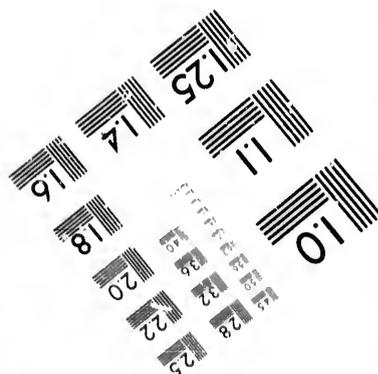
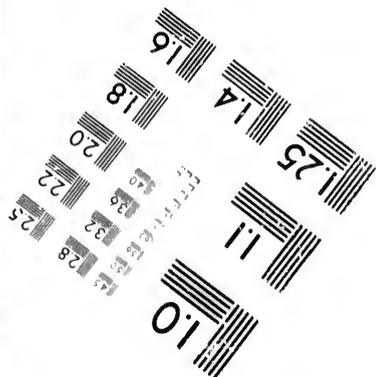
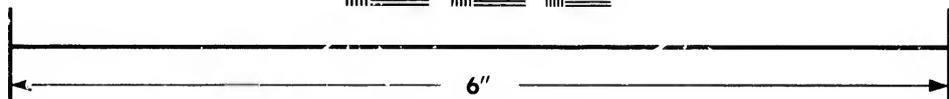
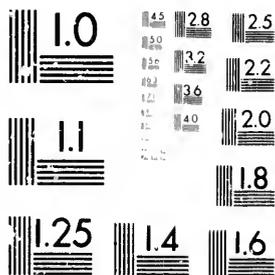


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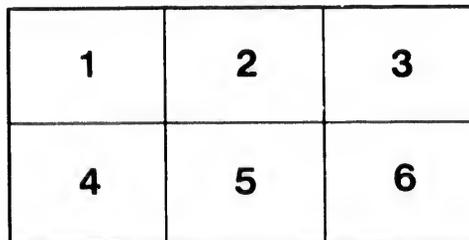
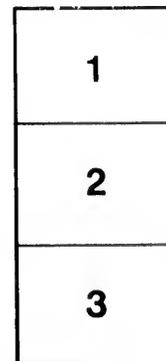
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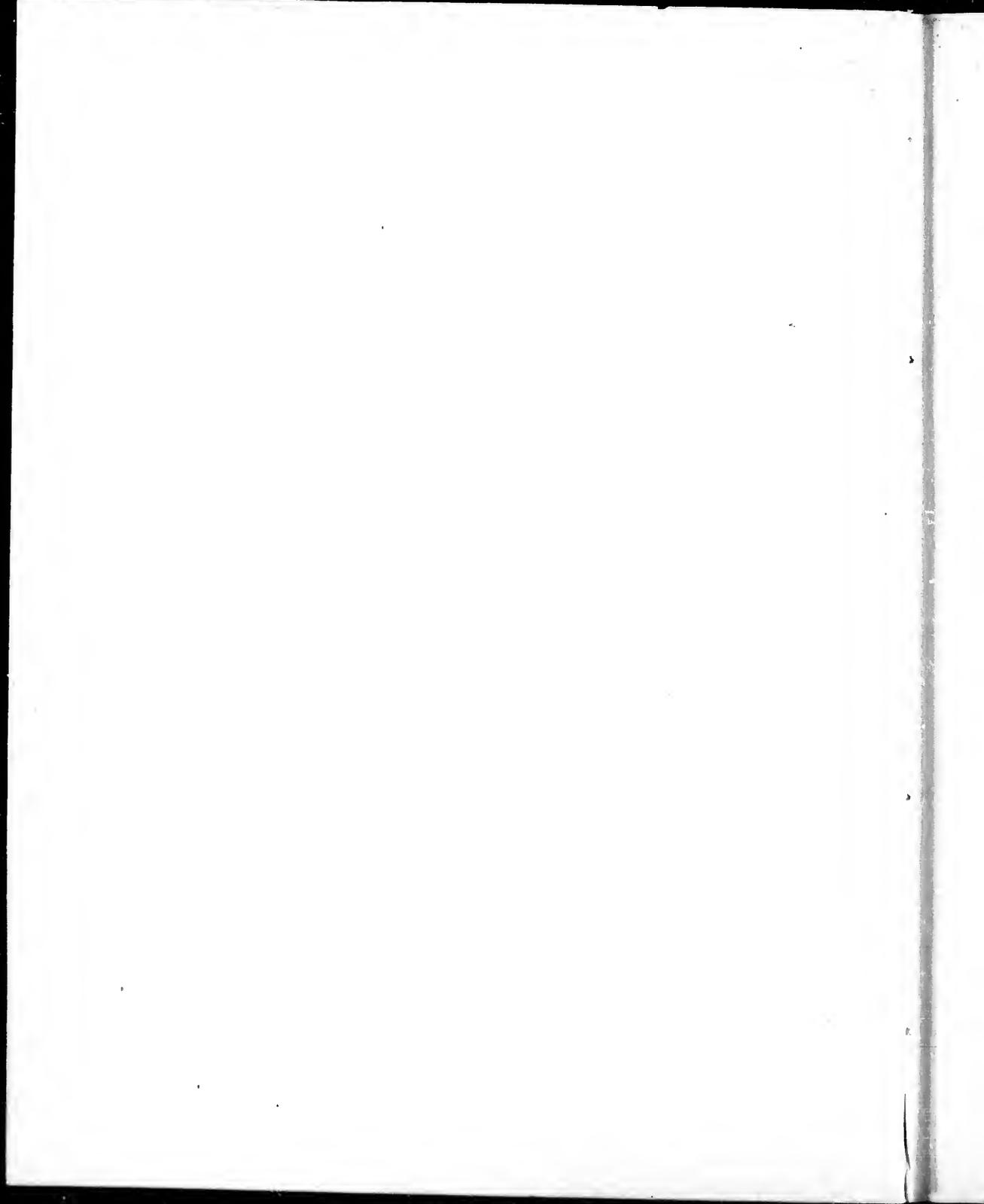
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Says of Love, and Miscellaneous Poems.



