh draughts the pure and moving air,
And felt how blest a thing it is to live,
How pleasure comes with every act of life.
Mine eyes were feasted on the pleasant woods,
The lofty mountain peaks, the dancing streams,
The wide green vales that lay between the heights.
In calm and pleasant rest all nature lay
Beneath the brilliant flood of softened light
That fell unbroke on all. But as I gazed
A bird of painted plumage fluttered past,
And as I turned to watch its flight, behold
Beside me on the sward there stood a youth
Of noble mien; winged where his springing feet,
And in his hand he bore a wondrous staff,

A staff with wings, round which two serpents twined.
 Ah me, my husband, then a chilling dread
 Fell on my heart and thrilled through every nerve.
 He stretched the staff and touched me on mine arm,
 And from thy side I then must turn away
 To follow through the air this stranger youth.
 And yet methought with pain I turned mine eyes
 Towards the spot where late I stood with thee,
 And saw thee stretch thine arms with bitter cry,
 "Eurydice, my love, Eurydice," and then
 Thou faded from my sight.

Orpheus—

In truth my love

It was a bitter dream, and full of pain;
 But tell me more, how did the shadows end?

Eurydice—

Full soon we joined a numerous band of shades,
 Dim half-seen fluttering shadows, like the whisps
 Of white and changing mist that float across
 The silver glories of the winter moon,
 And these with me followed the leading staff,
 Till underneath we saw the roaring sea
 Leap with the noise of thunder to the rocks,
 And broken fall with angry murmurs back.
 Then plunged we sudden through a mighty cleft,
 Into a noisome cavern winding down
 A narrow passageway beneath the earth.
 Long followed we the cave and pressed a way
 Between the jagged rocks all dripping wet
 With dungeon growth and slime, till op'ning out
 Before there stretched a river sweeping round
 In nine great orbs, a mighty citadel.
 Then knew I this was Hades, and the waves
 Of Styx that in nine circles round it sweep.
 We boarded Charon's boat and moved across
 The black foul waters of that stagnant stream,
 And stood beneath the City of the Dead.
 But when the ironbound gates moved slowly back
 Groaning upon their hinges, such a roar
 Of yells and shrieks and bitter moans burst forth
 That with the very terror I awoke.
 And sleepless with the fear still in my heart
 Arose to wander 'neath the morning sun
 And listen to the birds, and drown my dread
 In marking nature's universal joy.

Orpheus—

A dismal dream and seeming to foretell
 Some great calamity. 'Tis wondrous how

Upon the soul unthinking any harm
 Bound up in joyous dreams, a sudden thought
 Of terror startles all the mirth away,
 And broode with sudden quickening blackness o'er the
 heart

In mystical prevision. Let us hence
 To Delphi and beseech the Oracle,
 The Priestess of Apollo to vouchsafe
 Prophetic explanation of the dream,
 The evil threat'ning, and its cure.

Eurydice—

Nay, nay,

I put no thought upon it now, and see
 How while I waited for thy coming forth
 I've twined a wreath of thine own favorite bay
 With which to deck thy brows (putting it on). Now hail,
 sir king,

I greet thee, lord of music's heavenly charms,
 Apollo's gifted friend. And crave a boon
 That thou wilt glad thy fondest subject's breast
 With some sweet strain of mournful melody
 Such as the gods desire.

(As he takes his harp, she carelessly lays her hand
 in the grass, from which a serpent raising his crest
 strikes the hand and glides away.)

Ah-h. What pains thee?

Orpheus—

What harmed thee, that thou callest so wofully?
 Why turnest thou so pale?

Eurydice—

To die, to die,

To leave the gladsome earth, the beauteous woods,
 And all the springtide's various loveliness,
 To leave the bountiful life giving sun,
 To dwell in darkness with the silent dead,
 Among pale voiceless shadows. To hear no more
 The pleasant brooklet babbling o'er the stones,
 The million birds that thrill among the trees.
 To lie upon the pyre and have the flame
 Devour the heart, whence springing life blood flows,
 To journey with the shadows of the dead
 To the dim realms of Hades. Worse than all
 To leave thee, O my love, ne'er more to see

Thy longed-for face, nor hear thy loving voice,
 More dear to me than all the moving tones
 Drawn by thy fingers from the lyre. To die!
 O husband, 'tis a fearful thing to die.

Orpheus—

What ails thee, O my darling, why dost call
 with such o'erwhelming bitterness, "to die,
 To die," surely thou wilt not die.
 What thing affrights thee?

Eurydice—

The deadly serpent,

Saw'st not how he did rear him from the grass
 And strike me on the hand? Woe's me, my love,
 The dream, the dream, I soon must follow now,
 Him with the winged staff beneath the earth,
 And join myself to clouds of fluttering ghosts
 Bound for the realm of Hades. Woe is me,
 I see him now, beside me there he stands,
 Waving the mystic wand, and I must go
 To follow him, and leave thee all alone,
 Never to see thee more. Ah, woe is me,
 Farewell my lord, my love.

(Dies.)

Orpheus—

Ye gods, ye gods,

She is not dead? She cannot yet be dead.
 Awake my love, Eurydice, awake,
 Speak to me once again, look up at me,
 Why dost thou lie so still? Greet me once more
 With loving words. Why tremblest so my heart.
 She is not dead. Eurydice, awake,
 Cold, cold, cold, no longer beats the heart,
 No more the breath comes surging from her mouth;
 The life is gone. The body with the dust
 Full soon must join itself.

(Flings himself down beside the body, remaining
 silent for a while, then raising himself)—

O fearful death,

Dark grisly king, why didst thou strike her down
 And leave me here unhurt, though stronger far,
 Alone amid the darkening wilderness.
 Pale Shadow with thy deadly dart come near
 And strike me senseless too. I fear thee not.

She leaves the earth alone to wander down
 Where Pluto holds a universal sway,
 Or to lie down amid the Elysian vales,
 Whose inmates spend their time the weary day
 Longing to see once more earth's pleasant scene.
 Weep, weep oh heart, with many bitter tears,
 Thou never more shalt know Eurydice.

(Gazes round and sees the harp lying on the ground.)

What charm hath music now? How can I sooth
 I who aye charmed from other's breasts all woe
 With the sweet power of song. How can I soothe
 Myself, and kill this chilling gloom that lays
 Deep shadowing o'er my mind? Woe, woe is me,
 Had ye no pity, gods, that ye should doom
 So bright a one to die?

(Eyes the harp doubtingly, then with more joy)

Apollo thanks,

For hope comes glistening through my breast again.

(Picks up lyre.)

This, shall win back my lost Eurydice.
 With mortal steps I'll wend me surely down
 Deep through the dark'ning ways that lead to hell,
 The path the mournful shadows ever take.
 And when I come to Pluto's fiery throne
 I'll play with floods of tears such melting strains
 As shall perchance touch even his stern heart.
 And so my lyre shall win me back my love,
 And there midst shadows I shall gladly greet
 My lost, my found, my love Eurydice.

ACT II.

Scene I.

A broken rugged promontory, stretching out into a calm
 blue sea, interspersed with islands. On the seaward
 side of the cliffs a dark rift on the rocks, from which
 pours forth an unbroken cloud of smoke; near the
 entrance Orpheus standing.

Orpheus—

For many and many a long and weary day
 Now have I traversed all the Hellenic coast,
 And now my goal arrived at, stand to take
 My last farewell of earth and sky and sea,

Lest I should never more return. Here lies
The dark and toilsome road that winding down
Leads to the Kingdom of the Dead, the place
Where Pluto, Lord of Death, holds his domain.
So beautiful is all I see around,
The sun shines bright above, and warm and bland
Upon the land, and calm blue stretching waves
That leap with tiny plash to kiss the stones,
And ever fall with silvery gurgle back.
Far down among the isles I see a sail
Flit like a sea bird's wing. A drifting wreath
Tost from the careless hand of some fair maid,
Borne down some streamlet to the sea is there,
Floating upon the tides. All, all is here,
All she and I together aye have loved.
The vast expanse of ocean, and the sun;
Here ruggedness of rocks, there tender flowers,
The sweet breathed summer air that we drew in,
Bequeathing us fresh life. All, all is here,
All I have ever loved, or ere enjoyed
And blessed the gods for granting. Now I come
To take a long, perchance a last, farewell.
"O thou sun, the chariot of Apollo,
Whom every morning I have seen uprise,
And bowed before to honor thus, the friend,
The god who hath enriched me with my art,
Farewell to thee, for I go down to shades
Where thy ray never reacheth, nor comes warmth
Shed from thy all pervading fount of heat.
And O thou sea, whose clear blue leaping wave
Flows on unchanged in liquid melody
Through the long cycles of eternity.
Unchanged though men may come and gaze on thee,
And look their fill, and fall away and die,
Being forever lost, and others stand,
Yea, in the very footprints of the first.
And know not aught hath stood there, and in turn
Pass on, each one to give another place.
Farewell, for I may be as one of these,
Never to see thee more. Farewell, O earth,
And thou O cool and softly breathing breeze,
That oft hast snatched the full-toned choral strains
That I have played, and wandered far away
Bearing them o'er the plains, that all men cried
We hear the music of Olympus steal
Down through the limpid vast of zaire air
To cure our mournful hearts. Ye flowers, farewell,
Well have I loved you all, but now I go
To that I loved much better, more than life,

And more than ye, for life seems nothing worth
Save when 'tis in her presence. Strong in hope
Am I to bring her back from Death's stern hold
To paint life still worth having, and to make
Ye tenfold lovelier in her loveliness."

(Exit into cavern.)

Scene II.

A vast and lofty cavern, the upper part filled with wreaths and eddies of smoke, a very rugged and narrow path leading across the bottom, at one end of which two dragons, their lengths dependant and coiled among the rocks above, and on either side their heads guarding the narrowness of the path. From other end of path enter Orpheus.

Orpheus—

Hard is the path, but every step I take
Brings me more near to thee. Makes time still less
E'er yet I hope to see thy face again.
How glorious is hope. Play me not false
Mine art, when that dire time shalt come when thou
Must plead for me in Hades. So far still
No danger has beset my steps, beyond
The hardness of the path.

(The dragons lift up their heads threateningly.)

But what is here?

Now danger rears his giant crest before,
And mortal fear hath seized upon my heart,
Not for myself, but thee, for if I die
Thou canst not come to earth, and though I go
Down into death I know not if my shade
Shall meet with thine or know thee in the gloom.
Those dark and fearful stayers of my way,
Who rear their horrid heads with fiery eyes
And gaping mouths that threaten instant death,
How shall I pass or give them combat? Now
My mind descends to fear. O for a sword,
Then would I fight and cleave a passage way
Gainst pointed teeth and burnished steely scale,
For hope and fury rend me so apart
That nothing could withstand me; but how now
Shall I descend when barred by these?

A voice—

"Go back."

Orpheus—

What was that sound? Methought I heard a voice
That warned me back. That can I never do;
I'll not go back, and yet cannot go on,
And stand in dire perplexity.

(During this a spot in the smoke darkens, out from which presently gleam two fiery eyes, followed shortly by the appearance of the head to which the eyes belong, all the rest of the body being hidden.)

Head—

“Go back.”

Why seekest thou alive to enter here,
With all thy earthly passions round thy heart,
Strong hope and faithful love; who comes this way
Must leave his hope and love behind. In death
There is no hope, and dying, love is lost.
Go back, go back, or these shall rend thee.

Orpheus—

What is this dreadful form of awful gloom,
What are these words of direful import heard
From o'er the mantling cloud, that warn me back,
And yet do not appal me. Though I stand
In deep perplexity I do not fear
Nor shall be driven from my path by fears
Which I expect to meet.

(Accidentally sweeps his hand against his lyre.)

And now I find

That which I hope shall free my path before,
My thrice beloved, twice forgotten lyre;
Again thou comest to cleave my doubt away,
And with sweet tones instill much sweeter hope.
Now is thy time. Come, play and prove thy power,
And give me earnest of what thou wilt do
When Cerberus is past.

(Plays a soft lulling strain, during which the head vanishes, and the dragons fall asleep.)

“Thou hast proved true.

Soon if thou playest thus all will be well,
And we shall win our quest.”

(A shade like Eurydice appears, who beckons him on.)

And thou hast come
To comfort and uphold me. Oh no dread

Could now withstand me after seeing thee;
I know thou art but shadow, but I trust
Soon thy reality again to meet.

(Following the phantom he passes the dragons and exit.)

Scene III.

The same.

First voice—

Upright and bold in heart, and strong through love,
Moreover trusting in the strength of hope
He hath withstood us all, and baffled us
And passeth on to Hades.

Second Voice—

Aye, and shalt win
That which he came to seek. Who can withstand
The magic art of song, that pleads with all,
Appealing to the hard, the soft, the bold,
That showeth weakness with the weak, with love
Putteth on loving airs, and ne'er the less
Again derideth love; with hate, revenge
It pealeteth fierce and terrible. With all
The passions it can be combined, and doth
Overcome them all. By its own innate force
The gates of hell shall ope' and let him through;
The bars of Death shall not restrain his love;
The laughterless shall put aside his frown,
Yea, and shall grant his quest. And conquering all
He shall repass the Styx with her he sought.

Third voice—

Ay, ye say rightly, but ye know not all,
He conquereth now by love upheld by hope;
But when his hope appeareth almost gained
Then comes another power that plays on love.
This will I use to tempt him to his doom.

Scene IV.

The banks of the River Styx. Enter Charon in boat.
Charon—

Mine is a thankless task; through endless time
To ferry mournful shades o'er stagnant tides,

With no reward but curses. Shrieks and groans
 Are ever my sole melody; the dead
 But yet unburied, press on me with prayers,
 Proffering these instead of that obolus
 That is my ordered fee; and curses then
 That I will not accept them, ill doers
 Curse me because I bear them to the Judge
 Who shall condemn them, and the righteous men
 Because forsooth they fear the Elysian vales,
 Shall not so merry be as earth's fair plains;
 All hate me as the author of the ill,
 Who am but servant of the way. But hark!
 What is this unknown sound, that, stealing down,
 Fills my old heart with unknown happiness.
 I see him now, it seems some mortal come
 For unknown cause, towards this nether world.
 I must not let him pass, yet should he wish
 Cannot refuse by virtue of that power
 Which he so lightly wieldeth.

(Enter Orpheus playing.)

Wouldst thou pass over?
 Where then is thy obolus? Give it me,
 And I shall carry thee.

Orpheus (ceasing to play)—

I seek to pass
 Thy ninefold river, yet have not thy fee,
 I did forget. Canst thou not bear me o'er
 Without it?

Charon—

I may not, dare not bear thee,
 Lest the dread king should bend on me his frown,
 And I should writhe in torture at the sight.

(Orpheus again plays.)

But yet cannot refuse thee; for this fee,
 More richer than any other, I will dare.
 Come, but play on, play on, I still would hear
 That which so fit for gods hath ne'er before
 Reached my dull ears below.

(Exit.)

Scene V.

A lofty hill, up which Sisyphus labors to roll a heavy stone, near the base of which a pool, overhung with fruit trees, in which Tantalus stands, the water up to his chin.

(Enter Orpheus.)

Orpheus—

And is this king so dark, so terrible,
That whoso speaks of him speaks muttered words,
With half averted looks, as if he feared
To see the dread he spoke of near him. Names
Of misty import giving him "the Lord
Of wealth, the Laughterless, the Supreme power
Of death," none daring mutter his real name?
If he so direful is how shall I dare
To stand before his frowning face and plead
That he send back his subject to the earth?
If he be laughterless and know not mirth,
Will he be touched by sorrow which exists
Only by contrast with enjoyment? If
His mind be bent to anger will it list
To hear the voice of mourning? Yet how now?
Come wake my love, give courage to my heart,
Awake my hope, thou must not yet despond.
If he be angry I'll play raging tunes,
And when he listens soften slowly down
To utter mournfulness. Thus thou and I,
O lyre, shall move his heart. "But who art thou
That standst neck-deep in limpid waters, hung
With heavy-laden fruit trees over head?"
Ist enjoyment or some torture?

Tantalus—

I thirst,

Give me to drink, and I will tell thee.

Orpheus—

Thirst

With pleasant waters gurgling round thy lips
So near thou hardly needst stoop to drink!
Thou mockest me!

Tantalus—

Ah, fool! I tell thee thirst,

And hunger too. Canst thou not see the flood
Ebbs back from my dry lips, yet ever flows
Again as I uprise from my vain search?

Seest not the fruit that seems I need but ope
 My mouth and take and eat it; when I stretch
 My eager hands to seize, leaps back
 An inch beyond my outstretched finger tips,
 Or caught turns into ashes on my lips.
 Know I am Tantalus, such torture they
 Are tortured with who dare to mock the gods.
 Vain hunger and eternity of thirst,
 With food and water round my very lips;
 O subtle vengeance, I have mocked, forsooth
 I am repaid with mockery.

Orpheus (playing)—

Poor soul!

Eat, drink and know some little time of rest.
 Even in these dark realms I keep my power,
 Pity is noble, and I pity thee,
 Surely I may be pardoned that.

Tantalus—

O blest,

And yet thrice blest art thou. The waters rise
 Self willingly and play about my lips;
 The luscious fruit stoops down to kiss my mouth,
 But I no longer crave them, and have lost
 All sense of thirst and hunger in desire
 To listen for a while to these sweet powers
 That control all my senses in their own.

Sisyphus—

So the stone stands self-balanced on the hill,
 O magic spell that casts this peace around,
 Now I feel rest, sweet rest that ever yet
 Has been denied my weary limbs; for time
 So long that I have lost all count of time.
 I have toiled ceaseless here with little hope,
 Though once around my heart hope fost'ring strong
 Nursed up my flagging spirits to believe
 That I should some time gain the peak, and there
 Should dawn to me Elysian fields. Yet now
 Hope is long dead and all my heart is faint.
 O blessed one, once in Corinthian halls
 I do remember how my minstrels made
 Sweet sounds like thine, though less than thine in power
 Than is the sparrow's note chirped in the hedges
 To the full-toned melodious nightingale.
 Play on, for rest is sweet.

Orpheus—

And hope is sweet.

Poor weary hopeless souls rest on, and gain
A little peace while I can give it ye.
How wisdom dwells in gods, now may we know,
Who feel and see this subtle punishment.

(Scene closes.)

SCENE VI.

Hades and Persephone.

Hades and Persephone sitting upon a lofty black throne,
from the base of which flows out the stream of Lethe
and the River Phlegethon; from the latter fiery current
leaps up flames and dense wreaths of smoke, which,
eddying round the throne, only now and then disclose
glimpses of the deities. Enter a shape.

Shape—

O King Aidoneus hear and raise thyself;
A mortal man has sought the passage here.
Charon, beguiled by him, across the Styx
Has opened passage way. Past Cerberus,
Whom he by some enchantment lulled to sleep;
Now he has entered Hell.

(Enter second shape.)

Second Shape—

Harken, O king,

A mortal entering Hell now giveth peace
To tortured souls who groan in Tartarus.
By sounds of mystic magic from a shell
He charms away their pains that they forget
And feel no more their torture. Tantalus
Slaketh his thirst from waters that uprise
To give him easy drink. And Sisyphus
Takes rest, his stone self-balanced on the steep;
And as I passed the wheel of Ixion,
On which his doom was that he spin for aye
Had ceased its revolutions.

(Enter third shape.)

Third Shape—

Hades hear,

And hearing let thy heart awake to wrath.
This man who hath not yet seen death has come,
And with a few strange sounds has changed all Hell.

Th' Erinyes no longer wait the curse,
 That calls them to pursue the criminal,
 And have forgotten vengeance. In their flight
 They hovered and have rested. The Harpies
 Cease from their outcries; the Parcae sad,
 Alone may rest not, but their varied web
 Flows down in brighter colors from their hands;
 And when at last the thread of destiny
 Must needs be cut, and human life be past
 Atropos weeps and pauses from the task.

(The voice of Pluto from behind the cloud.)

"Peace, peace, think ye that king I do not know
 What chances in my realm. I knew of him
 E'er yet he came; I marked his passage down,
 How he beat back all opposition. Now
 Already he approaches."

(Enter fourth shape.)

Fourth Shape—

Lord of Death

A man who hath not seen death comes this way,
 And none have power to stay him.