Days of Love,

AND

Miscellaneous Poems.

BY

Barry Straton.

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1884.

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NOTE.

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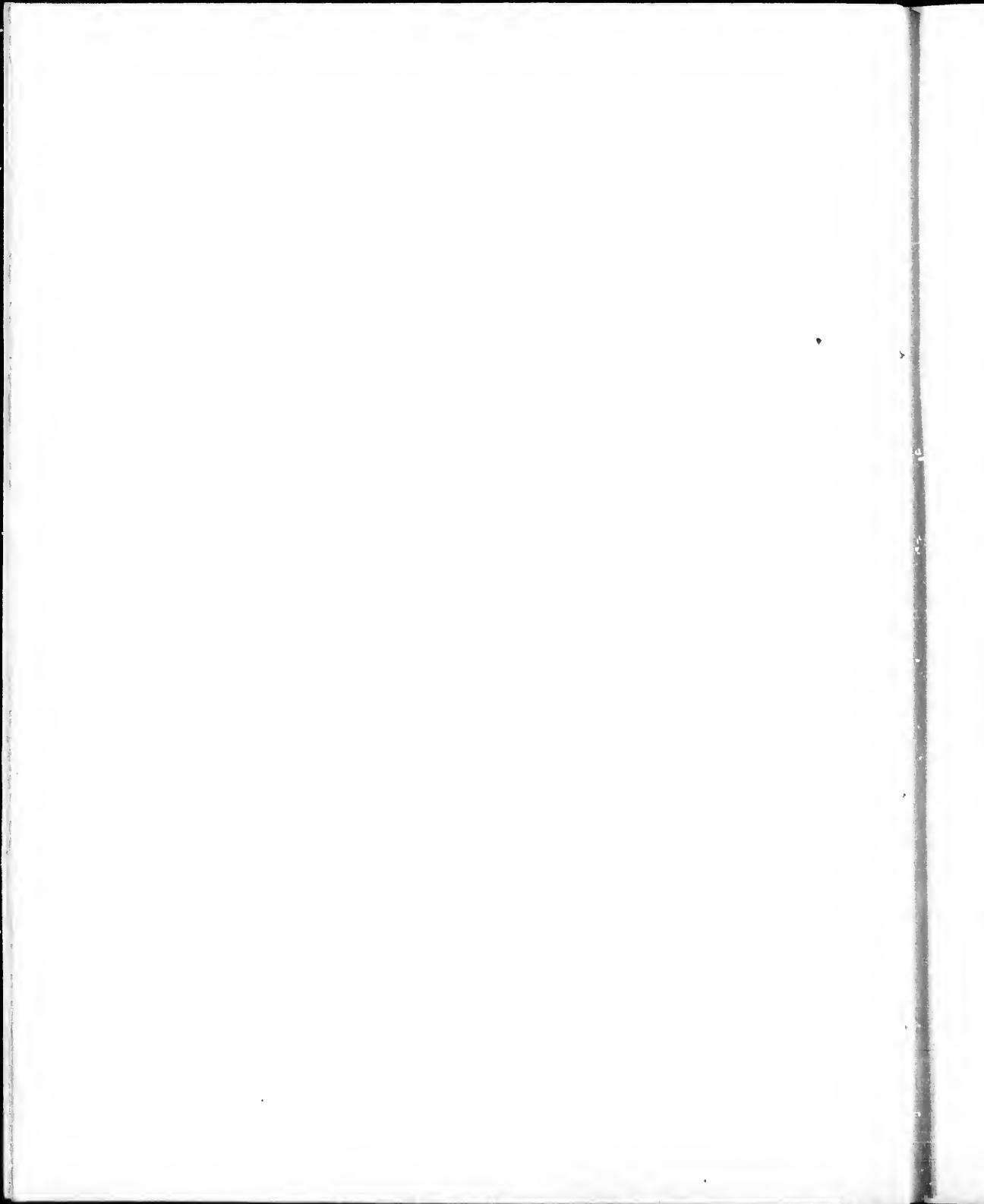
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Days of Love.

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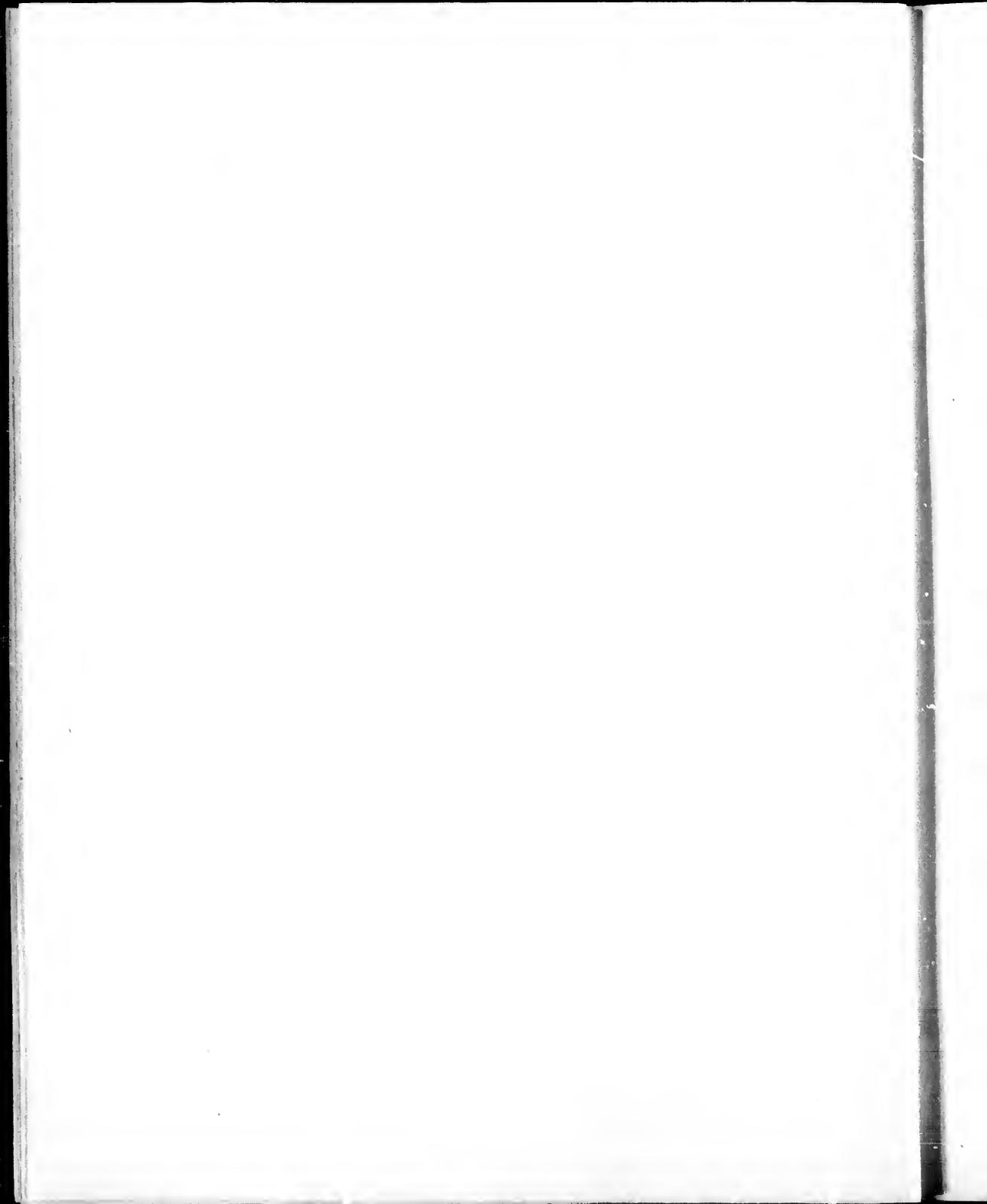
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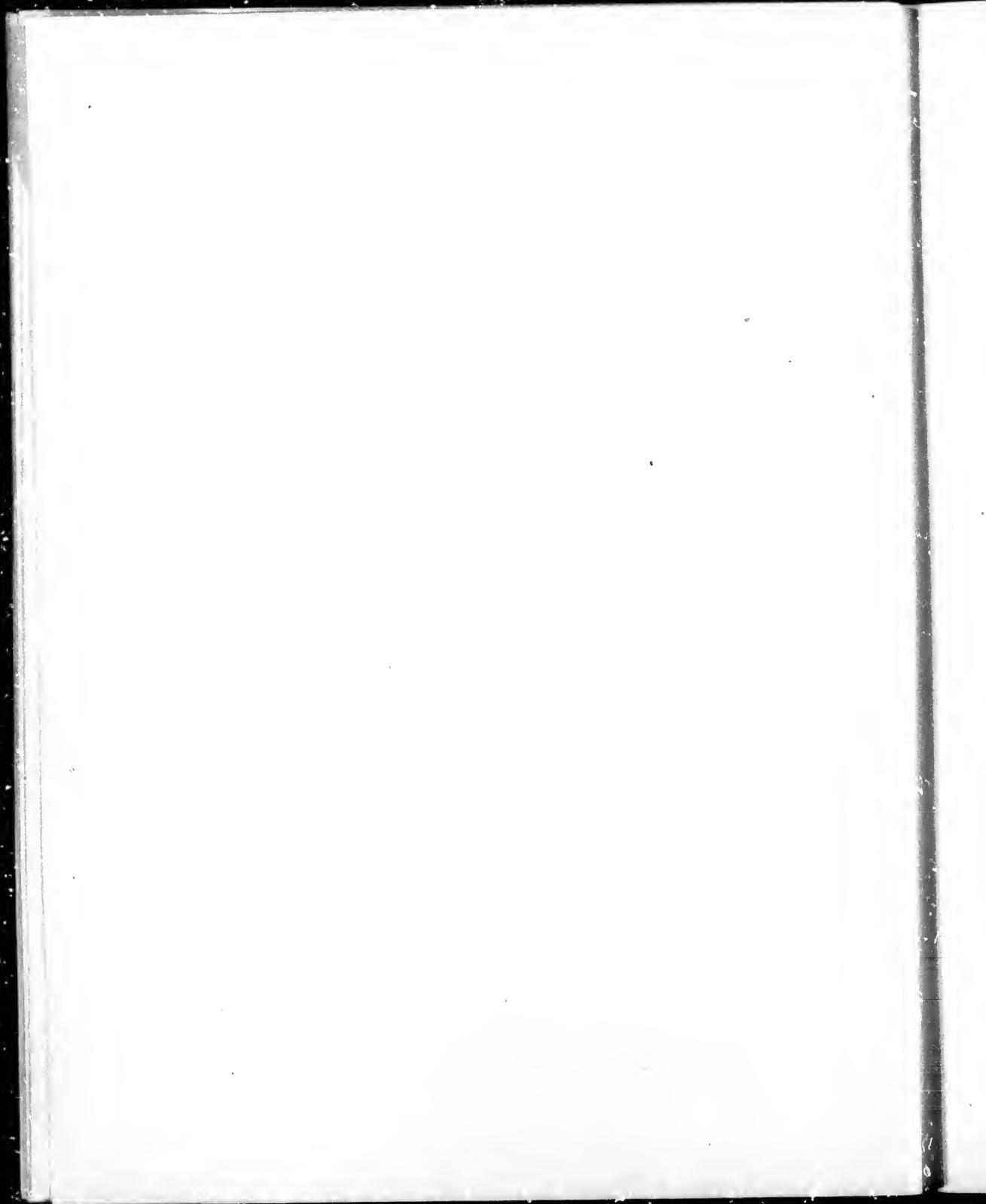
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Days of Love.



TO ERATO.

ERATO! Rare Erato!

From whose soul all love-songs flow—

On whose brows the bands of laurel greener grow as
years depart—

On whose lips the low sighs linger—

Let thy lore enwreath my lyre, breathe thy fire upon
my heart!

Erato! Rare Erato!

But one blushing rose bestow

From the scented chaplet circling thy fair head in
majesty,

In all willing heart-soil fertile

I would plant the gift you grant me, and all hate should
lift and flee!