(Enter Orpheus.)

Orpheus (to First Shape)—

Tell me thou,

What place is this?

First Shape—

Bow down, adore and fear,

This is the throne of Hades, there he veils
 His majesty and awe with columned clouds
 And splendor of long flames.

Third Shape—

Aye, mortal, fear,

And let thy spirit tremble, there he reigns,
 He whose meek slave is death, whose voice is power
 Over the dead and living.

Orpheus—

Wake my lyre,

Wake, for thy time is come, the cast of fate
 Rests on my melody. Plead, therefore, now
 As thou hast never pleaded, so the king
 Shall hear and yield to thee.

(Plays a prelude of passionate and spirited music, softening gradually down to slow gentle strains, during which the clouds of smoke separate to either side like a curtain, joining again overhead, and disclosing in the opening Hades and Persephone seated.)

Song.

Sadly in the darkened chamber,
Gather friends once well beloved,
And the voice speaks low in whispers,
And the heart is strangely moved.

On the bed a pallid dreamer
Passes slowly from the earth;
Ne'er they think as soft she slumbers,
Had they known so well her worth.

Sadly now can they remember
Every kind unselfish deed,
All her sympathy for others,
Proffered in their hour of need.

Full of laughter and light-hearted,
She was loved right well before;
Better loved as life is drifting,
Down the dark for ever more.

Oh the aching and the yearning,
And the dread and the desires
As the life spark feeble flutt'ring,
Flickers e'er it yet expires.

See they gather closer, closer,
Hark that gurgling half-drawn breath;
Now the eyes are closed forever,
And the soul is lost in death.

Cover o'er the senseless body,
Steal with noiseless step away
Each to weep alone in silence,
For the sorrows of the day.

Years will pass and dry in passing
Tears which now are freshly wet;
But when hearts are draped in mourning,
They can nevermore forget.

Second Part.

Brightly now the sun is shining,
 And the sky is warm and clear,
 And a summer breeze goes whispering,
 And the flowers their heads uprear.

Loud and sweet the birds are singing,
 And the sea with sparkling waves
 Rustles o'er the shells and pebbles,
 Or the rocky barrier laves.

With sweet glory nature gladdens,
 O'er the sea and hills and earth;
 We alone of all her creatures,
 Cannot feel her spell of mirth.

Lay the body and the spices
 On the pile of fragrant wood;
 Kindled now the flames upleaping,
 Close around their precious food.

Gather up the sacred ashes,
 Place them in their golden urn;
 She is gone whom once we honored,
 And we can but weep and mourn.

Though the birds sing through the woodlands,
 There is sorrow in their tone;
 Though the sun shines on forever,
 Yet his glorious light is gone.

Though the sea on murmuring shingle,
 Plashes up its limpid wave;
 Yet the heart in gloom is weeping,
 Midst the silence of the grave.

Second Shape—

What marvellous power is this? When has Hell known
 Herself at rest before? The pulsing strings
 Wailed in their bitter agony, and sank and moaned
 With deep heart-breaking passion, till more loud
 The solemn full-toned notes poured deeply forth
 Like one that groans in agony of soul,
 And sank and moaned, and rose again, and seemed
 The voice of an whole nation mourning for
 Some great and sad calamity.

First Shape—

And see,
Persephone weeps out loud.

Third Shape—

And he
Stern Hades, doth his iron brows relax;
And mark, he seems about to speak.

Hades—

Harken,
O mortal, that thou camest here I knew,
Perchance I also know why thou hast come.
Yet speak. What thing is't thou wouldst have from me?

Orpheus—

O king look down in mercy, not in wrath,
And pardon my presumption, for I come
To pray thee from thy realms of utmost night
To send back one thy subject. Hear, O king,
Eurydice, I seek Eurydice,
Give, give me back my lost Eurydice.

Persephone—

Let her go forth. See here upon my knees
I pray to thee, Aidoneus, let her go,
For lo! my soul is moved exceedingly
By this man's solemn music.

Hades—

"Peace, my queen!
When have the dead returned, how can they go
Back from these portals into life?" (To Orpheus) Yet hear
There rolls the flood of Lethe; do thou drink
And all thy woe shall be forgotten, then
Thou mayst return to earth and live in joy.

Orpheus—

O king, I seek not joy, nor to forget.
From childhood up have I been sorrowful,
And a strange weight has palled my weary heart.
One thing of joy I had, that was my love.
If I forget, I shall forget my love.
'Twere better to live on in pain; my art,
All things from childhood I should know no more
Knowledge is sorrow, it is also power,
And love is bitterness, yet it hath peace.
And peace and power are godlike, forfeit these
Then sinks the man towards the brute that has
Instinct for reason, passion for its love.

I ask not to forget, that were to yield
 Knowledge and love in one. I pray thee this,
 That thou wilt give me back my love and make
 Knowledge more perfect, life still more divine,
 Or rather take my knowledge, art and all,
 But give me back my love.

Persephone—

My lord look down,
 Grant me my prayer, that thou wilt grant him his,
 Let her go forth.

Hades—

Enough, O mortal go,
 Eurydice shall follow thee. Yet hear,
 Thou shalt not turn nor look upon her face
 Until thou leavst the passage ways of Hell,
 And greetest once again the brilliant sun.
 If this thou dost she shall return again,
 And thou no more mayst see her.

Orpheus—

Joy, O heart,
 And joy, O lyre, the doubtful quest is won.
 Grateful! Aidoneus can I now adore,
 Humbly thy servant thanks thee. Joy, O heart,
 Joy, joy, forever joy. (Exit.)

Song.

The Styx's ninefold flood was past,
 Hell felt the thrill that music made;
 Around its magic spell it cast,
 And tortured souls its peace obeyed.

Far in the dark abysmal deep
 The solemn flood rolled richly forth;
 The groans and cries were hushed to sleep,
 And ceased the harpies hideous wrath.

Alone the Parcae might not rest,
 But as the mighty web they wove,
 With brighter shades the cloth was blest,
 And men in happier circles move.

King Hades heard and knew its power,
 The dead again return to life;
 Death hath restored the stolen flower,
 Orpheus again has found his wife.

(Scene closes.)

SCENE VIII.

Another portion of the cavern leading to and from Hades, some distance ahead the entrance of the cave, showing like a bright star. (Enter Orpheus with the shade of Eurydice behind.)

Orpheus—

All laud and honor unto thee, my lyre,
The daring quest is gained; soon I shall see
My love again in earthly happiness,
For soon behold now shall I gain the day,
And I may turn to her, so Hades said.
O heav'n taught God-like art what triumph then,
Thou won'st when Hades, through its darkest depth,
Heard and confessed thy power, and the pale shades
Felt all the joys of the glad earth once more
Thrill with the thrilling chords. Already now (Pause.)
Seen like a star, the entrance of the cave
Gleams far ahead, and nearer and more near
It grows with each advancing step I make.
Then I may turn, O would I might turn now;
But that I may not, so said the dire king.
For what did he forbid it? (Stops suddenly.)

If this gift

Should not be really gained? I hear no sound
Of falling feet behind me, comes no call
Of loving voice, nor even noise of breath;
What if Hell's lord should plan a subterfuge,
Bidding me not look back, that I climb up
To earth, then will he barriers place, and I
Can never more return. (Pause.)

So near, so bright,

The starlike light ahead. I thought it gained
The mighty triumph, and my moody mind
Refuses to believe. O for a sound,
A call, a footstep, so that I might know
That she in surety follows. It cannot be.
I will turn back again and pray Hell's lord
That he no more deceive me. Yet that dread
And dire command 'thou shalt not turn thee back.
For if thou turnst before thou reachest day
Then is she lost forever." But if she
Be not allowed to follow me, and I
Climb on, each step I gain shall make
The hard return still harder.

(Turns round and sees Eurydice.)

33236

Woe is me.

Now art thou lost forever; I would clasp
Thee once again in one long last embrace,
But stand firm rooted here. O woe is me!

(The shade of Eurydice is withdrawn into the inner darkness. Orpheus falls senseless. Scene closes.)

SCENE VIII.

Same as Scene III.

Third Voice—

Lo; what I said that have I also done,
He triumphed over Hell and had returned,
But I by doubt so worked upon his love
That he hath lost that he had almost gained;
And now heart broken sorrowing takes his way
To greet the sun and die.

First Voice—

All hail to thee,
For thou hast greater power than we, and canst
By greater knowledge compass greater things;
All hail, for thou art mighty, hail to thee,
Thou art the loftiest one.

Second Voice—

O poor weak heart,
Of faithless man; striving with mighty pains,
Bold to endure the terrors of the deep,
Strong to o'ercome the dangers of the road,
Loving and patient in distress. Enough
Of strength and faith thou hast to earn the thing
Thou most desireth; yet thou canst not make
The sacrifice complete, and all thy pains,
Triumphs, and toils, are lost through want of faith.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A small wood in Thrace; an old woodcutter resting on his
axe near a half-cut tree.

Woodman—

Life is a weary farce, I still can think
Of times when I seemed more than half divine.
Signs hailed my birth, and old astrologers

Coming with gifts announced the rising star
Of a great conqueror. An earth shock came,
And hills and valleys trembled in that time
That was my natal hour. The fearful crowd
Felt, heard, confessed the birth-time of a king.
In boyhood's hours through wood and desert wild
I chased the fleeting deer. The savage boar
Oft gave his blood to dim my spear-point's gleam.
I reigned indeed a king, for then I was
King of mine own desire. Returning once
From the long hunt, when sunset made the clouds
Seem like hard-fought celestial battle field,
Five war-worn chieftains met me, greeted me,
Praying that I should be their leader, so
An oracle directing, promised them
That they should have the victory. Thus I
From a wild hunter came to be the lord
Of a vast army; thousands 'neath my sway,
Putting sole trust of life upon my skill
And courage in the battle. And I was,
As at my birth foretold, of mighty fame,
A warrior and a king! Ruling all men
So that ten thousands at my beck fell down,
Or at my nod uprose, restored to life.
A king I was in sooth; but in mine age
What am I now? What fame remains to me?
An ancient woodcutter, a refugee,
Whose broken fame not the least semblance keeps
Of the tall form that dared the battle shock,
Delighting in the clang and clash of arms;
Or sat, enthroned amidst admiring throngs.
An ancient woodcutter, to whom the past
Seems but one long regret, presenting none
Of those bright things that age should dwell upon,
To whom the present hour a torture is,
To whom the future has no glimpse of hope,
But softly, who comes here. (Enter shepherd.)

Shepherd—

This way methought,
I saw him pass, the man with God-like brows,
And through the leaves I heard a dying strain
Of his sweet harp's sad music. Hast thou seen,
O woodcutter, anyone pass this way?

Woodcutter—

None have I seen. Whom is it that you seek?

Shepherd—

One whom, while guarding flocks upon the hills
 Passed by me with sad mien, long golden hair
 Fell waving o'er his shoulders, and his face
 Was like a god's in beauty, save 'twas worn
 With the dark lines of sorrow, and his brow
 Beamed with such mournful light that all my soul
 Trembled with sympathy. In his hand
 He bore a golden lyre, which when he struck
 The sound as if a voice went north and south,
 To the east and to the west, o'er all the wild
 With a sad crying, like "Eurydice."
 And he was followed by a concourse strange
 Of birds and various beasts. The savage wolf
 And timid fawn walked down together, and
 The wild dog and the boar, the fox and the lamb
 Met in innoxious groups; the lust to kill
 And thirst of blood stayed in the fiercer ones,
 And all the dread of death destroyed in those
 Born of a timid nature; in the air
 From tree to tree fluttered the feathered birds
 Hovering above his path. All followed him,
 And sweeping with his hand the seven strings
 I felt as if by unseen chords compelled
 To follow also. So have I wandered down,
 But somewhere in this forest's shady glades,
 Passing between the tree boles I have missed
 My path and lost my leader.

Woodsman—

I know now.

It is the Thracian Orpheus thou hast seen; t
 No marvel that thou thus hast followed him,
 For it is said that playing on his lyre
 That birds will leave the heav'ns and beasts the wilds,
 That the rude winds will hush, and rapid waves
 Stand still to listen, such his magic skill.

Shepherd—

All this is true, and more, for I have seen.
 In the hot day time when the sun glared down
 Cool mists will come to shadow him; the stones
 Where he has played will weep and briny tears
 Glistening like dew upon their ruggedness.
 The trees which he has passed, when evening winds
 Come gently, coolly meand'ring through their boughs,
 Bend all their leaves together with one sound
 A whispered sighing like "Eurydice."

And I have heard at night the nightingale
Quiet her rich tones to learn so sad a song.
Thou seemst to know, tell me more of this man
That hast such power that he with his one woe
Can make the whole world sad.

Woodcutter—

Orpheus it is.

Has thou not heard of Orpheus, the great bard,
Blest by the gods with two most precious gifts —
His lyre and his wife Eurydice?

Shepherd—

Yea, through the hills a voice went pealing forth
Telling his praise, his marvellous power of song,
The beauty of his wife. And more, methinks,
I heard that wife was dead.

Woodcutter—

True is't she died?

Stung by a deadly serpent in the grass,
Fame tells that he, emboldened by his love,
Sought her beyond the Styx, and in the realms
Of Hades won from Hades' king a boon,
That she once more should come to upper day
On one slight stipulation, that he look
Not back, nor turn around before he reach
The upper world; but he, though strong in love,
Was weak in faith, and looked and saw,
And lost his wife forever. Now he roves
The Thracian wilds and sings but one sad song,
"Eurydice, my love Eurydice,
Woe for my lost Eurydice."

Shepherd—

He was

A bard of fame, and the wide stretching world
Rang with his praises. Now his mighty love,
And not less mighty sorrow, shall make fame
Once great, still greater, and through changing scenes,
When wars and kings and kingdoms are as dust,
Past, scattered and forgotten, yet his name
Shall only shine the brighter.

Woodcutter (aside)—

Woe is me.

I feel that this is true, for I was once
A mighty king; already now my fame
Is past and all forgotten. I was once
A great war captain, and I ruled the storm
Of the fierce battle like a god unharmed,

Unfearing, feared by all. My enemies
 Bowed down; their necks were as the steps to reach
 The grandeur of the throne whereon I sat.
 The dust of moving squadrons was a cloud
 To veil me in my glory. In my wrath
 Who dared withstand me. Yet, what am I now?
 Once lord of empires, god of armies, now,
 My power faded and my glory fled,
 Cast out, rejected, left alone to die,
 My fame is all forgotten. Oh, I see
 'Twere better to have been an humble bard
 Than a great king. Oh it were better far
 To be as this man is, though sorrow struck,
 Yet revered, honored through the earth, to be
 Loved by all people, than to be a king
 Cast out in age to die.

(Aloud) Didst thou then hear?
 Beyond there, but this moment, I did think
 I heard a solemn dying strain of sound
 Such as was struck by sad Apollo's hand
 When mourning for dead Linus.

hepherd—

I heard not.

(A faint strain of music heard.)

But now I hear and see, for there he moves,
 Slow, melancholy, yet with majesty,
 And see there also his brute worshippers
 Move in his footsteps. Come, let thou and I
 Follow and hear his strains a little while. (Exit.)

Scene—A wild and rugged plain. Strains of mournful
 music. Enter Orpheus, followed by a concourse of
 various animals. Seats himself upon a stone.

Orpheus—

Here let me sit and rest. I do forget
 All that is past; there was some horrid dream
 That tortured me with sorrow infinite,
 But that is all forgotten. Here I'll sit,
 And I will once more think that I am in
 My pleasant garden waiting for my love.
 She comes not, she is late, the sun is up,
 I hear the breeze go whisp'ring o'er the earth.
 Where is my love that she comes not to me?
 There is a weight that presses on my heart;
 I cannot tell—Eurydice is long,
 I cannot tell why I am woeful thus—
 I who am aye so light, a heavy cloud

Seems shadowing o'er my mind. Where is my lyre?

(Takes up lyre and strikes a few mournful notes.)

'Tis out of tune and strikes but jarring chords;

Why should it sing so solemnly when all

The sounds of earth join in such joyful tone?

Can it be true? A voice did seem to say

(Enter Shepherd and Wootcutter.)

Eurydice my love was lost to me:

Oh, no, I'll not think that; thou lying voice,

Why dost thou ring within mine ears and heart;

Eurydice but sleepeth, she will come,

Yea in a little time she will come forth,

And we will walk together through the flowers;

And earth, the sky, the hills, the sea, the sun,

The thousand silvery brooklets that pour down

Their waters on the thirsty earth, the winds

With their wild voices, all shall blend themselves

Into one vast harmonious dream of love.

Shepherd—

Oh ecstasy of grief, see there the man

Who, having lost that which he loves beyond

Ten thousand times beyond what he has left,

Cannot believe that it is really lost,

But mocks himself with idle fleeting dreams

That, that which he has lost shall come again;

Only when he awakes to make his pangs

More subtle and more strong.

Wootcutter—

Hush, for he speaks!

I fear by the fierce torture of his face

That that awakening comes.

Orpheus—

How can this be?

There is an under current in my soul,

Passions and thoughts I cannot comprehend;

There is a ceaseless moaning of the sea,

Voices that beat upon my close-barred ears

That will not ope and listen. In my mind

There is a shadowed memory of dread

That shrouds a gloomy pall about my heart

And threatens direful woe, yet can not I

Wake to the meaning of this mystery,

But like a man chained in some dreadful dream,
Where horrid dangers threat from every side,
Can neither fight nor fly.

(A dead bird drops at his feet.)

Ah; what is this?

It still is warm, but now it lived and moved
And shot with freedom through the limpid air,
And sang its clear-toned carol from the trees,
But suddenly 'tis silent! What is this?

I know, 'tis death. And as a veil were rent,
And light goes pouring o'er the shadowed space,
So in my mind that now but darkly felt,
The gloom of grief is light, and I can see
My sorrow in her ghastliness. The voice
Lied not, it spoke the truth. I know my doom.
She's dead, the one I loved. Eurydice.

Woe's me for lost Eurydice, ah, heart,
Groan, weep, it will not bring her back to thee,
Yet it may ease thyself a little time.

Weep for thy pain, and ye, ye heavy eyes,
Tire out yourself in tears, let briny drops
Course through your floodgates to the ground till ye
Have no more tears to yield, then rest awhile
And weep again, for all the earth is dark.

Woodcutter—

'Tis is thou saidst, and he now feels his pain
Tenfold the greater; that for a short space
He had forgotten that it was

Orpheus—

The earth

Smiles from a thousand hills, as if the thing
Called death had never peopled all her caves
With dust and bones of things which once had lived.
She smiles with colored flowers, and waving trees
And rippling corn and grasses. In her breast
She holds the flesh and bones of conscious things.
From these she feeds her beauty. Their decay
Builds up the loveliness men dwell upon.
She laughs and smiles, her pleasant waters flow,
And they, poor souls, unwittingly cry out,
"How lovely is the earth, from all sides round
She shakes out gifts among us;" nor think they
That these same gifts are their own bones and blood.
"How beautiful the earth" they cry, and think
That earth is made for them, not they for earth.

Yet they, poor fools, shall in a little while
Sink down beneath her bosom and bring forth
Things to make others merry, wine and oil,
And food and flowers and beauty from their dust.

Shepherd—

This present frenzy seems more dangerous
Than all the madness he hath shown before.
Thy years are many, as yet mine are few
I know not what to do; but canst not thou
From thy long knowledge of the past draw out
Some thought to comfort him.

Woodcutter (aside)—

To comfort him,

When I myself so need a comforter?
Peace for a little time, to offer now
A word of comfort would insult his grief
And bring a cold refusal on my head.
But shortly, when he hath exhausted all
The burning thoughts that sear his aching heart
And he looks round and feels his loneliness,
We will draw near and offer food and wine.
Meanwhile I'll rack my brain to see if I
Can find some words of solace.