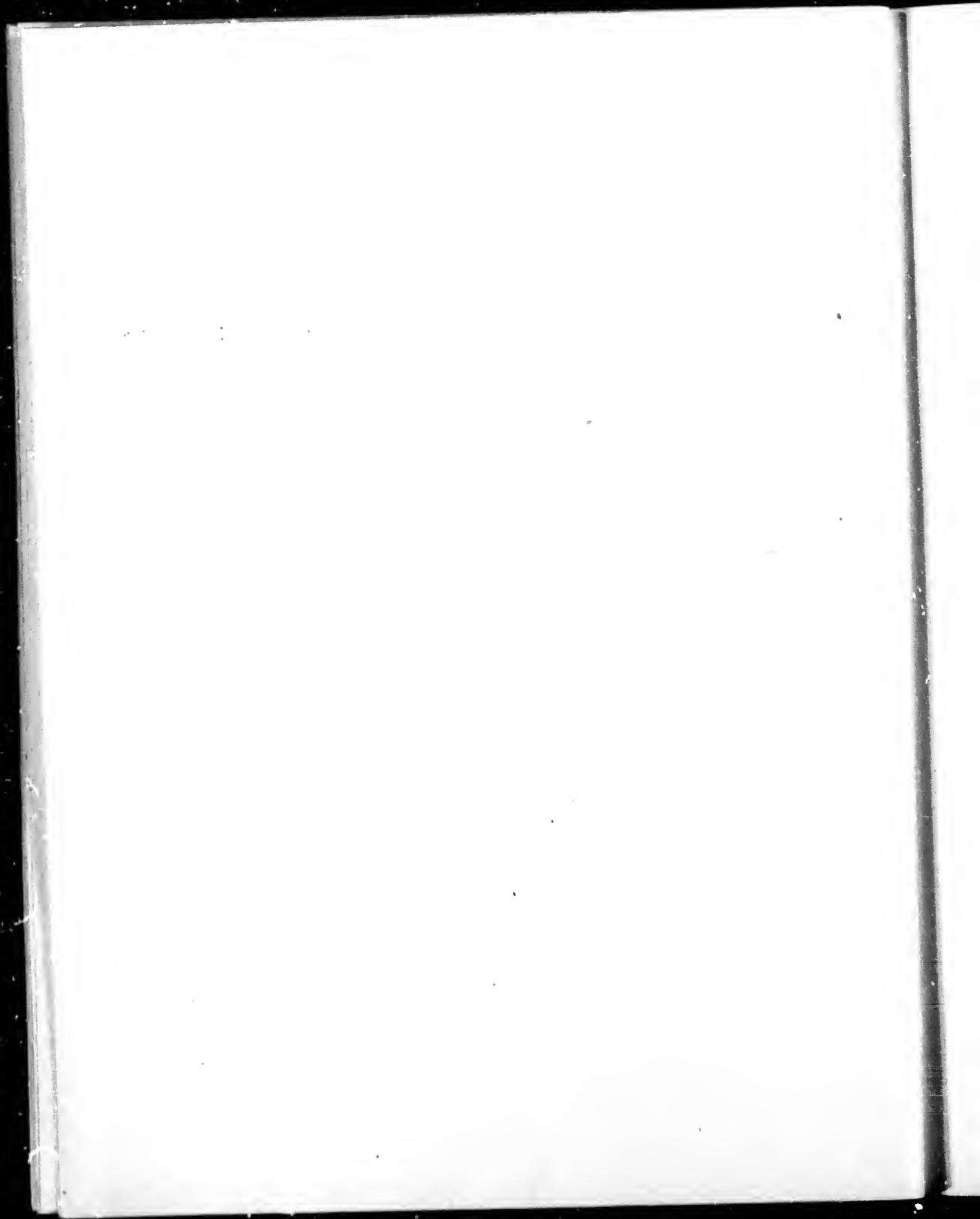
Erato! Rare Erato!

Wiser shall the nations grow

If they hear thy voice which soothes us, making fiercest
passion tame;

Theirs shall be the higher Temple,

With no golden portal holden by immortal sword of
flame!



EADGYTH SWANNESHALS.

RICH type of woman, meek and Eve-like pure—
Pure in the struggling light of thy dim day—
Swan-necked well named, more graceful than the swan
Which views in English lakes its arching self,
Some whispered word wafts through the rustling years
And bids my willing hand a tribute write,
Thy tears for Harold heralding thy truth.

Of Harold and the iron times when he,
A man of iron, graced the Saxon throne,
Shaping, so destined, England's destiny,
I sing not here. Truth-loving Clio craves
Those themes historic. Erato for me
Now, myrtle-crowned, shall sweep her sighing lyre
And sing the loves of Edith and her lord.

Long day at Senlac raged the storm of war.
Hearts taught to hate swelled high to hear the shout,
The battle's license. Surging like the sea
The armies struggled. Swirled the bloody blades,
And ringing armor and opposing brands
Blared martial music to the God of War.

No whistling, unseen ball, long-flighted, smote.
'Twas harder than to vanquish. He that bore
The full magnificence of manhood's skill
Might hold his life uninjured through the throng
That blundered fiercely with their blunt-edged blades.
Thus Harold walked, long day impregnable,
The paths of death. Before his hissing sword
Fell victims headlong; yet the Saxon Serfs,
Full jealous of the life which ruled their own,
Walled thickly 'bout their Sovereign, and the fierce
And rounded rush of battle centered where
His blazing banner pivoted the fight.
The day was slowly labouring to the west
With horrors pregnant, and the Saxon King
Awaited, hopeful still, the shades of night,
Whenas the coward arrow from afar,
Down-glancing swiftly, pierced his kingly eye —
So small a shaft yet shattered England's throne!
There, recreant to his guard, defenceless reeled
The hope of England. Then four Norman Knights,
Like coward were-wolves herded, rushed amain
With swords uplifted hewing out his life.
Then set the Saxon sun, and down the west
The sun of daylight shuddered from the scene.

Next morn two Monks of Waltham, they who owed
Their Order to the King's benevolence,
Sought for their martyred founder -- fruitless quest.
Then one who in his wild and worldly youth
Had, haply, wooed some willing maid and found
That love may know what friendship reckons not,
Thus softly to his comrade :

“ Loved he not
The fair and gentle Edith, Swan-neck called ?
And, Brother, think you not that she might see,
Among this mass of heads and limbs, some trace
By which to claim her lover ? ”

“ True. 'Tis well.
And yet, to bring the gentle Edith here
I scarce would venture. Thinkest thou that she
Could walk in reason through this ghastly field ? ”

“ The wave of love will buoy the lily up,
And this resource is keystone to our hopes. ”

Then turned they from the field and came to where
In silence Edith wept. She scarcely hoped
That Harold lived, nor knew the while, for truth,

If he were slain. While trembling stood the Monks,
Afraid to fright fair Edith, thus she spoke:

“What fearful horror hold ye that ye blanch
Like winter's snow, and tremble like the leaf
At breath of autumn? Harold slain? I know—
I read it in your halting! And ye thought
It were a kindness to withhold the truth?
Ye knew he loved me—Monks are always kind!
O Harold, Harold, ever lost to me!
To me?—What say I?—Yes, my King is dead,
And I of England mourn for England's King.
And have ye found my Monarch? I would pay
Last loyal homage to my royal lord.”

“Nay, Daughter, we have searched, but are at fault.
The Norman wolves who slew him, strove, 't is said,
To rival wolves of weald. There many lie
So mangled that their friends may know them not.
Unknown among the many Harold sleeps,
And, Daughter, we ——”

“Cease, Father, I will go!
My lord was pleased to please himself with me,
And who like I should know my royal lord?”

Then gathering up her hair, that round her head
It glowed a living coronet of grace,
Fair Edith rose. The field of death was reached,
And Edith searched,—an Angel treading Hell!
Here rolled a head, complaining, from the light,
Its loose jaws jibbering a fearful dirge,
Its sightless eyes fixed steadfastly on death,
Its cold, mute lips, which nevermore might meet
Lips welling o'er with love, filled with a sigh,
Lent by the pitying wind. Here lay an arm—
All might and muscle, true an English arm—
Grasping, relentless still, the smiting sword,
The brand of Empire. Shortly o'er such scene
There rang a sobbing cry, a piteous plaint,
And Edith fell where slaughtered Harold lay.
The Swan had found her mate! She breathed his name,
And circling with her fair and shapely arms
That mangled corpse incarnadined with blood,
Made moan which moved the Monks to screen their eyes.
Yet, not aloud her troubles smote the air.
She laid her cheek to Harold's, as a child
Might greet its mother, and one shapely hand
Went wandering through his wealth of waving hair,
Whereat her eyes made wonder that her touch

Had lost its spell to thrill him. While she gazed,
Scarce yet familiar with the face of death,
Some Normans, searching out their slaughtered friends —
The which I wiss were many — passed that way,
And one, unused to whisper, blurted out,
“’Tis Swan-neck, Harold’s mistress. Well for her
That Harold dies, if with him dies her sin.”

Then she, with blue eyes raised to meet his face,
With eyes that smote in their soft wonderment,
And low, hushed voice, as if the silence spoke,

“A sin! Who speaks of sin? Is love a sin?
And is it sinful I should love my lord?
And was it sin when hot from war’s alarms
He on my breast would rest his weary head
And in my arms find peace? What sin had I
When from his brow I banished war’s black clouds
And soothed him with the wealth of woman’s love?
Oh, Father, he did love me! He would lie
Full many an hour at gaze upon my face
While from the harp my willing hands would woo
Soft melodies which prompt the soul to love.
And then our eyes would speak, the harp grow dumb,
And he would whisper of his happy love.

Is that sin, Father? Sin! Then woe the world!
O Harold, hear, they say our love was sin!
Oh, if those arms could fold me once again—
Strong arms which oft you said could zone your
kingdom!—

Oh, if those lips once more could whisper love,
I would not deem it sin. Is loving sin?
O Father, speak! Oh, say we did not sin!
And yet—woe's me—with Harold dead I feel
All hope, all love, all life is dead indeed.
Before I loved my lord I loved the world,
And all of nature grew and throbbed and sung
Within my being, and all life was sweet.
'T was sweet to roam the glades and mock the birds,
And learn the lispings of the babbling brooks,
And read the whispers of the waving woods.
But when I loved my lord these ceased to please,
And often when I lingered for his coming
A nameless fear sprang up within my heart,
And brooks and woods and birds would mock at me.
O Father, why was that? Can love be sin?
But when my Harold came and clasped me close,
And whispered warmly of his happy love,
The birds within my heart would chirp and sing

And crown me Queen of all the happy glades.
Dost think the birds will ever sing again?
Those in the wood shall sing—but in my heart—
What wiles shall ever woo my soul to song?"

She, sobbing, ceased. Then unto her a Monk,
Grey-haired and bent beneath a weary weight
Of scourging years, compassionate, thus spoke:

"What moves my heart to pity most for thee,
Poor child, is thus to see thee left alone,
Thy hero slain. The dove without her mate
Fares sadly, droops, and cares not for the spring.
Thy gentle heart shall miss the stalwart form.
The dames that fawned full lowly at thy feet
May scoff thee now and greet thee with a sneer.
Thy marble brow will breed deep lines of care,
And many a tear will dim those brilliant eyes
To weep unused. Nor time nor place is this
For me to chide or sternly sift thy life.
The fault repented passes from the Book
And leaves the page full brighter than before.
The foe shall bear dead Harold from the field,
But, deathless, Harold in all English hearts
Shall sainted live until the end of time.

The dew falls heavily, the night winds moan,
And thou hast yet no portion with the dead,
So homeward turn thee, and the gentle Christ
Absolve thee from thy faults and grant thee peace."

This was thy power, fair Edith: thou didst wind
Around our strong young King the silken chain,
And held his heart, imprisoned in a curl,
Close captive to the liberties of love!
Is not man weak when woman wills a way!
This was thy beauty, Edith: thy bright glance,
Like sunbeams on a brooklet, shimmered down
Into the liquid soul of mobile man
And kissed to bloom the lilies white of love!
Sweet through the darkening amplitude of years,
With love's full roses fragrant—sad withal—
Thy tale is wafted. Eight long centuries
Have dragged them on since thou wert beautiful,
But we, with broken laws and covenants,
Can from no Sinai of higher lives
Cast back rebuke, nor blame that clouded dawn.