Orpheus—

O thou earth,

Thou that wouldst seem to teem with inmost life,
Thou art but one vast charnel house, a veil
To hide the face of death, for everywhere
Life was, death is, and death shall ever be.
The dead are everywhere, from nameless graves
In mountain and in desert, from the dust
That whirls upon the summer wind, the sea
With all her multitude of waves; they cry
From hills and plains and air and sea, a voice,
A voice that neither heard not heeded is,
Wells up to warm the living, that a space
A few short months or days and they shall fall,
And earth shall cover them, and they shall be
Lost in the realms of dark unconsciousness.
It makes me laugh derisively to think
O soul, of men's poor measured graveyards, when
The silent forest is one sepulchre,
And every inch of earth beneath my feet
Contains the dust of something that has breathed.

Shepherd—

Now let us speak to him.

Woodcutter—

Nay, wait a while,

He will be softer soon.

(Pause.)

See now his face

Shows sorrow more than frenzy.

Orpheus—

And so young,

So fair, so beautiful thou wert; too fair
 To die. Ye gods who rule the earth and heavens, once
 I thought that ye wert pitiful, and looked
 With loving kindness on the woes of man;
 But now I know that ye are adamant,
 Cold, merciless, of stern and vengeful mood,
 Breaking us for your pastime, for how else
 Could ye have doomed so fair a one to die,
 And not be bruised with pity, felt your hearts
 Rebel against the sentence of your mouths.
 So fair, so fair, she once was, now so cold,
 Far from my side, enchained within the realm,
 Bound in dominion of the Laughterless.
 And she so full of mirth. O weary life!
 O weary death! O time that being born
 Seems as eternity, and yet shall end.
 O sun whose light is given of all life,
 And yet canst look and see that all things die,
 As thou thyself shall some time die. O gods
 With pity born too late, have pity now,
 Look down upon my broken withering heart,
 That seems to know eternity of grief,
 And give it peace.

Shepherd—

O now he seems more soft.

Do thou assay.

Woodcutter—

Ay now his grief seems worn,

So let us speak (advancing). Fair sir, thou seemst dis-
 trest,

And now I see thy face is hungerworn,
 Thy lips are parched with thirst, thy hollow eyes
 Are dark from restlessness. See I have here
 Food and some wine; if thou wilt condescend

To honor a poor woodsman's humble cheer
Take, eat, there is enough for me and thee,
And something yet to spare.

Orpheus—

Thou seemest kind.

Tell me? Thy face is worn, thy locks are white,
And thou art aged, hast thou no fear of death?
Couldst thou behold him near and never dread?

Woodcutter—

Why, why, forsooth before old age came on,
While yet my limbs had all their native strength,
I've dared him often in the battle field,
And seen him ride above the dusty plain,
And snuffed the smell of slaughter and not feared,
Should I fear now?

Orpheus—

In truth, the battle field
Is not a place for fear, but when in quiet
Alone thou dwellest on the thought of death
And callest all its ghastly horrors up;
Feelst not a thrill of fear.

Woodcutter—

Why, no, I think

It rather as a sort of healing balm
That shall cure every woe, and hope for death,
For then the strife, the pain, the bitterness,
The troubles of the earth shall pass away,
And toil shall end in rest.

Orpheus—

And thou art old,

And hast seen many years of life, and ought
To know life better and to love it more,
And thou canst look death in the face nor fear?
Thou hast had many troubles, and thy life
Is weary of its pain and longs for death,
Conceiving death as nothingness. And I,
I too am weary of my toil and pain,
And though I hate death, yet I fear him not;
Yet think not death is nothingness; that thought
Alone witholds me from embracing him;
For though I hate life, yet I fear that death
May hold more direful troubles. O but she

Was young and had no pain, and loved her life,
 And she is dead, while thou and I, old man,
 Live on and curse our misery. Woe's me,
 My heart is sick with grief.

(Exit.)

Woodcutter—

I do fear death,

But did dissemble thus to humor him,
 And none the less I have entirely failed.
 I fear death, yet I hope for death, and here
 I find a mystery unsolvable.

Shepherd—

See he hath eaten neither food nor wine,
 And goeth empty through the wilderness
 Mourning, nor touching ought. I'll follow him
 A little time and proffer bread again,
 When he perchance may eat.

(Exit.)

Woodcutter (solil)—

O fool, fool, fool,

But now thou wast repining at thy fate,
 And wouldst have this man's lot before thine own,
 Willing to be remembered, dear bought fame,
 Bought at expense of all the hope of life,
 I thought my loss was great, a kingdom, wealth,
 A little gloss of fame, now dusted o'er
 With rust of dull forgetfulness, and yet
 I eat my bread in peace, and every day
 Find evil and enjoyment side by side;
 Evil of bitter thoughts and dead regrets,
 Enjoyment of my life, my breath and food;
 Slight things but all sufficient. But this man
 Hath known a wretchedness I never knew,
 Hath lost a thing of joy I never had,
 Hath lost a thing so great a hundred kings
 With armies, and the power of half the world
 Sweeping together in the battle shock,
 With blood and shouts and groans and blows, and dust
 Depeopling all the nations, have not power
 To gather nor return to him. His loss
 Exceedeth mine as seas exceed a pool.

(Exit.)

SCENE III.

Another wood scene, night time, an open glade, with groups of bacchanals among the trees, drinking, and in the open circle, some of them dancing. The whole scene illuminated with torches stuck in the cliffs and carried in the hands of the drinkers.

Song.

Crowned with vine leaves, wreathed with ivy,
Bacchus, god of wine, we sing;
Dancing in a mystic circle,
Leaping, singing merry lays
And hymns of praise
Afar adown the forest ring.

See him seated on a panther,
Tame beneath his Godlike hand,
Smiling down on us who worship,
Singing, dancing through the night
With mystic rite,
To draw his blessing on the land.

See him beautiful and rounded,
As when on the Naxian Isle
He first wooed sad Ariadne.
With sweet words her sorrow meeting,
Soft entreating
That she look on him and smile.

God of ruby wine that gladdens,
Firing all the heart of man,
Hear our rite who thus adore thee,
As thou taughtest adoration
To each nation
When thy worship first began.

First B.—

Ho: bring me wine. I am afire with thirst.
Open fresh skins and quaff the glowing flood,
Till heart and brain partake its native fire,
Then let us dance again.

Song.

Hail to the flowing wine,
Red, sparkling, strong and free;
I drink it and its strength is mine.
It giveth me
And sends far flashing through my soul
The fire it held in dark control.

Hail to the brimming bowl;
 This once a human skull,
Which sometime chained a human soul
 With wine now full,
Holds thoughts more dark and weird and strong
Than e'er to human soul belong.

I drink and make them mine,
 And feel the lightsome flush,
The glorious glow of living wine,
 Rise up and rush
With thoughts unearthly through my mind,
That frenzied whirls on wings of wind.

Hail to the summer hills,
 Where ripening in the sun,
The glowing grape with vigour fills,
 Till sourness gone,
The clusters plucked, young maiden's feet
Tread out the thick must strong and sweet.

Hail, Bacchus, most divine,
 Bless now the crimson flow
Of the sweet draught of nectarous wine,
 Whose ruby glow
Was made to shed among the trees
Its sparkling light on rites like these.

Song.

Drink, drink and drown all care,
The god of wine is here.
 Before his eyes
 All trouble dies
And fades away all fear.

Drink, drink and drown all woe.
Before his shining brow
 The burning thought
 To mirth is brought,
Your hearts shall laughter know.

Drink and forget your pain,
Your eyes their peace regain;
 Instead of tears
 Songs meet the ears,
And mournful memories wane.

Drink, in the sparkling glow
 Your tears forget to flow.
 Nought so divine
 There seems as wine;
 Drink and to Bacchus bow.

Third B.—

The very thought of drinking makes me thirst.
 Ho, there! More wine I say; bring wine skins up!

First B.—

I too do thirst; the song has parched my throat.

Fourth B.—

And I. It is a glorious god that gives
 His servants such delicious drink.

Fifth B.—

Ay, ay.

We all will drink; I feel the frenzy mount.
 Right soon we will lead forth the sacrifice
 And do meet honor to our god with blood.
 Oh, I could tear him now!

Sixth B.—

I too!

Seventh B.—

And I!

First B.—

Yet let us dance and sing once more. Come join!

Song.

Dance with widely streaming hair,
 Frenzied eyes that wildly glare;
 Clutching hands and thoughts that swim,
 Maddened strength in every limb.
 Bound and reel and sink and rise,
 See the approaching sacrifice.

Round and round we swiftly fly,
 Peals our chant beneath the sky;
 Wine is flowing in our veins,
 Forgotten are all tears and pains;
 See the gathering frenzy rise
 For the approaching sacrifice.

Lead the victim stately forth,
 Lower brows in frenzied wrath,
 Though all strength may circle him,
 We will tear him limb from limb.

(Breaking apart they rush with wild yells and shouts through the woods, waving their torches among the trees. After a moment re-enter several.)

First B.—

Ha! who comes here?

Second B.—

A man that bears a harp.
 Some travelling minstrel. He shall play for us.

(Enter Orpheus, followed shortly by Shepherd.)

Orpheus—

My heart indeed is sorrow struck. Woe's me,
 For her I loved and lost, Eurydice!

Third B.—

He seems in grief, his face is worn with tears;
 We'll have no sorrow here, let's give him wine
 And make him play us music.

Fourth B.—

Ay, we will.

Fair sir, here's wine; come drink and drown your care,
 And sing us songs to grace our festival,
 And honor thus our god. Come, drink, 'tis good;
 Nothing so well cures sorrow.

Orpheus—

Sooth not I.

I drink not wine to frenzy all my soul,
 And make it like the brute that knows no ill;
 There is divinity within the power
 To bear a sorrow, though the sorrow seem
 The darkest dross of earth.

Second B.—

Come, have a care!

It was a god who gave the gift of wine;
 His rites we celebrate. Do not despise
 The gift which he hath given.

Third B.—

An' ye'll not drink.

Come, play us now some merry, merry stave,
Then let the gathering song to frenzy whirl,
And we will dance again e'er we begin
To fly upon and tear the sacrifice.
Thus shall we honor Bacchus.

Orpheus—

Nay, I'll not.

Frst B.—

Ye will not. Have a care lest he inspire
His fury in us, and we fall on thee
And rend thee for the sacrifice.

Orpheus—

I'll not!

My art is noble, given by a God,
Not to be made of loose and wandering use
To minister to frantic Bacchanals,
In the nude frenzy of their mysteries,
Their dark abomination.

Fourth B.—

Tear him, tear!

Come, down upon your knees, and drink or play
Or join us in our dance. Come, or we'll tear
Thee bone from bone, and strew thy quivering limbs
Afar about the forest.

Orpheus—

I'll not play,

Nor worship nor—

First B.—

Come, rend him! Let him be
Meet sacrifice in honor of the god
Whom he nor fears nor worships.

All—

Seize him, tear

His quivering flesh from off his bones, his limbs
From off his palpitating trunk, and throw
Them far apart, that dogs may feed on them.
Seize, tear, ye furies, tear!

(They seize upon Orpheus and rush out in a tumultuous rabble, with shrieks, groans, curses, cries and frenzied shouts.) Short space, then re-enter Shepherd.

Shepherd—

O fearful sight,

There is a swimming in mine eyes of blood,
A ringing in mine ears of that last shriek,
As him whom even forest brutes adored,
Blind women, frenzied by excess of wine,
Tore limb by limb asunder in their wrath.
His power extended over trees and stones,
And the brute denizens of wood and wild;
But they, more hard than stone, more low than brute,
The only ones who saw him not divine,
Poured out his holy blood upon the ground
In floods as crimson as the wine they love.
O horrid sight! O impious deed, pour down
Ye righteous heavens on their head your wrath,
Who have slain him beloved of gods and men.
O'er the pale earth they scattered forth his limbs,
Yet writhing from their mortal agony,
And the blood-dropping head one whirled around
And flung into the Hebrus; there it sank
And rose again, and faithful still in death,
Witness ye trees and stones that this is truth,
The pale lips opened, uttering loving words,
"Eurydice, my loved Eurydice,
Woe for my lost Eurydice," they cried,
And down the river floated to the sea,
Still calling that dear name Eurydice.

(Flies out; curtain falls to a strain of mournful and solemn music.)



A R I A D N E

Sing, O muse, of Ariadne;
Of her bitterness and woe,
And how sorrow fits the mortal
Greater joy to undergo.

Sing the sad Athenian victims,
Treading now the fatal shore,
Sing the bold and fearless Theseus,
Sing the deadly Minotaur.

Sing how in the silent midnight
She arose from off her bed,
Came to him in sleep reclining,
Gave to him the mystic thread.

Clue to guide him in the windings
Of the Lab'rinth's fatal path,
That he may regain his freedom,
Should he quell the monster's wrath.

How he fought and how he conquered,
All the strife and all the pain,
And how he and his companions
Gladly hail their peace again.

Fair and loving Ariadne,
Theseus strong and subtle bold,
Sailed away for sunny Athens,
Shaking out the black sails fold.

Until far behind them Crete
Sank beneath the dancing sea,
And before them rose up Naxos
Where the flowers unceasingly

Bloom in endless cycle, roses
Fragrant greet the weary one,
And the rich grape clusters hanging
Ripen neath the summer sun.

Here they came and here they landed,
And refreshed their weary souls
With the breezes balmy odors,
With red wine in flowing bowls.

Sing! how Theseus, cruel Theseus,
 Rose one morn and sailed away;
 Ariadne, left lamenting,
 Paced the shore the weary day.

Weeping "Theseus, Theseus, Theseus,
 O my love come back to me;"
 Till the sea that washed the shingle
 Leapt and murmured mockingly.

Answer to her words, "O Theseus,"
 And wild echoe from the glen,
 Mocked again "O Theseus, Theseus,
 O, my love the king of men."

Till the wine god Dionyseus
 Came and found her weeping there,
 Saw her, loved her, wooed her, won her,
 Crowned with flashing jewels her hair.

All her days he loved and cherished,
 Till life threw his sceptre down,
 Then Dionyseus from her tresses
 Took his gift, the golden crown.

Set it in the gleaming heavens,
 That men might seeing know that one,
 Who by a mortal was deserted,
 By a god was wooed and won.

SONNET

I sought for love; and where the roses rise
 I found him in a flower-bell fast asleep;
 Thither to seize him did I softly creep;
 But he, escaping, hid within the eyes

Of Fortune fair; and thence, there sudden flies
 His shaft, ere I could guard myself; and deep
 It rankled in my heart. I could but weep
 With pain and consternation and surprise.

And after that whene'er I caught a glance
 From those deep orbs, I felt my pain anew
 Glowing, that sometimes I had almost swooned.
 The hurt it gave is healed by the same lance;
 So when my lady gave me her love true,
 The torch of Hymen touched and cured my wound.

A CRUSTY OLD BACHELOR'S LAMENT

Maggie and Edith and Ada and May

Sing Ho! for the days that are long, long past,
The days of our childhood so happy and gay,
Alas, for the pleasures that never can last.

Emily, Harrie, Eliza and Kate,

Ah me for the days when our hearts were young;
For the days when care never entered the gate,
The days of music, of mirth and of song.

Nellie and Ivy and Willie and Fred,

Alas for the days that are long, long gone,
For the days of my youth that are over and dead,
That have past and have left me unhappy alone.

LOST

Lost, lost, lost;

And with wild wail the mournful sound
Swept through the valley's utmost bound
Lost, lost, lost.

For lo! I looked to thee and loved thee long,
And lay before thy feet the gift of song.
But thou hast chosen wealth, for yellow gold
The poet's fame is cast away and sold.

And in the realms of trance
Into the far distance
I hear the sound go sweeping on
Toward the portals of the sun,
Lost, lost, lost.

O'er mount and wave and sea
The echoes roll;
Dost hear my soul
Lost, lost, lost,
Forever lost to thee.

THE ROISTERERS

We will not think of death, they laughed;
Fill high the bowl with glorious wine.
Deeply the sparkling draught they quaffed,
Oh! 'twas divine!

Let us have joy while lasts life's hour,
For soon, too soon, Death's gloomy pall
Uplifts its shroud with ghastly power
And covers all.

SONG

Oh the jolly brown porter that foams in the pot,
 The wine glowing crimson that gleams in the glass,
 Oh the pale amber negus all steaming and hot,
 And the blue or the brown eyes of each bonnie lass
 For hurrah! hurrah! we love them all
 With a love forever that faileth not.

Who loves not to lie 'neath the bright summer skies,
 Drinking red claret and free from all care,
 While watching the smoke ringlets lazily rise,
 Perfuming with delicate fragrance the air.
 Oh the jolly brown, etc., etc.

Who loves not to sit on a wild winter's night
 In a well-cushioned chair in his own chimney nook
 When the storm whistles loud, and the embers are bright
 With a glass of hot negus, a pipe and a book.
 Oh the jolly, etc., etc.

But the pipe and the book to the wind we will throw,
 And the red wine untasted may gleam in the glass,
 And warmer than fire each one's heartstrings shall glow
 At a smile from the eyes of his own bonnie lass.
 Oh the jolly brown porter, etc., etc.

Then away O tobacco, thy fumes I resign,
 Sing not ale in the country or claret in town;
 But a glance and a smile from each fair one be mine,
 I sing only the bright eyes of blue or of brown.

Then away with the porter that foams in the pot,
 Away with the wine, let it stay in the glass;
 The negus grows cold that was once steaming hot,
 We love only the bright eyes of each bonnie lass.
 Then hurrah! hurrah! for we love them most,
 With a love forever that faileth not.

 THAT DAY

Love seized with rosy hands a golden lyre,
 And tuned his lay;
 And two young hearts were touched with burning fire
 That day.

Fate gloomed with angry frown and snapped the chord
 Love fled away;
 And two dear hearts did part with angry words
 That day.

REGRET

When thy dear heart was pillowed on my breast,
Oh with what joy my heart's tumultuous beating
Throbb'd in its passionate and wild unrest,
With pleasure now and hope for future meeting.

Then came the parting; never never more
Shall we forget the hours so swiftly flying,
Sitting together listening to love-lore
Told both by lip and eye together vying.

Ne'er may those hours return, but to forget
I cannot, that last look of love and sorrow;
Oh let me sleep, perchance within its net
Sleep hath a dream of some more joyful morrow.

LOVE'S DEVOTION

Behold, I said I would not love,
That siren smile in heart of mine
Too cold to melt a stone should prove;
But lo! where e'er thy form doth move
I kneel and worship at thy shrine.

Then turn and from thine eyes let gleam
One ray upon this heart of mine;
And I as one that dreams a dream
Will sun myself within the beam
And kneel and perish at thy shrine.

THE SWORD OF DEATH

White glows the iron, we forge a sword,
Singing meanwhile loud and high;
Beat the blade out long and broad,
And laugh for men must die.

Double-edged, and broad and keen,
(Heavily comes our panting breath);
The deadliest sword that e'er hath been,
Laugh, 'tis the sword of death.

Temper the metal strong and true,
Make keen the edges now, and why
Both old and young its stroke shall rue,
Oh laugh, for men must die.

EYES

Black eyes are bright eyes ever,
 Brown is a tender hue;
 Grey eyes are clear and clever
 And very fair to view.
 But the violet eyes are faithful,
 And the eyes of blue are true.

False was the grey eyes token,
 Though the sun shines over the lea,
 The spell of his power is broken,
 And the world is dark to me.
 For the eyes of grey stole my peace away
 And joy nevermore shall I see.

Grey eyes grow dark and cruel,
 False is the brown eyes hue,
 But the violet eyes are faithful,
 And the eyes of blue are true.
 But the violet eyes are faithful,
 And the eyes of blue are true.

A RAY OF LIGHT

Alone 'mid a wilderness of dark despair,
 Heavy with brooding thought, burdened with care;
 Tortured by fiery grief, o'erthrown in fight,
 Trembling with many fears, hopeless for light;
 Dead all dear friends—the living care no more—
 Shattered my barque, wrecked e're it touched the shore.
 Shudd'ring my naked soul cries unto thee,
 Why, O my God, hast thou forsaken me?

Then comes the murmur of a thousand strings,
 And with the music, comfort, and a glow;
 Shines, one clear beam, athwart the murky pall;
 And down along the beam, clear echoing rings,
 Straight to my heart, a voice full-toned, tho' low,
 "Peace, oh my son, thy Father is in call."

Marry for gold, not love, for love is constant never;
 Love warms no cot, howe'er it may endeavor.
 For him with gold, bright glows the cheerful hearth,
 Browns the rich roast and many friends make mirth.

IN. A HAMMOCK

Lazy lying, idly smoking,
Through the balmy summer day;
Hammock swinging, calmly dreaming,
Pass the peaceful hours away.

In weary watching, gravely toiling,
Where's the use, life's but a play;
So in singing, idly swinging,
Let us pleasure's will obey.

Life is worthless, hope a shadow,
Rest will come at last they say,
And the toiler and the dreamer
Turn alike to dust and clay.

CYNICISM

Why mournful soul to-day
And hard to please;
Shall man's false heart or woman's wile
Rob thee of ease and mirthful smile?
Be gay,
For the wine is red always.

Be glad O soul to-day,
And take thy ease;
No man is brave, no woman true,
But what is that to me or you?
Be gay,
For the wine is red always.

OMEGA

" 'Tis done: And lo I come
O lovely mistress mine,
Full of sweetest praise
In many a numbered line.

Omega reached at last,
My pages full each one,
Then close and let me rest,
My task is done.

THE VIKING'S SONG

Come forth from your fiords ye Norsemen,
To the winds let the white sails be spread,
Let your dragons rush over the billows,
Let us cover the earth with her dead.
For the wolves are howling with hunger,
And the ravens cry to be fed.

Let us harry the coasts of the Saxon,
And storm the rich towns of fair France;
Make the women and children our captives,
Give the men to the axe and the lance.
For weary are we of our hunting,
And tired of the song and the dance.

We will laden our dragons with plunder,
And Odin shall joy in the slain;
Blest they who shall fall in the battle,
Free forever from care and from pain.
Elected to dwell in Valhalla,
Elected with Odin to reign.

And for those who survive from the tumult,
Are plunder and captives and gear;
The gold inlaid arms of the Southron,
And crimson-dyed silks they shall wear.
And jewels and harness and silver,
Away to our Northland we'll bear.

Oh the glory and frenzy of battle,
The sweep of the axe and the clang
Of the shield that is broken and shattered;
Oh to dream of the helmets that rang.
As the sword sweep broke through them, while arrows
And jav'lines o'erhead whizzed and sang.

Then come, let the flames mount to heaven,
And with blood let us dye the land red;
Let us swoop down as swoopeth the eagle,
And cover the earth with her dead.
For the wolves are howling with hunger,
And the ravens cry to be fed.

God smiles on children; on grown men
He looks with graver eyes. Keep then your hearts
Guileless like children's, though the years move on
With tottering steps towards the grave.

P E A C E

Oh weary human soul, that in this world
 Of tears and sorrows toileth day by day,
 Striving for peace, yet ever backward hurled
 By pain and passion from the wished-for way
 That leads to rest.

E'en while I muse a bitter sigh goes up
 From myriads of souls that toss in pain;
 "Oh when shall we have drunk the bitter cup,"
 "Oh when shall we at last to peace attain?
 Then were we blest."

Ho!— come to me all ye that toil on earth,
 All ye that weep and mourn with bitter tears,
 Ye that have never laughed in peaceful mirth,
 For I can tell, how in the flying years
 Your toils shall cease.

Green grows the grass, and fair the flowers wave,
 Calm shines the sun upon a silent land;
 For all is rest indeed within the grave,
 Sorrow and toil are not—pain ceases and
 In death is peace.

L I F E

I marched through the world alone alone,
 And laughed for the sun was high;
 And he who has found the Philosopher's stone,
 Or the Bard who his mystic rhymes Joth own;
 None chanted a louder or merrier tone,
 For who is so happy as I?

I passed by the mill; and I spied a fair maid,
 And I sang for the sun was high;
 And I took her white hand in the greenwood glade,
 And kissed her sweet lips like a dashing young blade;
 To love me, to wed me, she was not afraid,
 Then happier still was I.

So we ran through the wood with many a jest
 And a song for the sun was high;
 And all was glad for my dear wife pressed
 Her baby boy to her glowing breast,
 As I then kissed the lips of her I loved best,
 Then gladdest of all was I.

R E S T

One sighed as he toiled, to his neighbor,
 Oh when shall this weariness cease?
 From the heat of the day and its labor,
 How soon shall we earn our release?
 I long for the cool and the shadow,
 The quiet of night and its peace.

Night came—and his head is now lying
 Low couched on his loved mother's breast—
 Earth's bosom—and soft winds are sighing
 Above him the song he loved best.
 And 'tis over, the labor and longing,
 The watching, the pain, the unrest.

L O V E

For fame the poet strikes
 His loftiest tone;
 For fame the hero makes
 His prowess known.
 For me sufficeth
 Love alone.

Apollo wreaths with bays
 The poet's brow;
 The warrior with strength
 Doth Mars endow.
 To me fair Venus yields
 Her apple bough.

O love, O fire of fires,
 O might of might,
 O love, O king of kings,
 O victor bright,
 From lord to lowliest serf,
 All know thy might:

Though wide the poet's fame,
 Thou bind'st his will;
 Though great the hero's strength,
 Thou'rt mightier still.
 And through all hearts alike
 Thy power doth thrill.

The poet hath his fame,
 The king his throne,
 The hero's glory wide
 Is noised and blown.
 Enough for me; I have
 My love alone.

VANETA

1.

Long weeks and months and years have rolled away
In horrors, nightly horrors, daily fears,
Since first uprose the sun on that dark day
When its completing stroke my long work nears,
And I had finished then the form of clay,
Which careful I had built through many years.

2.

Have mercy O ye gods who dwell among
The silent stars, or, in infinite space,
Have ye no pity who are high and strong,
Or deign ye not to look on one so base?
Hear me ye demons, ye who nightly throng
The lofty mountain peaks and grant me grace.

3.

The darkness deepens and the horror grows,
Day is but night and night is bitter hell;
My gloomy mind bends writhing in its throes,
Which heaven will not and earth cannot quell.
Cursed be my natal hour, those hateful foes,
Who taught me to love loveliness so well.

4.

'Twas thus; I built a lovely woman's form,
I fashioned vein by vein and nerve by nerve,
The features 'neath my fingers grew, and warm
And soft appeared in growth each rounded curve;
Careless of light or dark, sunshine or storm,
Long years in patient toiling did I serve.

5.

I fashioned bones beneath, and o'er them laid
Muscles and veins and sinews one by one,
All those deep inner myst'ries I made;
The form seemed lovely e'er 'twas well begun.
The rising flesh my gliding touch obeyed;
Long days flew by, my work was well nigh done.

6.

I pricked the skin with every dot and line,
The smooth round fingers held a flower between;
I draped her form with mantles fair and fine
In silken splendor and of pearly sheen.
Her loveliness to me seemed half divine,
I thought that one like this had never been.

7.

How beautiful she lay, how still; I hung
Rapt o'er the smiling lips; the golden hair
O'er which rich jewels their varied radiance flung,
Moved with my half-stilled breath, she was so fair.
Fairer than bard has ever seen or sung,
And silent gazing I stood o'er her there.

8.

She was so beautiful I stooped and kissed
The laughing mouth that seemed about to speak;
And then it seemed before mine eyes a mist
Rose up, and all my thought was dazed and weak.
For in the form some subtle change I wist,
So strange that instant I its causes seek.

9.

The lips had seemed to move, the skin to glow
That instant with a bright and warmer touch
Life in the deadened eyeballs seemed to grow;
A blood tide through the pulse had seemed to rush.
Ye mighty spirits how could I e'er know
That I had formed the bolt my life to crush.

10.

The wind came breathing through the window sill,
The sunlight through the leaves danced on the floor,
The time when through the land birds sweetest trill
And the soft ripple breaks upon the shore.
And far away upon the sleeping hill
The drowsy herds and herdsmen then I saw.

11.

I stooped and kissed once more, the warm breath came
Sweet surging from the portals of her mouth
And fanned my brow, scorched with a burning flame,
Like fragrant violet odors from the south.
I bent it down towards her lips to claim
The cool so longed for by my brain's hot drouth.

12.

The limbs grew waxen and the warm blood flowed
Through the light beating pulses, and each vein
Became transparent blue, the fair skin glowed
With the rich roseate hue of youth; I fain
Could aye have gazed thus on her, then the load
Of life had lightened from me free from pain.

13.

The bosom heaved beneath the rising breath,
The eyelids fell together as in sleep,
Sleep that so near is, yet distinct from death,

And through her nostrils fair the breath came deep.
And the long eyelash on her cheek beneath
A sunbeam trembled that did o'er it creep.

14.

The color brightened on her cheeks, her hair
Glistened beneath the moving beams of light;
She stirred and muttered in her sleep, as t'were
Some lovely dream that chained her in delight.
The broken words fell on the drowsy air
Like silvery brooklets rippling through the night.

15.

She was so beautiful once more I stooped
Beneath the fascination of the spell
Towards her lips, once more my own slow drooped,
Once more I kissed the face I loved so well;
And at that kiss the eyelids slowly ope'd,
And the blue eyes first glance in my eyes fell.

16.

I probed their depths with swift and eager glance
To search if in them any warmth it spies,
With loving thoughts my own eyes eager dance
An answering smile to me were paradise.
But coldly they regarded me askance,
Like two blue balls of ever frozen ice.

17.

Coldly she rose; on me fell sudden gloom;
Gathered her draperies within her hold
And turned away. I darkening felt my doom,
And in the distance sullen thunder rolled.
With silken rustle passed she from the room;
I senseless fell remaining still and cold.

18.

But in that senseless sleep came dreams of things
So awful I dare not the thought repeat,
Fiends floated round me with wide stretching wings,
And evil things passed by with airy feet,
And pointed at me with foul gibberings,
And mocking words upon my senses beat.

19.

The wind went whispering through the summer leaves,
Light clouds in patches floated slow and high;
The sparrows lightly twittered on the eaves,
A thrush was singing in a tree hard by.
Waking my soul all varied sound receives,
I heard a sweet voice pealing to the sky.

20.

The warm sun glowed, the brook swift dashed along,
The soft-breathed zephyrs wandered through the trees;
Earth seemed so pleasant I could feel no wrong
Within the world, but thought all meant to please.
Below me in the garden the wild song
Rose up into the air with words like these:

1.

Far away in Elfin land
Bright the sun is shining,
The ripple breaks upon the sand,
And bough with bough entwining
Form arbors deep and broad and high,
Through which the Elfin bird flits by
With many a twit and mocking cry
O'er lovers there reclining.

2.

Within the trees of Elfin land
Loud the birds are singing;
And there in many a noble band,
Their golden armour ringing,
Bold knights ride by me two by two,
And silk-clad ladies fair to view,
Over the sward still wet with dew
To the wee flowerets clinging.

3.

The husbandmen are in the field,
Their ground for harvest tilling;
That soon in golden sheafs shall yield
Rich store, their garners filling.
But they nor really reap nor sow,
No knights nor ladies there ye know,
It all is but a goodly show
That fades when they are willing.

4.

Deep beneath the mighty hills
The swarthy gnomes are mining;
There no songbird sweetly trills,
There no sun is shining.
But heaps of gold shine through the halls,
And rich stones glimmer from the walls,
And where the dungeon barrier falls,
There, mortal foes are pining.

5.

They build their halls of em'rald stones;
Instead of sunrays beaming,
They fashion fair huge diamond thrones.
From these the light comes gleaming.
Their tables, seats, are of pure gold,
The hearths do ruby fire brands hold,
But all around about is cold,
Bright, but most icy seeming.

6.

Under oceans rolling waves
The mermaids light are laughing;
The mermen in their sandstrewn caves
Deep draughts of mead are quaffing.
Their cups are formed of drowned men's skulls,
Around are scattered wrecked ships hulls,
When'ere some awful tempest lulls,
They greet new dead with scoffing.

7.

Elûn sisters list to me,
In earth's garden singing,
Ye mermaids of the deep blue sea
With the wild waves swinging.
Ye gnomes leave quarrying of the stone,
Ye elfmen leave your shews alone,
Let each now join his voice in one
With mine so loudly ringing.

21.

I rose from off the floor, my dizzy thought
Once more came back beneath my brain's command,
Reeling with weakness for support I caught
At the first thing that came beneath my hand.
It was the table on which I had wrought
The form that to my soul had seemed so grand.

22.

I found it empty; I remembered then
How I had finished my long task and how
I stooped and kissed those lovely lips, and when
I kissed she rose as finding life, and now
My soul aghast had fled the haunts of men,
My body senseless falling still and low.

23.

I left that awful chamber and passed on
Down the long winding staircase to the hall,
And through the open door the summer sun

Cast checkered shadows on the oaken wall.
High in the heaven his throne of noon just won,
He left the zenith for his evening fall.

24.

I stood without the house, the gentle wind
Played with my locks and fanned my heated brow;
I wandered through the flowers and shrubs to find
The mistress of the voice that sang; but now
I saw and knew the being that my mind
Had formed, and 'neath which it was doomed to bow.

25.

Silent I stood and for a little space
Delighted in the scene before me laid,
Admired the beauty of her form, the grace
With which each part was carelessly displayed.
And then I marked how lovely was her face,
And praised the thought and hand that had all made.

26.

I marked her dress, no longer now she wore
The Oriental silks of flowing fold
In which my hand had clad her form before,
Rich with barbaric work in jewels and gold;
But a white robe was thrown her shoulders o'er,
Which one great ruby in its place did hold.

27.

Her golden hair was looped into a knot,
A coronet of gold upon it shone,
Nigh a small fountain midst a grassy plot
She sat, a mossy hillock for her throne;
Her hand held flowers, happy I thought their lot,
The touch of such fair fingers having known.

28.

For longing love within my being grew,
And the boy god, marking my lengthened pause,
Laughed from his cloud, seeing me gaze anew,
While with hot ardour my cold heart now thaws.
Swift from the bended arc the arrow flew,
And I was one obedient to his laws.

29.

O love, O mystery of might, O power
That thrills to agony the human breast,
To rise again to joy in one short hour;
O thou that now depriv'st of any rest,
And mak'st a storm of gloomy passion lower
On brows and eyes where merry mirth sat best.

30.

Who makest man to weep in bitterness,
And teachest him to know he is but clay,
And in the midst will mock his sore distress,
And darken to his sight the gleaming day.
And when he thinks that nought will e'er redress
His pain, 'tis then thou purgest it away.

31.

O thou that purifiest the human mind,
And cleansest it from dross by burning flame,
Making affection's spring flow towards its kind,
Kindling warm hope in all our trembling frame;
And now dost pass away as doth the wind,
Whither doth no one know nor whence it came.

32.

The gods placed breath within our narrow mould,
But far more subtle than the breath art thou;
They placed a spirit and a jewel of gold,
Set in a common casket it is now;
Thee with the spirit they did close enfold,
Their separation can no time allow.

33.

"O subtle love, O love the power divine,
Hear me, thy feeble votary, that calls
Humbly to thee from thy most glorious shrine,
Thy temple great that knows not roof nor walls;
For woods and shady dells are they not thine?
These are the temples and thy palace halls."

34.

Thus rose my spirit's inward prayerful tone,
To love's high place, craving his smile serene,
As I advanced towards the mossy throne
And bent beneath the feet of that fair queen.
"Thy subjects and fair loves myself I own,
And at thy feet I bow in loving mein."

35.

And she, ah me, her words were sweet to tell,
Had I that power, for on my being came
A soft, majestic calm beneath their spell;
And o'er my soul when she first breathed my name
A smile like sunrays on dark waters fell,
That touched its gloomiest depths to golden flame.

36.

Ah me those happy weeks when love was young,
And hand in hand with hope walked pleasant ways,
All nature joined its voice in choral song,

To hail their advent with sweet hymns of praise.
Till from some quarter dark a cold wind sprung,
And gathering gloom foretold the winter days.

37.

Then hope lay down and died, and love was left
Alone in darkness till came by despair,
And took the place of her whom time had cleft,
Away from fair love's side, and with him there
To greet the side of love of hope bereft
Came sorrow and despondency and care.

38.

Ah me, those pleasant days when thou and I,
Vaneta, walked the wild woods silent aisle;
Silent, save when the light wind whispered by,
Or when we paused to rest our feet awhile;
And heard from some near hedge the shrewmouse cry,
Whilst thou would'st listen with the same faint smile.

39.

The weeks flew by, and all the earth was glad,
The birds sung through the gardens and the flowers
Bloomed in unending cycle, blossoms clad
The trees, the mossy lawns, the shady bowers,
The bright sun shone, no living thing was sad,
For mirth was still companion of the hours.

40.

For after that I never missed her face,
But every day we walked the shining paths,
Meeting when first the sun begins his race.
And from his chariot wheels the mist that swaths
The glory of his form rolls back apace,
And parting when night brought forth other earths.

41.

And every day my love became more strong,
And every day her face in beauty grew,
And all my being rested on her tongue,
And when she spake my whole soul forth she drew.
My heart upon her slightest gesture hung,
And weary life was when she passed from view.

42.

Jealous was I of the light wanton wind
That toss'd the golden splendor of her tresses,
Envyng the flower within my inmost mind,
That her small foot in passing softly presses.
Yet more the bloom that e're her fingers bind,
With gentle touch her rosy hand caresses.

43.

The morning breezes saw us wander forth,
 And tuned their harps among the grass and weeds;
 At noon from high Apollo's sultry wrath,
 Some leafy bower its pleasant shade concedes.
 The evening zephyr cross'd our homeward path,
 And with soft lingering sighs our way it speeds.

44.

I hated night that hid her face from me,
 Stretching above the world his pinions black;
 And curst the god that he so enviously
 Swallowed her beauty up in his attack.
 But rosy morn I blessed right joyously,
 That brought to conscious sight her beauty back.

45.

Thus passed the days, until one golden noon
 We seated where a silvery poplar hung
 Over a glancing brook, whose drowsy tune,
 With many a rippling cadence lightly sung
 She listened for a while; till rousing soon,
 With wild sweet voice these words she softly sung:

1.

"Shadows changing, shadows fleeting,
 Life is but a mockery,
 Shadows parting, shadows meeting,
 Shade with shade in strife competing,
 Shadows forming, passing by.

2.

Earth is but a strange phantasm,
 Life the brook now flowing past,
 Men the shades that from each chasm,
 On the waves with frantic spasm,
 Are in checkered order cast.

3.

Shades that on the sand and shingle
 Quiver in unceasing strife;
 Now they rest apart and single,
 Now in one dark mass they mingle,
 Now they fade away from life.

4.

All we know is but delusion,
 Parts of one faint passing dream,
 That too dim for our solution
 Fills our hearts with wild confusion;
 Pressing its fantastic theme.

5.

On a consciousness dim dreaming,
On a mind itself so vain,
That no pondering nor scheming
Comprehends the shadows teeming,
Of its pleasure or its pain.

6.

Men may strive, but strife is nothing,
None can alter unseen fate;
To the void despite their loathing
Hollow shades must still be moving,
Dreams must cease or soon or late."

47.

She ceased; again in dreaming doubt her eyes
Gazed pensive on the brook, that dashing on
Still as each wavelet on its journey flies
Made changing shadows dance beneath the sun.
My gaze upon her musing features lies,
And to this thought my wandering fancies run.

48.

O thou like those for whom the spirits dared
To leave the wilderness and mountain peak,
Whose charms not e'en the awful ange's spared;
They left their thrones with such as thee to speak
Their love, the mighty giants on earth upreared,
Whom vengeance for their tortured sires did wreak.

49.

What wonder men by love should be inspired,
That in their veins the blood should warmer burn;
What wonder they by beauty should be fired,
That all their noblest thoughts on this should turn;
Which seeing even angels have desired,
And knowing could no greater joy discern.

50.

The spirits were brought down from space by love,
But man into the height exalted is;
It causes him through loftiest dreams to move,
When weary love will soothe him with a kiss.
Forgotten then the pain with which he strove,
And that one moment is his dearest bliss.

51.

Then found I words and spoke, "Altho' life be
A mockery of things in shadows clad,
Yet pain and pleasures are reality.

If they be not, yet let us not be sad,
 O give me love, that mournful shadows flee,
 And if I dream still let my dream be glad."

52.

She looked at me and, laughed in scorn
 And bitter mockery, then fled away;
 Homeward in pain my lingering steps are borne,
 Thick clouds were gathering fast their dark array.
 For weeks in bitter grief I weep and mourn,
 And still her laughter smote me day by day.