LOVE'S ARGOSY.

SHE softly sails the singing sea,
My maiden laden low with love.
For her may all winds kindly prove,
And waft her precious freight to me.

Pacific isles be hers to reach!
O mermaids, let the Sea Gods know,
And bid the spicy breezes blow
And bear her to my calling beach!

The limpid wavelets lisp her name;
The stones cry out, and she must come:
The booming breakers burst in foam,
And, dying, sing her perfect fame.

O pure white sails of chastity!
O graceful masts of deeds of good!
O burnished prow of maidenhood!
O golden helm of charity!

O argosy of saintly life,
Veer softly to my star of love.
Safe to the happy anchorage move
Of perfect womanhood and wife.

LETTY.

FAR away from crowded city,
Where the winds blow sweet and free,
Lives my country lassie pretty,
Lives lone Letty on the lea.
She no color knows but blushes
Brought by kissing winds that rove:
That is why I love lone Letty,
With her laughing looks of love!

Ne'er a careless idle whisper
Mars her lips, to truth resigned,
Ne'er a thought to harm a creature
Dwells within her gracious mind.
Her voice is like the gentle cooing
Of the wooing springtime dove:
That is why I love lone Letty,
With her laughing looks of love!

But my heart is filled with sorrow,
For a love I must conceal
Which no promising to-morrow
Gives me license to reveal.
As the secret of my sorrow
Would her soul to sadness move,
I'll not tell I love lone Letty,
With her laughing looks of love!

THE PLEA OF LOVE.
—

MEEK maiden of the dreamful eyes—
Like moonbeams mirrored in the mist;
With cheeks like roses fairy-kissed,
And little zephyr-stems of sighs—
My heart in hunger frames its plea,
And if I think not all astray,
The gentle thought thy breast can sway—
Thy love can sometime flit to me.
True love of love alone can think,
And to itself shall hostage be,
Unbounded by eternity,
Unbroke save in this mortal link.
What care we if our bodies age,
Or if we lack much earthly truth?
Our spirits hold unaging youth:
In lore of love our hearts are sage.
Thou, last and best of Eden's bloom,
Canst bring Edenic bliss to earth.
Oh, fill my life with nobler worth!
Let thy bright love my soul illumine!

And all our life shall be again
That ancient Eden, ever new ;
You Eve, I Adam, primals to
The long descent of striving men.

And we, when wed in higher spheres
In spiritual love and utter truth,
Shall see the saplings of our youth
Spread, like the banyan, through all years.

And in the change Fortuna rings
On years of war and years of rest,
This beauteous, inviolate breast
May, mother glorious lines of kings.

The while she hearkens, in her face
The love-tide flows with rosy glow ;
The love-tide ebbs—the pure, white snow
Is like her in its desert place.

I seal my plea with happy kiss
On lips that are not turned away ;
And she, when reigns the merry May,
Will set her gracious hand to this.

REX CUPIDO.

I.

In praise of thee, Ah me! Ah me!
The little leaping brooks cry out,
The silent, sombre mountains shout,
Ah me! Ah me! in praise of thee!

In praise of thee, Ah me! Ah me!
The trumpet winds do wildly call,
And roars the loud-voiced waterfall,
Ah me! Ah me! in praise of thee!

In praise of thee, Ah me! Ah me!
All songsters sing on willing wing
Till earth and air enchanted ring,
Ah me! Ah me! in praise of thee!

II.

To-day my garden held a grace
Which all earth's blossoms cannot lend.
She o'er the lilies white did bend,
And plucked a red rose from its place.

That rose—sweet emblem of my love—
 May nestle warmly on thy breast,
 As sweetly might the lily rest,
Nor any fairer, purer prove.

My rose is thine by royal right;
 The lily thine by spotless mind.
 My love—thy truth—shall reign combined,
And sing thee pleasure day and night.

III.

I saw her raise her blind this morn
 Clad on with all her native grace.
 The senseless sunbeams sought her face
But could her face no more adorn.

The senseless sunbeams slanted down
 Behind her fragrant robe of night,
 And nestling on her bosom white,
Knew not enough to sigh or frown.

Seek, senseless sunbeams, seek her soul!
 Oh! warm her heart to love for me.
 Whisper of woman's destiny
Till truth and love shall win the goal.

Rex Cupido.

My lady bade me sing of love,
But Oh! what could I sing!
A mockery it could but prove
To sing of Love, the King,
Unless our happy love were crowned,
And sweetly in our lives enthroned.

My lady bade me sing of love,
But Oh! no song had I
Save sighs that might her pity move,
And love-lore of the eye.
If e'er for us the joy-bells ring,
Then, love, of Love to thee I'll sing!

IV.

My lady thinks it sweet to kiss
And wonders that it should be so.
She dreams not youth bestows the glow;
She recks not love bestows the bliss.

Her large blue eyes in wonder gaze
When I, all love-lorn, seek her face,
And dwell upon each breathing grace,
And watch her living marble ways.

Oh! I shall woo her love to life
With pleading eyes, with arms that twine,
And joyous kisses, till on mine
Her heart shall blush with rapture rife.

Love shall know thee when he comes,
Search thy secret sighings out.
Loud shall ring his joyous shout,
Trill his bugles, beat his drums.

Love shall scale the mountain high,
Sweep the vale and dare the sea.
Swiftly shall he come to thee.
Softly of his passion sigh.

Love shall win thee when he comes,
He shall humble all thy pride,
Claim thee for his blushing bride,
Flare his trumpets, roll his drums.

V.

I hang her picture on the wall.
Her cold, sweet beauty warms the room ;
Her radiant face obscures the gloom,
And holds my soul in happy thrall.

My soul converses with her eyes
And questions of their speechless prayer,
And all the silence seems to bear
The music of her low replies.

I kiss her picture. Foolish me !
Her lips are cold, a fruitless kiss ;
And yet it warms my soul to this —
To will her love, and it shall be.