II.

1.

Vaneta for all love is mockery,
 Vaneta for all hope is dark with care,
 A sunny stream that lightly flowing by
 Plunges into the chasm of despair.
 Youth looks to future things with joyful eye,
 Age mournful dwells upon the days that were.

2.

For still I hoped until at last forlorn,
 Burnt with the fire of useless hope my brain
 Bent 'neath the ceaseless terror of her scorn,
 And tottered to its fall; alas in vain
 Opened for me the splendors of the morn,
 Or billowed in the wind the golden grain.

3.

And on me fell the terrors of the deep
 Eternal darkness, and the awful fear
 Of endless dreams, yet could I never sleep,
 For I was mad and wandered without care,
 Naked, as when I first was born, to keep
 Tryst with the awful demons of the air.

4.

Or things of my own fancy, for to me
 Men moved as shadows, and my thoughts were real
 And terrible, nor could I ever see
 Between the true and untrue. And a peel
 Of marriage bells rang ever loud and free,
 Jarring a deadened heart that would not feel.

5.

And I saw visions, and the forms therein
 Mocked me with outstretched fingers, and they made
 Scorn of me as she did, only more thin

As at a distance, and I was afraid
More than an unused boy who first hears din
Of broken armour and the ringing blade.

6.

And all men stood aloof and shook their heads
As I went by, and none came nigh to cheer.
And in their eyes was loathing mixed with dread.
Where'er I went the children laugh and jeer:
For in the world of men I was as dead,
Nor had I home, save in the forest drear.

7.

Yet came there one Erman, best loved of all,
Dearer to me than kin, more loved than life
Itself, who heard when absent of the fall
Of reason from me, and of all the strife
Of jarring fancies and the sudden pall
Of darkness and a brain with visions rife.

8.

His love to me was more than woman's love,
For we had babbled at one mother's knee,
As I had ne'er a mother; when she strove
To bring me forth from nothingness to be,
Death took her in his arms, and far above
I trust she dwells and sometimes thinks of me.

9.

A second mother took me in her arms,
An infant senseless all of my great loss;
Her son, my friend, just born; and safe from harm
She kept us both. With shining silken floss
Our mutual cot was lined, and one voice charms
Us both to sleep, unwitting pain or cross.

10.

And as we older grew, at the same knee
We learnt unto our father's God to pray;
The same sweet voice, so soft and silvery,
Taught us the stories of an older day.
And the same face bent o'er her son and me,
To kiss us when at night asleep we lay.

11.

How well do I remember that dear face,
Pale, gentle, soft—soft with a mother's love,
Her kind blue eyes, and all the silken grace
Of her bright hair. Unto the Gods above
She too ascended, ere she yet could trace
How evil science and passion in me strove.

12.

For this I am most thankful that she died
Ere yet she knew of all my pain and sin,
Ere yet her son was drawn unto my side,
Trusting his power me from my woe to win.
Oh my dear friend the joy for sin denied
Irks less than that thou joined the shadows then.

13.

I was a studious child of weakly build,
And all my trust and love in him were stayed,
And tenderness for me his bosom filled,
For he was tall of form and strongly made.
And when dark thoughts my aching bosom thrilled,
At his dear side I did not feel afraid.

14.

He fought my battles in my childhood days,
And bore my punishments and stood between
Me and all pain whatever; above praise
His tenderness when I was sick did screen
Me from grim death, when others in amaze
Fled from the fear of plague and shafts unseen.

15.

And as we older grew he led me forth
And taught me all of nature's life I know,
Showed me the flowerets springing from the earth.
How the waves ripple where the wind doth blow;
The eggs and nests of birds, and from their birth
The rabbits, young ones, running to and fro

16.

And now, in madness, without fear he came,
Trusting his love might bring me back to health;
And now as I look back I burn with shame
For sorrow brought by sin on love that wealth
In mines could never buy, nor utmost blame
And slander of foul tongues abstract by stealth.

17.

He came and watched and saw he could do naught
Of his own strength, and went away again;
And in the rocky solitude he sought
The oracle from whence the gods made plain
Sometimes the future ways of men, and taught
The law and sacrifice they would ordain.

18.

Desolate is the temple now, and dead
The prophetess, and each tall columned stone
Hath fallen from its base, and weeds o'erspread

The maze of ruins; and the lofty throne
From whence before the words of doom were sped
With all its glories now is overthrown.

19.

But then it towered in grandeur, and each god
Sculptured in gold and ivory stood high
Robed in his lofty place, and princes trod
The marble halls with richest gifts to vie
In showing honor, and the veriest clod
Might view its beauties with a wondering eye.

20.

The fire of desolation and the doom
Of all things hath consumed it from its place.
Can man complain because his gaol, the tomb,
Doth him and his most noble work abase,
When o'er the gods themselves time throws his gloom,
And dares their sacred temples to deface.

21.

There came he with rich gifts and sacrifice
Offered in my behalf, and humble prayer
That if his utmost wealth should not suffice,
Then in his mercy might the Thunderer
Permit him with his life to pay the price,
Himself for me my penalty would bear.

22.

He wept and told my story word by word,
As he had known it from my childhood years;
And now his one petition he preferred,
Humble and sorrowful with many tears.
The ancient priest the woeful story heard,
And with the gifts the inner portal nears.

23.

He passed within to where in awful state
The prophetess pronounced the gods decrees;
Upon the altar there to dedicate
The gifts that they might wrath divine appease.
Meanwhile a day my anxious advocate
Must wait impatiently and ill at ease.

24.

The following morn uprose the lofty sun,
And with a clang at the appointed time
The portals were flung wide, and then began
Pealing to heaven's vaults the hymn sublime,
Which, when dawn opes and when the day is done,
Rings through the forest its melodious chime.

25.

And Erman waited there and heard the hymn,
And saw the long procession wind about
The lofty aisles and through the courts kept trim
By white-robed neophytes, and so throughout
The columned arcades of that temple dim
To where before the sun they knelt devout.

26.

Then rose the black smoke of the sacrifice,
And the long tongues of flame upleaping fast.
And the hierarch lifted his hands thrice,
Then on the flames the odorous incense cast.
Pealed the last hymn while yet the fragrant spice
Consumed, and so the morning rites were past.

27.

Then came the priest and said: "Thy friend hath sinned,
Taking unto himself rights manifold,
Pertaining but to him who rules the wind,
The power of life. A spirit in the mold
He could not place. The gods will not rescind
Their doom, nor yet entirely hope withhold.

28.

Hear then the doom of the immortal god,
The sentence now pronounced by the most high.
"Though beautiful the man-made form is odd,
Who would complete it must the soul supply,
But ere he can do this, life's fair abode
He must forsake and yield himself to die.

29.

"So shall immortal anger first be lulled,
But not entirely quenched; his pain shall be
Long as his years, never to be annulled.
The clouds of madness from his brain shall flee,
But till his life spark shall by death be dulled,
Remorse and sorrow are the gods decree."

30.

Weary and sorrowful he left the place
And came again to me, for though he gave
His life, yet even this will not buy grace
Completely. Though his friend might cease to rave,
Should he complete the sacrifice, his face
Must yet be sorrowful until the grave.

31.

Thus was he torn with doubts, but yet he came
And watched me as a mother doth her young;
Kindling at night to warm my limbs the flame,

Following still my wanderings, and strong
Supported me, and ever called my name
With gentlest accents of our mother tongue.

32.

Thinking that this might memory recall,
And lift my mind from its abysmal deep,
And snatches of old songs he sung, but all
Was useless, and he hung above the sleep
Of me who knew him not, and of't he'd fall
In very bitterness upon the ground and weep.

33.

And soon I grew to love him, as the deer
Will learn to love the one that harms it not.
For he was ever gentle, and without fear
I followed him, although I shunned each spot
Where other men would walk; for they would jeer,
Nor knew the gods' decree had doomed my lot.

34.

Then one day came Vaneta, with her face
Beautiful as the gods are, and there rang
Within my ears with old remembered grace
Her dulcet tones, though each word brought a pang
Of memory, that time could not efface,
As cruel with mocking gestures then she sang:

1.

Love the Tyrant, Love the King,
Thus these feeble mortals say;
Elfins, let your laughter ring,
Let your mockery have sway;
That they who shades through shadows move,
Thus should be the slaves of love.

2.

Ye, may live a thousand years,
Changing forms of drifting mist,
Never know ye pain or tears;
Laugh, at those who but exist
A single day, yet do approve
Themselves the slaves of fear and love.

3.

Love and Fear will perish both,
Laughter only never dies;
Hope, a thing of mushroom growth,
Only born for those unwise.
Laugh O Elfins as ye rove,
Mocking at the spells of love.

35.

She past, and all that night I raved again,
And shrank from mocking forms that pressed me
close,
And shrieked out in my agony and pain,
And Erman's watchful care did all engross;
Who wept and watched by me, and did in vain
Strive still to win me from my mood morose.

36.

And often 'neath his breath he cursed at her,
Whose witcheries he said this ill had done,
And caused me 'gainst the gods decrees to err,
(Though sin alone my miseries had won),
Till day dawn found us sitting 'neath a fir
Exhausted while unrose the morning sun.

37.

Fair rose the sun upon no fairer morn,
His golden chariot hath risen high,
Through fleecy clouds in limpid air upborne,
That drifted slowly on an azure sky.
Sweetly the birds sang from the budding thorn,
The squirrel's chattered out a sweet reply.

38.

Swiftly beyond the rockbound river rushed,
Dark, deep and silent onward in its course.
Further adown with sullen roar that hushed
The birds song sometimes dull and deep and hoarse;
A smooth green arch it bent and fell and crushed
Itself in foam into a whirling torse.

39.

A rainbow ever played about the place,
And rumor far and near had hallowed it
To all the seeing gods, men hid the face
When they came near, and bowed, hastening to quit
With trembling steps and quaking hearts the space
Allotted to the gods, as dwelling fit.

40.

Then Ernan spoke; the words into my brain
Burnt themselves one by one, "I do repent
The curse I spake last night; for it is plain
Vaneta worked not of her own mind's bent,
But by the gods decree. Nought can obtain
Their pardon free, nor heal their dire resent.

41.

Saving the sacrifice of man for man,
A life to save a man from worse than death.
So let it be. "Hear me, ye gods," began
His invocation, "for to ye in faith,
Who all our hidden thoughts and actions scan,
I yield the sacrifice my living breath."

42.

He spake, and ran and from the utmost ledge
Sprang headlong down into the seething deep;
Swift through the air he fell, then as a wedge
Struck the white foam, whose spray shafts leap
Aside one moment, closing edge to edge,
Then o'er their prey the whirling eddies sweep.

43.

Then as the cataract whirled away its prey
Reason at last returned to me,
But none the less I hate the brilliant day;
Would God, I weep, that I had died, not he.
Mournfully prayerful now I kneel away,
"God's blessing on the dead" my only plea.

FUNERAL MARCH

I heard a funeral march with groan and wail,
It swept the aisle and echoed in the dim
And vaulted roof; I felt my spirit quail,
My heart grow faint, and feeble every limb.

It seemed a woman wailing in her woe,
Mourning because her first born was no more;
A maiden weeping for her lover now
Drowned when his boat had nearly reached the shore

And then the burden changed, a sweet sad song
Arose, more hopeless than the first wild grief;
And sing, it said, as slow it wound along,
Sing for the life of man dies as the leaf.

Sing that the world is slipping from our grasp,
Sing that the greatest are but as the dust;
Life's spark dies out, one feeble groan, a gasp,
Then to the grave we sink to mould and rust.

ISANDWHALA

"Save the Colors."

Weep

With sighs and moans and tears
For those who fell
On Isandwhala's fatal plain;
They fought and well
They sleep.
They are not borne on b'ers;
Vultures and jackals tear the scattered slain.

Weep.

Great England feels
The shock through all her veins.
Hot tears she yields
For those whom Death did reap
On Isandwhala's burning plains.
But yet not only weeps for each dead son,
But glories and is glad for honor won.

How firm it stands, that thin red line;
And see, from end to end the flashes run
With that dread sound of rolling musketry;
And here and there with dull deep roar a gun
Sends forth its heavy charge of woe and death.
On come their Zulu foemen, tall and strong,
In health and savage might, bounding along
The broken plain, intent on their design.
Death to the scanty foe; and hundreds fall,
But thousands more ere they have lost their breath,
Spring up a living, moving, angry wall
To face that deadly crash of musketry.

And thousands fall, a myriad more spring on;
The cartridges are spent, yet each man stands
Holding his rifle in his firm brown hands,
And, ready with the bayonet, forward bends.
But those wild warriors fighting for the lands
Held by their fathers, and their wives and hearths,
Heave up the writhing bodies of their friends
To dash them on the soldiers' hands and arms,
Then ply with skill the deadly assegai.
Firmly they die, nor is there fear or cry,
The whole air shakes with dreadful war alarms,
The field runs down with gore, and earth's
Red bosom heaves with slaughter of her sons.
And all is lost, yet 'mid that awful strife,
Where heaving to and fro with shouts and groans,
The fighters splatter with their blood the stones,

And yelling of that great triumphant host,
England remembers with exultant boast
How in that little troop of her true sons
One still more noble gave his own dear life
And died that he might spike the useless guns.

No hope for all is lost, and now a cry
Arises, save the standard though we die.
Melville and Coghill, summoned by that sound,
Attend, and for them chargers are supplied.
No veterans they, inured to war's alarms,
Accustomed long to blood and clash of arms;
But only youths. Yet, bravest of the brave,
Adieus are said, they mount, prepared to ride
Through those deep ranks of death. All else is drowned
By that wild yell, pronounced with cruel zest,
A thrilling, loud and wild triumphant cry,
Telling the last of that fierce strife is nigh.
They leave their friends, and through the crowd they press,
Brave Melville with the colors round his breast.
O, wake my lyre, and tell in lofty strain,
How well they fought who ne'er shall fight again.

Upon great heaps of dying and of dead,
With dull and heavy plash the iron hoof falls;
Both horses and their riders are blood red,
As with a shout they leap through those firm walls
Of broadened shield and quivering assegai,
And barb'rous men, who pause in mid war cry,
To bend them backward for a steadier aim;
Then hurtles the lithe javelin through the wind,
Hurled forth like some long living flash of flame
From sinewy arm urged by an angry mind.

And ever these two riders lift their hands,
And their bright ruddy sabres downward fell,
Each time there rises up a dying yell,
As still they press through those thick savage bands.
Ah! they are past at last; they now are free,
The river waves before, sing loud with glee.
They plunge them deep into the foaming tide.
They have breasted the current and reached the shore,
And stand upon firm English land once more;
They have safely ridden their deadly ride.

Ah, no! They ride still on. Then Coghill reels,
Dying from off his horse. Melville dismounts
To raise and succor and await his end.
So Coghill dies, and Melville too now feels

He looks his last on hills and glancing founts,
The huge extent of plain, the lofty sun,
And knows for him the fleeting sands are run.
He feels all this and lies beside that friend
Whom late he fought beside, content to die
Close wrapt in one another's arms they lie.
There they were found beside the river strand,
Dead 'neath the colors of their native land.

Weep on,
And yet be proud
That was an English soldier's death;
And such death lives
Longer than the longest life.
They fought a mighty strife,
Loud fame her laurel gives,
And future times 'neath every sun
Shall sing in lofty peans loud
Their praises with exultant breath.

FRAGMENT

Far dwell the gods within a distant sphere,
Nor do they care how fare we mortals here;
In dreamy ease they pass the peaceful days,
And nod to sleep while great Apollo plays.
Celestial wine and love and song are their's,
Nor have they time to rule the world's affairs.
While we below must watch and toil and pray
And sorrow through tumultuous life's affray,
Nor rest we till the spirit takes its flight,
And the dark grave shrouds us in endless night;
Yet in our weary toil one pleasure's ours,
And a friend's smile brightens our saddest hours.
Call me thy friend, I ask no other boon,
And sorrow's night will change to joy's full noon.

HAIL

All hail! ye sunny seas, ye island shore.
Hail to the dark green trees, the rocky height,
Hail to the everlasting mountains' hoar,
Whose pinnacles are crowned with heaven's light.
With love, my land, that ever shall endure,
Returning now I greet thy shore's first sight.

ON THE NARES EXPEDITION IN SEARCH
OF THE NORTH POLE

England Loquiter.

A murmur arose, the voice of a nation,
A restless voice that traversed the earth;
With anger, with hope, with high exultation,
Now solemnly prayerful, now pealing with mirth.

Now echoes the voice with a restless craving;
"I'm queen," it says, "of the far-rolling sea;
So vast are the empires my billows are laving,
Whose bounds not the sun, though all seeing, may see.

The monarch of fire and the lord of water
Obey my behest and uphold my throne;
And the earth king dark to the ocean's daughter,
Yields freely the riches he calls his own.

"Oh, find me and set me some new endeavor,
Some iand to conquer, some feat to achieve;
Must I sit and rust in this sloth forever,
To think of old glory, and bitterly grieve?

"I have conquered all; must I, too, be weeping,
Like Alexander for some new world,
And dream of the battle tones rushing and sweeping,
The roaring of cannon and banners unfurled.

"Must I dream in frenzy of armies clashing,
Till I rise in frenzy to waste the lands?
And the beat of the drum and the thunder crashing,
And the blood poured out on the thirsty sands,

"Tell I have risen from prosperous slumber,
To shake out energy gotten of sloth;
To add yet more to my victories' number,
To add yet more to my Empire's growth."

(Seamen Loq.)

A voice of men that are talking together:
Strong, bearded captains of sturdy frame,
Who laugh at the storm and the windy weather;
Bold men and right noble of name and wide fame.

"Our fathers," they said, "were brave men and glorious,
Their names are our country's most treasured dower;
Unflinching in danger, in battle victoriorous,
Their might has raised England from lowness to power.

"So far they sped, nought is left to discover—
Yet, stay—the Cold North has baffled all yet;
Let this be our dream, the Ice Queen our lover,
Our battle to conquer the cold and the wet."

(Science Loq.)

Yet another voice, the voice of earth's sages—
Pale, earnest kings of the realms of thought;
Deeply they ponder o'er intricate pages,
The wealth of all wisdom the mind yet hath wrought.

And one is now pointing with tapering finger,
Tracing a map with deliberate care;
And, lo! on one spot his hand still doth linger—
Man's foot hath not touched it, the Ice Queen dwells
dwells there.

"We know," he said, "all the earth and the heavens,
But hither has no man yet ventured to roam;
The praise of the nations to him shall be given
Who dares to explore it, and—honor at home."

(Seamen Answer.)

The captains exult and have taken their station;
The eddying winds around them now sing.
And hope has stilled the voice of the nation,
While the sages wait for the word they bring.

II.

The Ice Queen sat in her glassy halls,
A frozen mountain was her throne;
From her wind-blown hair the snowstorm falls,
The heavens were her palace walls,
Around her bright parheliions shone.

The eddying north wind was her breath,
The darkness as her mantle seemed,
With many a fold it covereth,
About the majesty of Death,
Auroras from its skirtings gleamed.

A glacier flowed beneath her feet,
Medusian eyeballs froze to stone
All mortals that their glances meet;
Afar the clashing icebergs greet
Her list'ning ear with gird and groan.

There, wages she eternal war
With the warm sunrays' genial glow;
Now she retreats again afar,
Her groaning icefields clash and jar,
With blinding hurricane and snow.

There sits she dreaming, yet awake,
Of times when wider realms she swayed;
When her cold thoughts could southward take
Their way, for many a league and make
Her chilling pall on all be laid.

She rises, snowdrifts whirl and dance;
Far south the birds fly from her sway;
She shakes her robe, Auroras glance,
The icy powers their force advance,
All earth in captive chains they lay.

2

The Ice Queen sits in her palace halls,
And laughs; "Who hither comes," saith she,
"Who enters in my glassy walls?
My cold embrace his strength enthralls;
Who loves it, cannot mortal be.

"Loving immortals, mortals die;
Their breath goes forth, their feeble frame
Cannot withstand such ecstasy;
The fire of love in passing by
Destroys the lamp that feeds the flame.