VI.

To-day the marriage bells shall ring,
And love shall fill the glowing hours,
And joy shall bring its fairest flowers
To crown our love, for Love is King!

Columbus-like, my lady stands
Before the world of love all new,
But I shall be her pilot true
And she shall rule its happy lands.

I seek her eyes and read her gaze,
A happy trust is all I see ;
And she shall read the mystery
Of love's most potent, happy ways.



THE BLOOM ON A MAIDEN'S CHEEK.

SWEET hours I whiled with a maiden meek,
When the golden sun sought the crimson west,
Where the lilies rest on the mirroring stream,
And blushing to see their beauty, seem
Like the bloom on a maiden's cheek.

The whip-poor-will sang to the laughing creek,
The butterfly hid in her nest for the night,
As the golden light through the tree-tops rushed,
And kissed the stream till its wavelets flushed
Like the bloom on a maiden's cheek.

The red moon rose o'er the purple peak,
And chasing the sun from the western sky,
Sent her bright rays high to the stars' abode,
And bathed the clouds till their edges glowed
Like the bloom on a maiden's cheek.

* * * * *

I sought the dell in the autumn bleak.
The cold, dark clouds threw a gloom on the day,
The warblers gay from their nests had flown,
The sweet red rose from the bank had gone
Like the bloom from the maiden's cheek.

The north wind blew with a dismal shriek,
The brown cones fell from the boughs overhead,
The lily lay dead in the breast of the stream,
From the brooklet's wave had passed the gleam
Like the bloom from the maiden's cheek.

Ah! never again in merry freak
Shall we roam at eve in the golden light.
All the blossoms bright are below the snow,
From the western sky has passed the glow
And the bloom from the maiden's cheek.



LOVE'S HARVEST.

THE furrows of life Time is plowing,
But we mourn not the Spring which departs,
For the husbandman Fate, in his sowing,
Scattered love in the soil of our hearts.

The sunshine of virtue and beauty
Shall wake the sweet seedlings to bloom.
The warm dews of mercy and duty
Shall moisten the tractable loam.

Oh, blow, grains of love to the binding!
Oh, blush, golden fruit on the hill!
'Tis a dreary, long day to the grinding,
But a short, pleasant way from the mill.

But fondness and faith will be growing,
Be the sky clear or cloudy above.
When fortune 'is ripe to my mowing
We shall gather our harvest of love!

MABEL.

I.

Thy lips are like the sweet red rose,
Mabel mine.

Thy head a lily fair at pose,
That by some wooing brooklet grows,
Peerless Mabel mine.

The clinging clusters of thy hair
The glory of a sunset wear,
Thy cheeks are damask roses fair,
Mystic Mabel mine.

Thy sweet face haunts me night and day,
Mabel mine.

I mourn thee as alone I stray
Where willows kiss the wavelet's spray,
Beauteous Mabel mine ;

And as the willows woo the wave —
The waves the lilies which they lave —
So woo I thee, and pity crave,
Sweet my Mabel mine.

Thou didst not read thy heart aright,

Mabel mine :

But thoughtest love's fair, dawning light

Could pass, as noonday into night,

Foolish Mabel mine !

Or didst thou hold it somewhat wrong

To listen to thy soul's sweet song

That sought to cheer thy lifetime long,

Modest Mabel mine ?

And is thy love all lost to me,

Mabel mine ?

Dost think that I will set thee free

To long, sad years of misery,

Sweetest Mabel mine ?

I know I hold thy virgin love,

And heaven from its place shall move,

Or I will all thy fondness prove,

Sweet my Mabel mine !

II.

Swim the swallows o'er the lea.
From the sea sweet echoes wake.
O'er the lake the plovers free
Flit from mossy rock and brake.

Mabel, when the waving trees
To the breeze in sorrow sing,
Whispering strange melodies,
All to thee my thoughts take wing.

List! The lonesome whip-poor-will
By the rill his greeting sings,
As it springs far down the hill,
Tossing gems on fairies' wings.

Were my heart a fairy bright,
Or that sprite of streamlet clear,
Swift to where thou art to-night
Would it wend to warble there.

III.

Through evening's golden ray
We drifted on the bay :
The west beneath the sun's warm kisses blushed :
The crying sea-mews rushed,
On wings all sunray flushed,
To seek their nests on lone rocks far away.

Across the sea-foam white
The sunbeams sparkled bright,
And paved a path of glory from the west,
And threw their rays to rest
On Mabel's gentle breast,
And lit her face as with celestial light.

Afar, where sky and sea
Are wed in harmony,
And blend their waving robes of white-flecked blue,
The swift-winged vessels flew
The waning sunset through,
And seemed like souls from earthly bonds set free.

Ah! vast expanse of sea —
What unread mystery
Sings in thy waves and whispers in thy gale!

Our mortal spirits fail
To solve thy wondrous tale—
Thou holdest something of Eternity!

There, as the twilight fell,
Our spirits felt thy spell,
And hearts could speak though lips no language knew.
In Mabel's eyes of blue
I read a promise true—
Found joys which can all earthly cares dispel.

Sweet Mabel! Gentle heart!
No death can ever part
Our wedded souls which blend in harmony,
And all the bliss we know
In happy years below
Is earnest of our sweet Eternity!



LOVE'S CONTRAST.

Who are these with woe-worn faces
 Standing at my side—
These who weep in lonely places?
 These are they, my bride,
These are they by love were lost,
These are they whom fate hath crost,
They whose kisses turned to curses.
 Such are they, my bride!

Who are these whose glorious graces
 Years may never hide—
These who hallow life's dark places?
 These are they, my bride,
These are they by love were won:
Pure of life to shame the sun:
They whose hearts are happy verses.
 Such art thou, my bride!

THE SILENT SONG.

AH! sweet wert thou to me, as to the bee
The buds and blooms that blow in gardens fair,
And yet of thee, so rare, I may not sing!
Too near, too dear wert thou, too pure a thing
For careless song and thoughtless rendering.
No mortal ear shall hear me chant thy praise.
Thy praise is in my soul, unspeakable,
A ceaseless song of sighs and threnodies.
When time has hushed his hymn whose rhymes are
 years,
Whose verses hearts, and stanzas agonies,
Again we meet—God grant, and lead thy feet,
Sweet one, through pleasant paths to that sweet tryst.