"And sooth it seems I've lovers now—
Mortals, to whom immortals bend;
For here a voice hath whispered how
The earth and fire their sway allow,
And the winds their pinions lend.

"The Sea King soothes his ruffled wave,
And tamely bears them on his breast;
Now to thrall me they vainly rave;
My breast shall prove a nameless grave,
And its gift eternal rest.

"Fools! Are my realms an open field—
A spoil to ravish when they please?
Though air and sea their homage yield,
And the Fire King doth obeisance mild,
Am I to be one with these?"

"Here have I reigned in solitude,
Since first Creation's dawn began;
And shall I now my halls denude,
And bow me down in humble mood—
Vassal to feeble man?"

3.

The Ice Queen sits in her silent halls;
The frost powers gather 'neath her spell,
A darksome gloom the region palls,
Her chilling forces round she calls.
"These shall," said she, "their ardor quell."

The darkness shrouds her like a veil,
The stormy winds her word obey,
The eddying snowdrifts southward wheel,
The rending icebergs groan and wail,
And the icechains bar the way.

"With these," she said, "I guard my realm.
Strong he, who maketh these retreat,
Firm hands, wise head may guide the helm,
But these their ships shall overwhelm,
And the slaves shall lie at my feet."

But the strife was long, the battle rude,
And she trembled on her icy throne.
The men were strong, and of sturdy mood;
They entered her weary solitude,
And a little more was known.

They opened paths in a weary waste,
Where man's foot never trod before;
The bitterness of death they taste,
As the snowstorm's power they boldly faced,
And the wind swept by with a roar.

Some she clasped in her cold embrace,
And marble-hued they fell to sleep;
They wake no more, God give them grace;
They sleep the sleep of a noble race—
They honor them not who weep.

And the strife was rude and the battle long;
 But mortals are but mortals still,
 Though hearts be stout and limbs be strong,
 The vigor from the frame is wrung,
 The limbs grow weak, the heart grows chill.

And the Ice Queen breathed a chilly breath,
 And laughed to see their strength decay.
 Till they left the realm of gloom and death;
 "We go," they said; "but we yet have faith
 To conquer, though we fail to-day."

III.

And the voices wait for the captains' story,
 Who come with their tale from the distant North,
 And they hailed them thus: "May yours be the glory,
 For boldly ye ventured the Ice Queen's wrath.

"Ye conquered not, but ye have not failed us;
 Ye have done more than man hath done before,
 And though but a little your efforts availed us,
 Ye were strong to suffer and bold to endure."

And the captains answered, smiling ever:
 "Our limbs are weak; give us rest and we
 Once more will arise for a fresh endeavor
 To rob this realm of its mystery."

THE WILER SNARED

A dainty white doe, so softly and slow
 Was walking one day in a woodland glen;
 There came a hunter, and oh I know
 What he said in his heart to himself just then;
 For he vowed to catch that pretty white doe
 And tame her to feed from his hand I trow.

So there in the glen where the lilies blow
 He tried his arts, they were all in vain;
 For he lay at her feet on the grass I know,
 While she bound him fast in a silken chain.
 Did he try to escape? I wist not so,
 For his life was bound up in that witching white doe.

LINUS

All earth moves forward to eternity,
And half our hopes are with the things to be,
And half are numbered with the pleasant past—
Alas! that nothing good on earth should last.

The Fates still scourge all mortals with their rods,
And sorrow touches e'en the mighty Gods;
With tears Apollo framed the mournful words,
Singing "Ae linon" as he swept the chords.

"Woe for Linus, and for Linus," yet again;
"The earth is blessed with light and bounteous rain,
But he, my son, has passed from my sad sight,
And Hades holds him in its endless night.

"Ah! woe is me, that he has passed away,
Passed from the pleasant earth, the light of day,
While I through that high path must guide the sun,
And watch his steeds till their last course is run.

"God of the harp, God of the power of song,
God of the whirring shaft, the sun that long
Rides the high heavens ere he sinks to rest,
And wisdom's God yet am I all unblest.

"Music's sweet charm, nor the far-speeding death
Can bring to Linus his once-yielded breath;
The sun's bright power but hastens his decay,
And wisdom bids us hide the corpse away.

"Immortal are the Gods—but Linus died,
And Pluto's brazen gates are opened wide,
While through the portals to those gloomy glades
Winged Mercury leads in the mournful shades.

"Ah, woe! ah, woe is me, for my dear son,
Dead ere thy happy race was well begun;
Passed from the woods and fields and reedy fen,
Passed from the haunts of Gods alike and men."

Who has not felt the searching touch of grief,
And seen his loved ones fall like Autumn's leaf?
And who, as he surveys his mournful hours,
Will yet not say that sorrow has sweet powers?

On sorrow past with tempered joy we gaze,
Yet look with fear to the far-distant days,
But roseate hope is mingled with the fear,
And smiles are blended with the falling tear.

BATTLE SONG

Oh the joy of the combat,
The delight of my soul
When the war horns are singing,
The battle axe ringing,
And far overhead
The thick dust clouds roll.

Then Odin is watching,
And they the fair maids
The Valkyrs are winging,
Where the war songs are singing
And choosing the dead
Mid the clash of the blades.

The eyes darting lightning,
The sword swinging high,
The battle axe clanging;
Then comes the home ganging,
For the Valkyrs have chosen,
'Tis joyous to die.

All hail ye Valkyries,
With joy will I go,
For much would I rather
Meet Odin all Father
Than dwell in the frozen
Plains here below.

The scalds in their saga,
Shall sing of my death;
While high in Valhalla,
With heroes whose valor
Is told in each story,
Shall I mingle my breath.

And the bowl shall be flowing,
And the hunt shall be high,
Till Ragnorok breaketh,
And my soul again taketh
Its sword for the glory
Of Odin to die.

SONNETS

I.

A woman's tears are like the April rain
Down pouring on the hard and stony ground;
Now the warm sun casts wealth of light around,
Then rainy clouds o'erspread the sky again,
And moisture gently greets the thirsty plain;
In this same change doth woman's mind abound,
Now smiles she like the sun, and now are found
Tears to express her anger or her pain.

And like the rain which in the barren field
Rears up the seed to blossom to the flower,
Her tears are weapons she doth dext'rous wield
To keep o'er heart of man the sway of power,
And in that heart, all barren else with pride,
Hopes spring and love and there like flowers abide.

II.

Hard were the task, fair lady, all to tell
Of thy perfection in dramatic art,
Each passion that may sway the human heart
Thou dost in act and word depict right well,
The full, deep joy, and that which joy can quell.
Unable all to sing thy high desert,
My lines can echo but a little part,
With halting rhymes that faintly laud thy skill.

Yet take, O lady fair, this lay of mine,
And if my words but faintly fit my theme,
Then know, indeed, that song were half divine
That to describe thy excellence could dream.
Thy praise 'twould tell not, though the strains I sing,
With every virtue loftiest named should ring.

III.

He who loves art, is like a mountaineer,
Big beads stand on his brow and hard his toil;
Eager he grasps each twig the barren soil
Affords to aid his foot his weight to rear;
He gains the peak and gazes far and near,
Those on the plain below, their fierce turmoil
He notes in proud pre-eminence awhile,
Till silence strikes within a chord of fear.

His soul in pride one moment pleasure found
 But stillness now makes known to him its power;
 Now all his fame he'd give to reach the ground,
 And be with those despised, for one short hour;
 Yea, fain he would return, but 'tis too late,
 and he alone for death must anxious wait.

IV.

He who is wise no woman's love believes,
 Nor any trust will place in friendship's power,
 As pleasant dreams to cheat an idle hour
 Love and the warmth of friendship he conceives.
 Patient he suffers, and for no loss grieves;
 Peace to his mind is an eternal dower,
 His soul in lofty loneliness will tower,
 And from its thought its whole existence weaves.

He draws himself apart, and round him folds
 Musings and mystic dreams, as if a veil;
 Each day's enjoyment like a God he holds
 Within his hand, nor will his pleasure fail;
 And piercing through the future with his eye,
 Marks not the worms around that writhe and die.

A QUESTION

"Oh, soul, my soul, what is the greatest good
 Of all things?" weary to myself I sigh;
 And from the inmost fountains of my blood
 Was answer borne, "It is far best to die."

My heart, of all things what is't thou would'st have?
 Great love, I know, will be thy earnest cry.
 Love and desire are dead, nought can I save
 For rest, and rest it is, indeed, to die.

Sure ye my fiery thoughts and pulsing brain
 Care not for rest when pleasure is so nigh?
 Swift came the answer from this weary train,
 "Oh, master, it is best, indeed, to die."

Then spoke I to the awful inner voice,
 "What is the best?" I asked, with weary breath,
 "To live or die, to mourn or to rejoice?"
 But sad that voice would only answer, "Death."

THE EXILE

Far from his native land,
Only a struggling clerk,
That sat at his desk in a dusky room,
And wearily bent to his work.

Unknown in an unknown land,
Weary and worn and sad,
And the daily task and the lonely meal
Brought nothing to make him glad.

But the pen had slipped from his hand,
Unnoticed his copy lay,
And his free thoughts soared from his weary mind
To his dear ones far away.

And in at the open door
The trooping shadows came,
As his soul turned back to his friends and kith,
And he thought of each well-loved name.

The friends that his schooldays knew,
Old men with snowy hair,
Kind matrons and laughterful children came,
And maidens tall and fair.

They gathered about his desk,
They spake of the days gone by;
And accents kind in his weary ear
Rang their old melody.

A step, and the shadows fled,
The roseate dream was gone;
And down the long page in his frail white hand
The pen flew rapidly on.

Far from his native land,
Only a struggling clerk,
That sat at his desk in a dusky room,
And wearily bent to his work.

DANISH HYMN—Translation

Think when those clouds have broken before morning,
 That here have gloomed and brooded o'er our strife;
 When the eternal day above is dawning,
 And round each step shines fair the light of life.

Think when made known are things at which we wondered,
 Answered each question, dark and unknown here;
 Thoughts which we could not solve, although we pondered,
 When even to us God's way at last is clear.

Think when at last upon that glorious morrow,
 Healed is each wound, and wiped from every face
 The tear of pain and the deep sigh of sorrow,
 Silenced and satisfied in love's embrace.

O think when face to face, the Lamb ascended
 In whom we trust, with joy we shall behold;
 Think when before him there the knee is bended,
 How all our praise and thanks shall then be told.

Think of the life that passes without error,
 Each thought serene, each action true and just;
 When never more our souls shall quake with terror
 At the unbidden thoughts of sin and lust.

Think when at last in Golden Courts supernal,
 With those dear friends whom we now love on earth,
 Ling'ring we talk in light of life eternal,
 Of that dim dreamlike life that gave us birth.

O Jesus make this thought in us abiding,
 Each time our path seems long and thick with fears;
 Sweet shall it soften pain, and woe subsiding,
 Smiles shall be drawn even through sighs and tears.

Blow, ye winds, and howl, ye tempests,
 With a loud, jubilant roar;
 Roll, ye clouds, and drift, ye storm mists,
 Dark and drear forever more.

Fall, ye snowflakes, cover all earth
 With a garment white and clear;
 But within dwell joy and light, mirth,
 Laughter loud and merry cheer.

Blow, thou wind, forever ringing
 Out thy loud, jubilant lays,
 Bending down the trees and singing
 Through thy wild and weary ways.

THE DEATH OF THE YEAR

Swiftly fade the rolling years.
The clouds from heaven are dropping tears;
The old year dies to-night,
The old year dies with the dying light;
Wish him a long good-bye—
And let him die.

Rain and sleet and snow in turn
Weep and for the old year mourn,
For with the morning light
The new year comes fresh, gleaming bright;
Swiftly the last hour flies—
The old year dies.

Trouble and woe the old year brought,
Bitterness in my heart he wrought,
And reft my peace away.
Will joy come back with the coming day,
When the New Year's dawn shall ope,
Will it bring hope?

Nay, it brings no hope to me;
Hope with the dying year must die—
It brings no better cheer.
I sorrow thus for the dying year,
And heave a weary sigh,
To see him die.

Loud the bells ring through the gloom,
Loud the echoes answering come,
Pealing a merry chime,
Foretelling joy and a better time
(As I sit and listen here)
In the new-born year.

And friends come now with open hand,
As chimes are pealing through the land,
Wishing "A Glad New Year."
But mine eyes are wet with a dropping tear.
"New joy and health," they cry—
O mockery!

Forgetfulness brings time to s me,
And lifts from off their minds the gloom,
But lights no woe for me.
As I watched the old year's last breath flee,
I wished that my life leaf sere
Fell with the year.

THE SUICIDE

"A coward act, done by a coward hand,
 I take my life because I dare not stand
 Before the world's forever jeering face.
 I go from hence, nor do I hope for grace.
 Ah, me! my sin, my sin, that fearful thing:
 The awful Angel bears with spreading wing
 The record of my sin engraved on stone,
 To lay before God's mighty judgment throne.

"Yet do not thou, O world of man, presume
 To sit in judgment on my sin, nor doom,
 Because thy sins are hid, that I should be
 A mark to point at through eternity.
 What—will ye, dare ye, sit and judge me? Lo!
 I point and cry unto the great 'I know';
 I laugh the highest in the land to scorn,
 'You, too, will sin before to-morrow morn.'
 Against my judges now their sins are hurled;
 We all are sinful, in a sinful world.
 Because your sins are hid and mine are known,
 An outcast must I wander and alone?
 O God, forgive me, by that Mighty One,
 Who came man's wretched likeness to put on,
 Who in that likeness from all sin lived free,
 And taught, Forgive if you would Godlike be.

"Farewell, ye sun and clouds, ye hills and sea."
 The shot was fired, and thus he ceased to be.

MEMORY

The dark blue hills, the snow-clad mountain peak,
 The rolling sea, the river's billowing wave,
 All of great Nature's utmost grandeur speak;
 The winds that through the gloomy forest rave,
 Whisper great thoughts, yet bring not that I seek—
 For memory's sadness only do I crave.

The mighty mountains, the serene blue sky,
 The darkened depths of ever-moaning sea,
 The thundering cataract, the clouds that fly,
 The gurgling brook, the mighty forest tree,
 The winds that through its branches ever sigh,
 Whisper the future—Memory speaks of thee.

PSYCHE

Lo, a slender maid with flowing hair,
Stretches her hand before;
Nor face nor hand could be more fair,
Or seem more pure.

Comely the face, with liquid eyes,
Unfathomably deep.
And still the hand points to the skies,
"Up, upward keep."

These are the words she seems to say,
"Seek, seek the wealth of love,
And leave all else to coarser clay—
Gaze thou above."

For she incites love for lovely things,
Desire to learn and know;
And ever still her warning rings,
"Look not below."

TO —

Thou art my muse, when'er I seek
The deep, impassioned power of song,
The power that praises beauty's glow,
Raises the meek, rebukes the wrong.

When'er I strive for higher place
Than that which common mortals gain,
Thine eyes the lights that lead me on,
To and for thee alone I strain.

As the Chaldean priest of old
From the high tower of Bel his Lord,
Strove long to make the mystic stars
Knowledge of future things afford:

So in thine eyes—bright stars to me—
I strive to know my future state.
May thy dear love be granted me,
Or must woe be, indeed, my fate.

THE SEA

O Sea: thou boundless, solitary sea,
 I love thee, for thy deep, unceasing roar
 Has in it music kindred to my soul—
 A restless sound of wrath and sullen war.

Yet thou, too, ever hast thy gentler times,
 When thy calm face reflects the sky of heaven,
 Smiling and blue, as if in thy great depths
 Thou never hadst by storm been torn and riven.

The smiling heaven's cloudless vault above
 Is true reflected by thy depths, O Sea;
 So, too, the mind of men, the passions tamed,
 Reflects the wealth of love and purity.

The winds arising break thy mirrored face,
 And thou resumest thy ceaseless, sullen sound;
 So, too, man's mind, by wrong or insult roused,
 The passions quick resume their restless round.

Thy depths, O Sea, by eddies deep are stirred,
 Thy tide with various currents ebbs and flows;
 In heart of man do various passions rise,
 With thoughts and feelings deep and bitter woes.

ALL THINGS ARE BEAUTIFUL

All things are beautiful—the earth, the sky,
 The rounded vault of heav'n, when moon and stars
 Strike golden gleams through the black pall of night,
 The cloudy dark and noonday glare of light,
 The time when daytime fades or morn appears,
 The distant view or sight of things more nigh.

Beautiful are the rolling plains of earth,
 The rounded hills, the mountain's soaring peak;
 Most beautiful the calm or stormy sea—
 All things are lovely to eternity.
 'Tis beautiful to breathe, to see, to speak,
 To hear the leaves that rustle in their mirth.

Lovely the earth, the sea, the golden grain,
 Lovely the rushing winds, the dark and light;
 Yet beauty all must fade and die away,
 With earth and sea and hills and night and day—
 All things must fade before death's gloom of night,
 And beauty then shall aye unknown remain.

VICTORIA

A fairy city, nestling in the hills,
Surrounded by an azure ring of sea,
Where with her utmost beauty nature fills
The soul: where'er the eye may turn, there she,
In wild magnificence and grandeur, wills
Her glory spread in mount and wave and sea,
That man might in her loveliness be blest,
And weary souls turn from their toil and rest.

Fair spreads the town; below the harbor lies;
Above, the woods and pleasant, fruitful plain;
Towards the north, the rocky hills arise,
Clothed with great firs, which tempest-tost in vain,
Heave up their storm-grown trunks athwart the skies,
Nurtured with summer's heat and winter's rain.
And all around the boundless seas enclose
The isle to keep this jewel from her foes.

Far to the south, in the dim distance blue,
Are mighty mounts, clad with eternal snow;
Clear in the summer air they rise to view,
Brilliant in sunshine, purple when the glow
Of sunset deepens to the darker hue
Of twilight, as the eve advances slow,
And fading altogether from our sight
When the ten million stars shine forth at night.

Who might not dream that this was Paradise,
Lying in sunshine when birds lightly sing?
Where to the flower the hummingbird light flies,
And trees give forth fresh verdure in the spring—
In summertime—or e'en when winter hies
Hither with snowflakes, and the steel skates ring,
Swift gliding o'er the frozen-breasted lake,
And laughing voices woodland echoes wake.

Hail, then, ye mighty hills and forest deep;
Hail to the roaring deep, the babbling wave;
Hail, ye calm heights, on which the sunbeams sleep,
And rocky shores, where rippling billows lave;
Hail, ye dark streams, where silvery fishes leap.
No greater beauty have I power to crave—
Here will I dwell amidst the light and flowers,
And pass in dreamy ease the peaceful hours.

DYING

Dying, dying, all are dying,
 Tolls the death bell every day;
 All around the graves are lying,
 Listen what the dead men say:
 "Earth must die and pass away;
 Live and laugh while live you may.

"All is darkness in the grave,
 There no laughter sounds nor song,
 Nothing moving therein, save
 The gnawing worm that creeps along
 To nestle on the bosom cold
 O'er hearts that soon must turn to mould.

"After death no joy can come;
 Happy were the days of earth;
 Here is nothing but deep gloom,
 Here no song or moving mirth.
 Every joy for earth is made;
 Dying, everything must fade.

"Eat and drink, and laugh and sing,
 Be merry yet awhile, and love,
 Ever let your music ring,
 While you stay on earth above.
 Soon shalt thou be borne on bier
 Towards the pit, and join us here.

"Live, then live, while live you may,
 Let no sorrow drown your peace;
 Forget that life must fade away,
 Forget that everything must cease—
 Till death shall lay on you his hand,
 And bear you from that pleasant land."

Oh, the wind and the sea, the wind and the sea,
 How fiercely they battle, how vainly they strive—
 The wind lashes the sea, the sea rises in wrath
 And they struggle together, as both were alive.

The wind lashes the sea, the sea rises in wrath,
 And clashes his waves and roars loud on the shore;
 And they rush them together, but neither o'ercomes,
 But must roar and must strive through the long ever-
 more.

TO —

Summer reigns on hill and meadow,
Over all the sunlight lies,
Checked through the trees' dark shadow,
High the rapid swallow flies,
And among the woodland bowers
Are carpets thick of varied flowers.
Evening settles slowly down,
Done the heat and toil of day;
Lightly nods its lofty crown,
The foxglove growing by the way.
Hark! bells are ringing from the town.
Loudly sings the nightingale
From the dusk of leafy trees.
O love, come wander through the dale—
Day's heat is past, cool blows the breeze—
From many a hedge the blossoms glow;
O come, my love, come with me go.

MARRIAGE LAY

To and fro the bells are swinging,
Loud the mellow tones come ringing,
Through the softened evening air,
Golden sounds of marriage cheer.
Over hill and lawn are flying;
Listen to them loudly crying:
"Now new life shall be begun,
God hath joined two souls in one."
She comes, light blood her temples flushing,
Downcast eyes, cheeks warmly blushing;
Maidens glance aside to see
The bride in bridal majesty.
Louder still the bells are clashing,
To and fro their iron tongues dashing;
She passes now the entrance gate,
Nigh which the eager horses wait.
Ring, ye bells, more loudly vying,
Send sound through the town far flying,
That all may hear the gladsome sound,
And bless those joined in holy bond.
Pass, thou bride, in happy gladness,
May no wintry hour of sadness,
No dark sorrow ever come
To break thy peace with cloudy gloom.

VALE

His life has past,
 And I shall see no more
 The bounding joy that ever leapt to meet
 And fawn about my feet;
 Never shall his eyes wait again on my eyes, nor
 Shall they be gladdened that due praise is won, nor cast
 Mournful upon my face, that I refuse
 Some slight caress, or watching when I muse.

Never again to wait,
 From early morning, by th' unopened door,
 List'ning and longing for my ling'ring step;
 Nor yet again, with careless joy, to leap
 To greet the hand that bore him food; no more
 To attend my walk, with eyes and heart elate.

The truest of all friends,
 The one who never met me carelessly,
 Nor passed me coldly by,
 Nor greeted me with half-affected zeal.
 But who, with unfeigned joy, made my heart feel
 That he, at least, was ever glad to be
 Near and with me:
 And that kind nature sends
 One life, at least, in all distress
 To cheer our loneliness.

But he is dead,
 The life-spark fled
 Into the illimitable depth of space;
 The sunken eye like lead,
 Cold, blue, no more shall light to see my face.
 Truly all flesh is grass,
 And love and hope and friends and joy must pass.

Yet mourn not, O my soul,
 For though men arrogate
 Unto themselves alone eternal life—
 It is not so; do thou but patient wait,
 Till as the seasons roll,
 Thou, too, shalt die;
 And thou shalt find him waiting by the door
 That opens from time to the long evermore,
 That leads to rest from the world's weary strife,
 Watching for thee.

DIRGE

Vive plus moriere. Plus cole sacra colentem,
Mors gravis a templis in cava busta trahet.

—Ovid.

Nobly hast thou fought thy fight,
Now thy time for peace is come;
Rest, thy toil shall now requite,
Thou at last hast reached thine home.

Dust to dust and clay to clay,
Earth within an earthly bed;
But the spirit soars away,
From the dreary gloom hath fled.

Sad are all thy comrades now,
Thou hast left them for a while;
Left the winter's winds and snow,
Done thy time of work and toil.

Death hast seized thine earthly form,
Like the frost that cuts the leaf;
Thou art safe from every storm,
Far away from pain and grief.

Cold the wind sighs from the sea,
Sweeping over hill and plain;
Sighs, and strips from off each tree
Every leaf that doth remain.

So doth death move through the earth,
Takes the goodliest from the land,
Fills the heart with weary dearth,
Changes fruit to arid sand.

Lie thou there beneath the ground,
Flowers will grow upon thy grave,
Trees will shed their leaves around,
Dews thy earth will lightly lave.

Lie thou there—thy toilsome part
Now is done and thou art free;
Now we go, but aye each heart
Loving thoughts shall hold of thee.

THE ACCEPTED

Oh, who so happy as the man that loves,
 And loving, finds not springs dried up in dearth;
 Light singing through the woods and fields he roves,
 And all is pleasant in a pleasant earth,
 On rugged hills, in shady, woodland groves,
 In storm or shine, still life is full of mirth.

He, wandering in the fields, the blossoms views,
 And for him every floweret has a tongue;
 Reading their words he will himself amuse,
 For of his love is every petal's song,
 And every thought his love intense renews;
 The hours fly on, nor seem the moments long.

Perchance he wakes when night has spread her pall,
 And dark'ning eve has closed the flowers in sleep;
 He gazes up and sees a meteor fall
 Where the ten myriad stars their calm watch keep,
 And straight he thinks of her he loves, for all
 His thoughts and fancies will towards her leap.

Light heralds in the East the coming dawn:
 And he, impatient, thinks the day begun;
 Soon the glow brightens over hill and lawn,
 And breaks an opening through the night clouds dun;
 He greets with eagerness the rising morn,
 And hails with joy the glory of the sun.

THE REJECTED

Among the wild and rugged hills he roams,
 Upon the shore beside the moaning sea,
 Passes, perchance, by happy, peaceful homes,
 And thinks that these are not for such as he;
 Sees from afar the lofty temple domes,
 And hears the marriage bells ring merrily.

He sighs and turns away with weary limb,
 Far from the merry, mocking sound he flees,
 And seeks again to hear the mournful hymn
 Sung solemnly by rocks and surging seas,
 Or threads afar the silent, vast and dim
 Arcades among the gloomy forest trees.

Again he dreams that love has yet some power,
 And seeks again the fragrant, flowery fields,
 And idly plucks the daisy's tiny flower;
 Lying where shade from summer sunshine shields,
 Plucking the petals, happy for an hour,
 He asks stern fate if any love he yields.

"She loves," he says, and then "She loves me not";
 The broken petals flutter to the ground.
 "She loves," again; "She hath all love forgot."
 His eager hands have plucked the floweret round.
 "She loves. Ah, no! Sweet love is not my lot.
 Can any time e'er heal my heart's sore wound?"

And now he would the petals were all told,
 That he might see and know the bitter last;
 And now they seem more precious than tried gold,
 And he hath spent their riches all too fast.
 "She loves me not"—he plucks the last light fold,
 And all his hope and happiness are past.

THE WREATH

A wreath of flowers I'll twine,
 Twine it of blossoms fair;
 She whose dear love is mine,
 Will wear it in her hair.
 Twine, twine, twine, twine,
 Lilies white and ivy green,
 Red roses and sweet eglantine,
 With pleasant heartsease here between.

The roses are for love,
 The ivy is for faith,
 The bay leaves with them wove,
 Say, "Change comes but with death."
 Twine, twine, twine, twine,
 Geraniums here and heliotrope,
 And hawthorn buds I'll interline,
 To whisper to her, "Sweet is hope."

False, and the dream is past;
 Love, thou hast fled away.
 It is true love cannot last,
 Night follows every day.
 Fade, fade, fade, fade,
 The flowerets fair are withered now;
 To die are the blossoms made,
 To be broken every vow.

THE BELLS

Loud the bells are ringing, ringing,
 To and fro each swiftly swinging,
 And the tones o'er all the earth,
 To the plains and cities round,
 Travel like a song of mirth,
 A joyous sound.

See the people laughing, smiling,
 Tedious ways with jests beguiling,
 The sounds flowing like a sea
 Of sweet mirth and happiness,
 Drowning in a flood of glee
 Each sore distress.

Still the bells' tones onward sweeping,
 And the laughter, never weeping,
 Upwards, onwards ever wells.
 Would all were with grief attacked,
 And the bells, the merry bells,
 Would they were cracked.

DIRGE

Cut down in the flower of youth—
 Life seemed like a bright summer's day;
 Came the summoning breath,
 And the sword of death
 Reft the thread of his being away.

Cut down like a flower, without ruth,
 In the midst of the dance and the song,
 When most sweet smells the rose,
 And wine ruddiest glows,
 And ripple-like laughter leaps from the tongue.

Cut down in the sunshine of strength,
 Cut down in the glory of power,
 When sweet from above
 Rains the nectar of love,
 In passion's strong opening hour.

Cut down—through the land's breadth and length
 The heavy bells summoning toll;
 With many a tear
 Draw his lovers anear,
 To pray for the peace of his soul.

Cut down—and the temple's dark gloom,
The slow chant, the priest's awe-stricken tone:
"The earth to its dust,
To wither and rust,
Let the elements take their own."

Cut down—let the shroud and the tomb
Enclose their corruption from sight;
Far away, far away,
Past the portals of day,
Soars the spirit in ne'er-dying light.

SILENT SOUNDS

Who listens in the silent sunny fields,
Or far among the rugged mountain peaks,
Or sailing on the dreamy summer sea,
Will hear strange voices and melodious sounds,
Sweet music ringing in the radiant sky,
Or murmuring low along the pleasant earth,
And whispering sweetly in the passing wind;
Voices that call his name, though none are nigh,
Or mocking laughter and derisive shouts;
And then again sweet, melancholy tones,
The flowers will tinkle like the wood nymph's song,
The grasses rustle like the fairies' call,
Or the light waves that dash against his boat
Will echo with the siren's throbbing notes.

Can any tell whence come these low, sweet tones?
Whence all the music that we sometimes hear?
Whence the light songs that echo in our hearts?
Can any tell whence those long, sweeping tones,
That wafted by the ever-sighing breeze,
Are sometimes borne to our awakened ears?
Whence those sweet voices that pass back and forth,
With many, many questions, through the air,
And which we never hear, save when we are
Alone in some far, solitary place?
Ah, no! No one can tell; all we know is
That heaven and earth are filled with sweetest song.

SONG

Ere music was e'en known, song was beloved,
And young and beautiful maidens' snow-white throats
Swelled with exultant ecstasy of words.
Who hast not heard of maidens by the sea,
Who, singing to the wild waves' beaten time,
Were found by princes' sons and wooed and won?
Whose childhood has not known of mermaids fair,
Who rising in the tall ship's foaming wake,
When night has made the seas resplendent shine
With phosphorescent glimmer where'er stirred?
Fair shapes, but faintly seen beneath the wave,
With combs of pearl decking their flowing hair;
Whose voices rising from the murmuring sea,
Entrance and 'stonish list'ning mariners.
And sirens by whose wond'rous gift of song
Strong men were drawn beyond their own control,
And unresisting passed into their power?
Like these, I thought, she sings; thus thinking came,
Where tall and stately fair Irene stood.
She sang, and her clear words echoing rang
Up through the lofty chamber, and my soul
Trembled and quivered like some tight-drawn string
Upon a harp touched by the player's hand,
Vibrating to her tuneful melody.
My heart and all my being rose and fell,
Drawn in the whirls of her all-powerful song,
Keeping strange cadence with her wondrous voice,
That thrilled and ever rose till all the halls,
Filling and ringing with her throbbing notes,
Ringing and whirling with the changing notes,
Filled with one loud, triumphant burst of song.
Until my pulsing heart within my breast
Fluttered and swelled and strove to break its bounds,
Most strangely filled and pained with that sweet power.
Then the voice sank, the mighty notes fell down,
Though still their echoes rang from distant walls,
And in their place arose such low, sweet tones,
As in the leafy woods in pleasant spring
The dove coos to his mate among the boughs;
And pleasant seemed a world of light and shade,
A world of love, a world of song and flowers.
Still yet again that sweet voice changed, and from
Content and peace it grew to solemn woe,
And echoed every note with such great pain,
That my deep heart perforce was rent with grief,
And quick tears started to mine eyes, my soul
Was moved and troubled as with bitter woe,

And I had ever wept; but then the voice
Ceased and the saddened notes uprose no more.
And to myself my soul was drawn again,
And all my dream was shent, and I uprose,
And with mine eyelids wet from those last notes,
I looked into my lady's face and found
Tears answering mine were standing in her eyes.

FRAGMENTS

The world will say that he has lifted up
With impious haste his hand against himself,
And coward died because he feared to live.
But let us rather think that he forgot,
And thus forgetful, with intense desire
To know and visit those supernal realms,
Which though to us so far and misty seem,
To him, perhaps, were touched with brighter light.
He lifted up his hand and instant died.
He said: "Each one of us must sometime die;
None can desire to live and live for aye,
But when Death lifts his hand (for Death is King),
He must lie down, e'en like the lowly beast,
And struggle for a while, then yield his breath.
What matter if I shorten my short life
By some short years, and bide not my right time,
But instant pass from out the courts of men?
Will any miss me or will any weep?
Some few, perhaps, but they will soon forget,
And I shall pass away and be no more."

ON SEEING A PICTURE OF "THE BODY OF CÆSARE"

O Conqueror,

Whose will supreme held all the world in awe,
Whose word was law; at whose command bowed down
Thrones, kings and principalities and powers,
The graceful Grecian and the Scythian wild,
The civilized and the barbarian.
At whose command advanced the Roman arms,
And the fierce Gaul was conquered, and the Celt
Fled back before their lustre in the night.
Who said, and it was done; himself who fought,
And came and saw and conquered, and passed on,
The light of the whole world. Now carried out,
Noble in death and grim within his arms,
As if he, too, wouldst cower beneath thy glance.
Alas! he is the King of Kings, and thou,
The only man that could'st have saved Rome,
Art nothing more than clay.

DEATH ENCHAINED

"Hail to the Great King!

The God of Life,

The Lord of Death.

Hail to the Great King!

All hail!

Who in his wisdom hath

O'ercome the Conqueror,

And bound the binder down,

Hath vanquished Death,

And chained him low

Beneath his dungeon grates.

Hail to the Great King!

All hail! All hail!"

Thus rose the sound within the thronging street,

As slowly passed the King in golden mail;

Where'er his jeweled horses pass, they greet

Him loudly with the cry, "All hail! All hail!"

On passed the haughty chargers, pacing slow,

And still where'er their golden trappings ring,

Down to the ground the throng has fallen low,

With joyous greetings, "Hail unto the King!"

And far through winding street and lofty arch,

Before young men and maidens dance and sing;

Faint dies away the tumult of the march,

Yet still come cries of "Hail, thou glorious King!"

* * * * *

Fair Merope within the palace walls

Had left her maids, and wandered all alone

Through lengthened corridors and lofty halls,

Where jewels and precious metals glanced and shone.

Among the marble sculptures light she passed,

Forms of the heroes of an older day,

Gazing at men who poised the lance at cast,

Or goddess forms more fair than earth's frail clay.

And so she came into a cool small room,

Where through the open lattice work she heard,

Borne on the breeze that whispering entered, come

With songs and tumult, "Hail, thou Godlike Lord!"

Then turning to go forth she saw a door,

O'erhung with tapestry of Tyrian dye,

A low, dark arch, she ne'er had marked before,

And lightly paused as she was passing by.

And lift the hangings up, and drew the bar,
And found a narrow staircase there which wound,
Low, damp, with many a spiral curving, far
Into the vaulted dungeons underground.

One moment pausing, she drew back in fear,
Then on the first wet step her foot she set,
Leaning with both hands on the walls to hear
If any sound of dread her fancy met.

All there was silent; lightly she stepped down,
Touching with dainty hands each flanking wall;
Soon died away the roar of that great town,
No sound she heard save her light footsteps fall.

And came at last to that deep staircase end,
Setting her foot upon the bottom round,
Before there stretched a vault where day might lend
No ray to meet the damp and gloom profound.

There seven wide arches rising through the gloom,
From pillars based deep in the rocky floor,
Spanned part, a temple or a dungeon tomb—
A place to fill the boldest mind with awe.

Centreing the circle was there one small lamp,
Whose gleam above was lost in utter night;
Upon the pillars the black growth and damp
But faintly shone beneath its dim-shed light.

Small space was lit by that faint-burning spark,
Just round beneath the spot it hung o'erhead,
Showing beyond each arch more direful dark,
And awful gloom, profundity of dread.

'Neath where it hung, with cries of rage and pain,
Arose a formless thing, a spectre dim
(Bound to a pillar by a mighty chain),
Shapeless and void, with neither trunk nor limb.

First seemed it like an awful night-black cloud
Of poisonous vapor gathered over a fen,
With all dark evils hideously endowed,
Foreboding pain, disease and death to men.

Then on all sides stretched snaky arms, and thus,
Groping about and twisting every way,
Like tentacles of some huge polypus,
It strove to reach and seize the promised prey.

It failed, and changed once more, and fiery red
A sword shot out, clasped in a hand dark brown;
Then came there up the likeness of a head,
On which was set the semblance of a crown.

Great batlike wings shot forth, of nightly hue,
With which the sick'ning air it smote amain,
And shook the sword, and 'gainst the pillar drew,
Striving with frantic strength to break the chain.

And roared like thunder of the stormy sea,
When from the beaten rocks it falls again:
"Lo, I am Death! Come loose me, set me free,
That I may slay oncè more the sons of men."

But Merope had fallen on her face;
Terror had nearly stayed her heaving breath,
Yet whispered, daring not herself to raise:
"And art thou then so terrible, O Death?"

The straining ceased, the roaring died away
Far in the deep recesses of the cave;
Slowly within her life resumed his sway,
And strengthening succors to her bosom gave.

She looked again—the chain was thrown around
An angel form, with glistening wings of gold;
His bright hair with a diamond circlet crowned,
His robe around him fall'n in many a fold.

He seemed all light, more brilliant light his blood
Shot through transparent tissues for his veins;
Light filled the gloomy vault from where he stood,
So radiant that the lamp to darkness wanes.

No sword was in his hand, an olive bough,
Clasped firm within fair fingers, promised peace;
Glad peace, that shall the weary rest allow,
And bring a time when strife and discord cease.

And sweet his voice, as when in choral song
The angels hymn the praises of their God,
When sweetest notes are from their lyre strings rung,
Their voices telling earth made at his nod.

Or to descend to lowlier things, as when
From journeyings through some desert's arid woe,
Wilds of sharp rocks, and burning sands, tired men
First hear far off a brooklet rippling low.

So sweet it came with wealth of strange content,
Her bosom thrilled, as listening there she heard
Full-volumed tones of glad encouragement,
More musical than song of any bird.

"Come, loose me, I am Death, and set me free;
For many wait and long upon the earth,
Weary they wait, and glad would welcome me,
For never comes to them content or mirth.

"Old men now sit beside the cottage door,
And sorrowing millions of my mission dream,
Sick men, the more their pangs, desire me more;
Of these am I the sole desire and theme.

"Come, loose me now, and let me freely go,
That I my own appointed rounds may keep;
I lay my hand upon each aching brow,
And soft the tired mourner sinks to sleep."

But Merope once more had fallen low,
And in awe-stricken tone, scarce audible,
Softly with reverence she whispered now:
"O Death, and canst thou be so beautiful?"

THE SEASONS

Springtime comes with stormy weather,
Wind and cloud and sun together;
Coos the turtle to its mate,
On the zephyrs' balmy breath.

Summer comes in dreamy splendor;
Autumn fields their riches render;
And the land in golden state
Goes downward to its death.

Thus 'tis well that life should greet us,
Stormy days in Springtime meet us;
That the winds of hope and dread
Should round us rave.

Summer hours more peaceful flying,
Slowly come where Autumn, dying,
Bows in peace the honored head,
Sore mourned for to the grave.

CROESUS

When golden Croesus reigned in Lydian Sardis,
Jealous of Persia's greatly waxing power,
He sent with princely gifts a weighty question
Unto Apollo's fane.

"Should he," so ran the question he propounded
At the rich temple of the prophet God,
"Should he, advancing with his kingdom's forces,
War upon Persia's King? "

And from the Pythoness upon her tripod,
Inspired with the quick essence of the God,
Came in long rolling lines the doubtful answer:
That if he should make war,

"Then should his act destroy a mighty Empire."
And he construing this, as all men do,
Who construe dubious words, to his own wishes,
Marched with his army forth.

And on the boundaries of Persia's kingdom,
He fought with Persia's King and Persia's host
Through one long day an undecided battle,
And marched his army back.

And 'neath the walls of old imperial Sardis,
Disbanding all his men, he sent them forth
To their own homes, to come again in springtime,
Then to renew the war.

Scarce had they gone when in came the fierce winter,
And with it fiercer men, for Cyrus came,
Leading a mighty host against the stranger
Who had attacked his realm.

With all his guard and such of his late levy
As had remained by him, marched Croesus forth,
And marshalling his troops without the city,
Waited the wild attack.

It came, with Persian horse and Median bowmen,
And slingers drawn from many a conquered tribe,
And through long hours the dust and shouts of battle
Floated upon the wind.

But Persia's myriad host rolled on unbroken;
And his few warriors dead upon the plain,
Croesus ere night beheld his Lydian sceptre
Fall shattered from his grasp.

Sardis was stormed, and the fierce mountain chieftain,
Cyrus, the King of Kings, sat on his throne,
Raised on the trampled plain, to judge the conquered;
Before him Croesus came.

Him Cyrus doomed to die a death of horror,
Living, to die upon the burning pyre;
Acting the deed, ere spake the Gallic Chieftain,
Of woe to conquered men.

And the dry pile was raised, and binding Croesus
They laid him on the wood, and now the torch
Already touched the parched and splintered fragments,
When from the writhing lips

Of that bound figure, "Solon, Solon, Solon!"
Came with a wail of anguish to the King.
At his command once more they brought his captive
Beneath his judgment seat.

When asked the meaning of those words of anguish,
What name he called upon, of God or man,
Thus on the verge of the unknown forever,
King Croesus answered thus:

"When I was yet a King and ruled an empire,
So great my power and fame was on the earth,
That wise men came from all surrounding nations,
And gathered at my Court.

"Among the rest came Solon from fair Athens;
And him, the wisest of all living men,
One day I asked, of those whom he had met with,
Whom did he think most blest.

"But he, rebuking me with words of wisdom,
Answered, 'That happy no man could be thought,
Till with the passing years he had been numbered
Among the happy dead.'

"He passed away, and I forgot his saying
In the bright days of wealth and power and peace;
But now I know their truth, as with dark horror
I face the fearful end."

King Cyrus listened, and his heart relented,
And he, repenting his untimely ire,
Returned to Croesus once again his sceptre,
As Persia's vassal King.

NOT DEATH, BUT LIFE

I passed long, slow revolving hours in quiet
And silent meditation, till at length
I saw as if through shadows or a veil,
The first and primal essences of man,
Soul, and the giant Intellect. The Frame,
The third and mortal part, walked more distinct.
The Intellect and Frame walked hand in hand,
And both together searched all mysteries,
And learnt the ways of earth; then Intellect
Brought knowledge gained into the Soul, who aye
In deep abstraction moved, and more apart.
Then as I gazed, I saw how Thought and Form
Took counsel both together, how that they
Might gain some power by which the life of man
Should be prolonged through ages. This they sought,
And thus, from both as one, came one idea.

"The thought of Death is terrible; to lie
In dull forgetfulness beneath the flowers
That spring in glorious forms above the dust,
As if no horror lay beneath; to have
The writhing worm devour the beauteous form,
That now exults in strength. To know no more,
To be no more, through all the countless years
That press with winged footsteps each on each,
Whose every hour brings forth some glorious gain,
And each slow month revolving something new.
To die and be forgotten on the earth;
Where race on race of men shall spring to light,
To glory in their strength and grace and power,
Forgetting those who lie beneath in dust.
Races who shall have mightier thought than we,
And move through loftier spheres. Races who shall
Live in their turn, and in their turn shall die,
And fall to native earth, and be as we,
Forgetting and forgotten. Oh, this thought
Of death bows down the very heart with woe.
Come, let us join our powers, and hand in hand
Oppose stern front against the Monarch Death,
And when his gloomy forces he arrays,
And through the dark advances terrible,
Let us prepare to meet him, force with force,
To drive him backwards from us, step by step,
And vict'ry gain o'er him, unconquered yet.
While we have life, the life that nature gives,
Let us search out some power so wonderful,
That when he comes he must again retire.

"For 'tis a noble thought, this thought to live
Calm through the passing ages, and behold
Every new thing that springs beneath the sun,
All the new knowledge gained by mighty men.
Each springing fountain head of power, and this
To add to that known in the silent past.
To live as demi-gods, and year on year,
To see men spring to life, and fade and die,
Like corn within the summer fields, and we,
Unchangeable, unchanging, to pursue,
Through devious paths, the doubtful track of science,
All undeterred by the dull thought of death.
To live, to live, and see the beauteous earth,
Through all her future ages. 'Tis a dream
Worthy a noble Intellect; prepare,
And we will strive with Death and overcome."

But here I saw new change within the Soul;
It drew more near to Thought and Form, and shone
With all its glorious beauty over them;
And having known their murmurings in the dark,
Their strivings after hidden things; it roused
Itself from deep abstraction, and replied,
And with low silvered voice it answered thus:

"Lo, I am life, and without me can be
No life, nor ever yet has there been life;
And I shall live through all eternity,
And ye in me, for a' your better parts
Are closely merged in mine; 'tis but the dust
That fades and joins the wretched dust again.
If some shall bid ye look on brutal forms,
And there see life without a soul, 'tis false,
For everything created has a soul.
Think ye that animals shall tamely toil,
And meekly bow beneath the lash of man,
And when their work is done, shall fall to earth,
And die without redemption; shall they spend
Their time in weary pain and bitterness,
And have no hope of future rest? Of old
The wise men of the Ancients taught that when
The man debased himself, his soul in death
Passed due probation in a brutal form,
Or many brutal forms, until at length
Trial once more in manly shape was gained.
And e'en the noblest worship, Christian Faith,
Teaches that man his time upon the earth
Should pass in preparation, that he may
Assume at death, a better, loftier state,

And more complete existence. May it not
 Be in proportion with the humbler brute?
 Not from the earth at death to pass away,
 But to be born again in nobler mould;
 Perchance in time, when fitting season comes,
 When with experience the mind expands,
 To play his part as man. Howe'er this be,
 Believe that lower life has yet some soul."

ENGLAND

Said the man from the East to the man from the West,
 "We are English wherever we go!"
 And the Northman joined hands with the man from the
 South,
 And shouted at once, "It is so!"

Chorus—

So hands once round, my lads,
 And a glass to the land of the free;
 For in North or in South or in East or in West,
 We are brothers wherever we be.

For we all of us come from the right little isle,
 The tight little isle o'er the sea;
 And in North or in South or in East or in West
 We are brothers wherever we be.

Chorus—So hands round again again.

So wherever we meet, in fun or in fight,
 On mountain or plain or on ship,
 We stand shoulder to shoulder at once, and our bond
 Shows with heart and with hand and with lip.

Chorus—

So hands round again, my boys,
 And a glass to the land of the free;
 For in North or in South or in East or in West,
 We would die for our land of the free.

In Africa, Canada, Land of the Swan,
 That is black or the isles of the sea,
 We turn to Old England and give her our best—
 Our mother, the land of the free.

Chorus—So hand round again, etc.

From the isles of the sea, or dark land of the sun,
 Be our badge either beaver or swan,
 We turn to old England—give her our best,
 Till our workdays on earth here are gone.

Chorus—So hands round again, etc.

AN IDEAL

A face surpassing all in beauty's form,
Crowned with a halo of bright golden hair,
With snowy throat and white and rounded arm—
Was ever one on earth could be more fair,
More fit to take the love of all by storm?

With broad and lofty brow, surmounting eyes
Deep as the deepest well and clear as dew,
And mind 'neath which all baser reason dies;
So high the thought, the balance nice and true,
Confounded are all fools who would be wise.

Her step majestic, in her looks a queen,
Surrounded by long draperies which flow
Back from her shoulders with soft silken sheen;
Her lips are like the great Apollo's bow—
A goddess now she is and ever too has been.

But, oh! the soul, the deep and inmost whole,
'Tis like the western sunset's warmest glow;
As round the sun the golden clouds do roll,
Changing their beauty with the warm light's flow,
So are all virtues moved by her sweet soul.

She is the subtle muse, if ere the lyre
Is swept by her sweet fingers 'mong the chords
The rushing tone e'er rises high and higher,
And heaven's richest music swift affords,
Inciting tears or rousing to quick ire.

Raises her voice, the bending crowd of men
Submit and bow before her power of song,
Thrilling the words up to the skies, as when
Arion sang his pirate crew among;
Birds pause in flight, beasts listen from the fen.

She has the pity of a noble heart,
The love of all God's creatures great and small;
She has 'mong men the rare, if e'er gained, art
Towards herself all lesser things to call;
Once called to her, from her they never part.

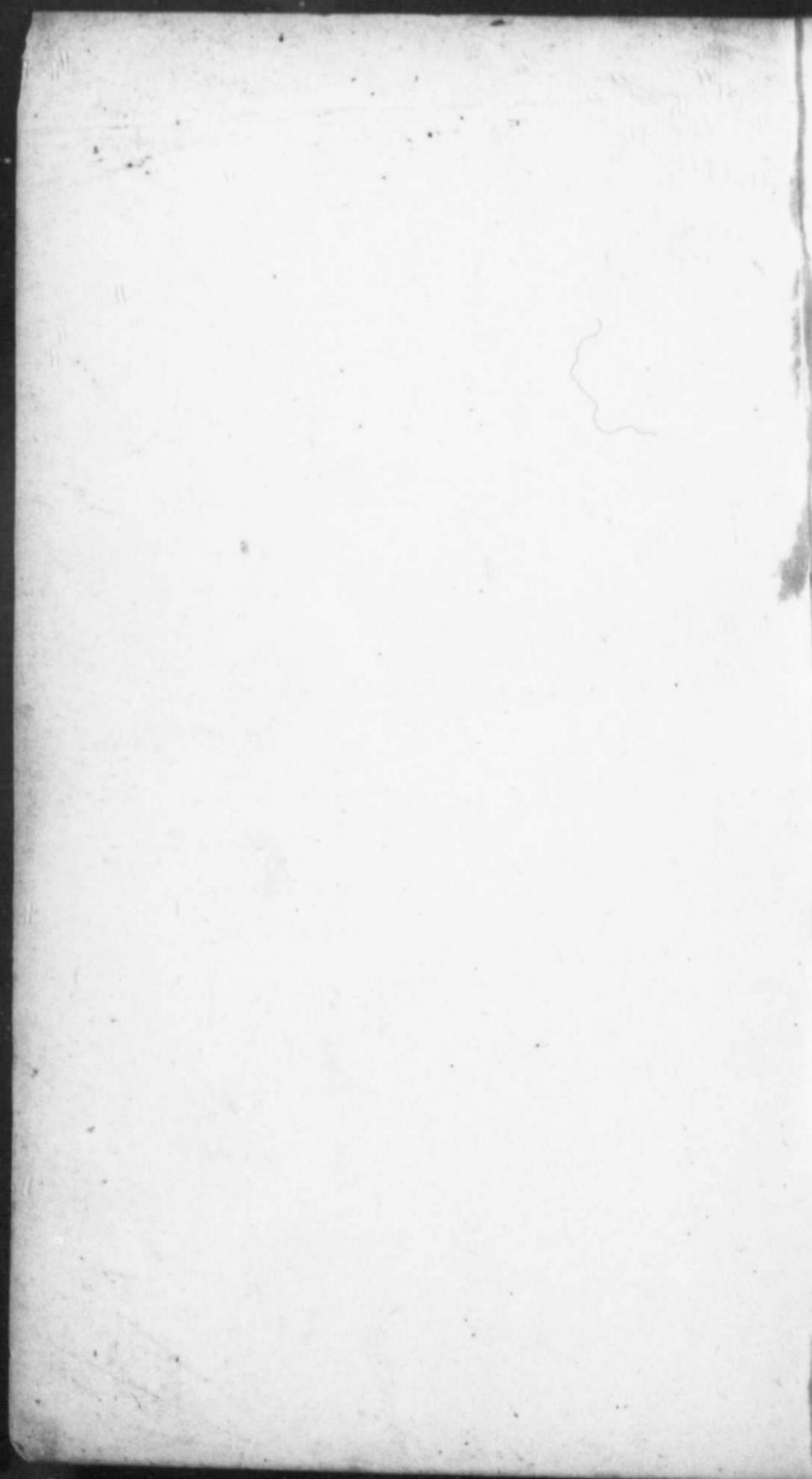
She has the courage of a noble mind,
The courage that will face e'en death itself
That she may help and soothe her injured kind;
Careless is she of earthly power and pelf,
She looks to God and leaves all else behind.

Humble and pure in heart, with all her gifts
She bends her down and doth not self esteem;
All shadow from her mind her sweetness lifts;
Humble and pure, though beauteous as a dream,
Or sunshine shadowed through a white cloud's rifts.

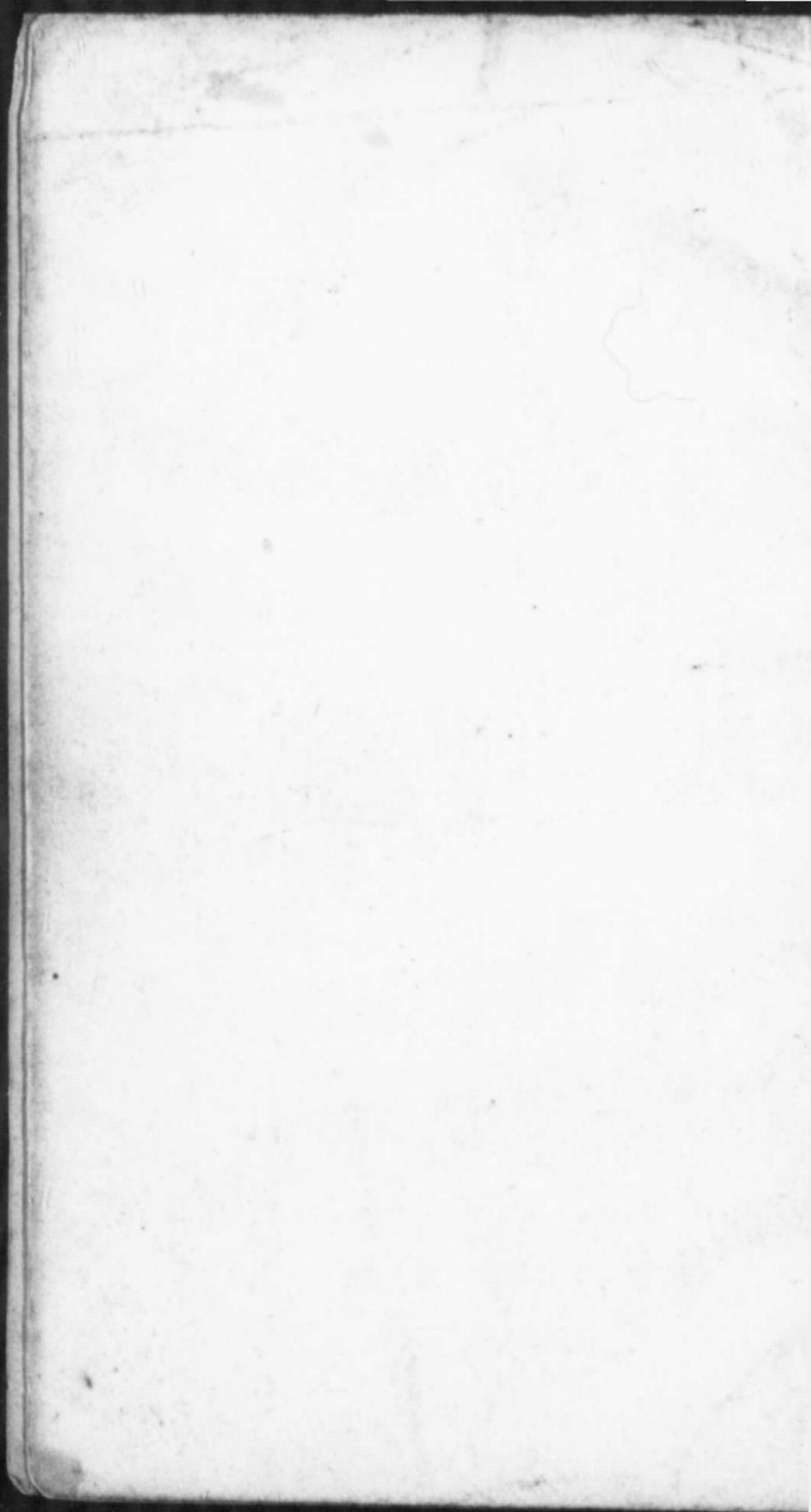
And she possesses too the power of love,
That wealth that fills and glows within the breast,
Bringing bright light fresh gleaming from above,
Bright'ning all other virtues else possesst
As diamond gems when placed in lights that move.

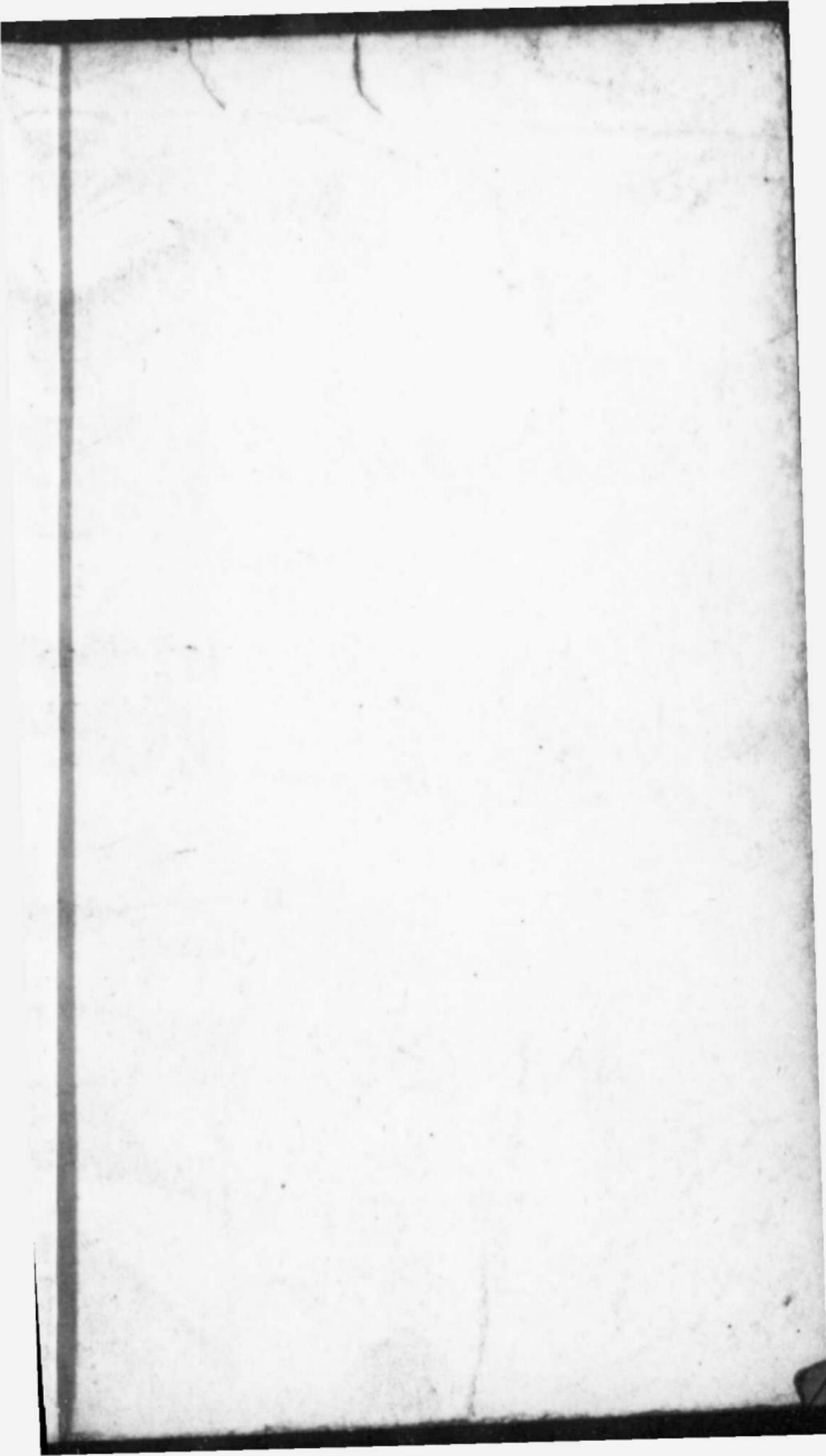












Vancouver Public Library



VANCOUVER, B.C.
THE NEWS-ADVERTISER, PRINTERS