SEA GRAVES.

A MAIDEN sang low by the rippling rill,
On the mossy hill of the whispering pine,
Where the pale stars shine in the evening still,
While the nightingales sing on the lea.

To her pure young heart all the world seemed fair,
No shadow of care on her brow could rest,
For sweet in her breast, and low in her ear,
Sang her bright, virgin love in its glee.

But blight on the bloom of her happiness fell ;
The Mermaids know well that her loved one lies
Where the Nereid hies through the pearl-paved dell
To her coral-lined cave of the sea.

Now she roams at night where the pitying waves
Sob dirges o'er graves in the depths below ;
She whispers her woe to the echoing caves,
'Midst the murmuring moan of the sea.

"MY LADY SLEEPS!"

FAYS and the fan thee faintly,
Softly as a breeze from Heaven,
Thou whose life is pure and saintly,
Till, like moonbeams, thou art driven
Slowly drifting, fading, falling
Down the vast abyss of sense,
Where no pale-faced cares are calling,
Lost in rapturous indolence.
Fold thy hands across the moons ;
Veil my happy suns of life ;
Sweet ! my arms shall be as zones
Girdling thee, my world, my wife !
Softly sink, as worlds that fade,
Down the whispering, conscious air,
Till in Lethe thou art laid,
Fast in love, and lost to care.
In the morn thou shalt arise,
Sun-like, from the sleeping sea,
Chasing sleep with glowing eyes,
And my arms shall set thee free.

Sweet! not yet! The midnight star
Shines to bless thee from above ;
Shades of night are spreading far—
Shades to earth, but lights to love !
I but whisper in thine ear,
As I fold thee to my breast,
Sweets which if you rouse to hear
But entice thee back to rest.



LOST MEMORIES.

SAT a pretty maiden
Gazing on the skies,
Lights of love were glowing
In her lovely eyes.
Through her lips of roses
Little sighs were sped,
"Ah! he loves me dearly —
Wishes me to wed."

Bright immortal spirits,
Hovering in the air,
Whispered, "Love him, lady,
All the world is fair,
And we will be thy children,
By thy side to dwell,"
Whispered, "Wed him, lady,
For he loves thee well."

Then the sweet confusion
Of her gentle blood
Filled her face with roses
Of its rosy flood;

Then she drooped the lily
Of her queenly head,
Sighing, "Yes, I love him!"
Softly, "We shall wed!"

Now the little children
Gather round her knee,
All their glances holding
Some lost memory;
For darkened are the pathways
Which before they trod,
Till the world shall give them
Back again to God.



WHAT MATTERS IT?

WHAT matters it to me what far strange sky
Should form a vault where I to rest am placed,
Or what hot waste should spread my bones to dry?
And what care I?

What matters it to me! Did I not lie
In that dear spot where I have laid to sleep,
In silence deep, the forms for which I sigh,
Thither my bones would creep, my phantom fly.
So much care I.

What matters it to me if no sad eye
Should answer tear to sigh above my tomb—
No loved one come to weep me where I lie?
And what care I?

What matters it to me! The agony
Of soul to think that she whom I love best
Should never rest her head where cold I lie,
Would haunt me even in eternity.
So much care I.

LOVE'S PROPOSAL.

COME make thy nest beneath my caves,
Where lopes the sunlight through the vine,
And pleasant fancies intertwine
With rustling shades of shifting leaves.

And let thy sweet, young cheery voice
Fill all the chambers of my heart
With floods of song, the angels' art,
And make my weary soul rejoice.

O dove, my birdie! Love, my love!
Come, flutter fondly to my breast,
And I shall guard thy warm, sweet nest
From suns that stay, from winds that rove.

LOVE'S ATTAINMENT.

WHO knows of labor, most may enter rest :
Who hungers long and faints for food enjoys the feast
the best :
Who wages war well welcomes peace : the slave best free-
dom knows :
Thus I, when weary waitings cease, can hail my full
repose.
Thy smile enthralls my heart as birds are held by serpent's
gleams ;
To noiseless mood my life is wooed, my soul to voiceless
dreams.

Cold were the world and worthless if no power
Of beauty's smile, no whispered love, could pierce the
clouds that lower.
Far brighter than all earthly things the soul's soft glances
prove ;
Far stronger than the voice of kings the low-breathed
word of love.

Those smiles give valor to the blood, and nerve the arm
for strife ;

Those loves instill the mystic thrill, and mull the wine of
life.

The long oblivion of the clinging kiss —

The palor painted on the cheek by passion's thrilling
bliss —

The upturned face — the dark eyes veiled — the pulsing
of the breast,

While earth stood still, and knowledge failed, and time
was laid to rest —

And virtue walking hand in hand with largess large of
good —

All these were thine, O wife of mine, O perfect woman-
hood !

I peer across the tumult of my life,

And see behind wild waves of doubt and bitter storms of
strife.

But ever through the blackest night one light incessant
shone,

To hold my waning, straining sight, to cheer my spirit on.

That light the boundless beauty beaming brightly from thy
soul —
Thy fairest face and rarest grace—to beckon to the goal.

And now in peace I fold thee to my breast,
As robed in beauty like my bride the sun rolls down the
west,
I gaze into thy glorious eyes and drink deep drafts of life;
I faintly hear thy joyous sighs, my winsome, willing wife;
We kiss, and all our lives are rolled in ecstasies which move
The ringing spheres and singing years to bless our holy
love.



THE LAST DREAM.

FULL deep is thy slumber to-night,
And stilled is the throb of thy breast,
But thy face holds a glorious light,
And I know that thy dreaming is blest.

Full pure are the flowers of May,
And sweet is their Heaven-born breath.
But purer and sweeter than they,
Are the fragrant, pale lilies of death.

It is well with the beauteous wife
As she folds her young babe to her breast:
It is well to know pleasures of life,
It is better with souls that find rest.

Then sleep in thy cold, narrow bed,
In the merciful, infinite rest.
We leave thee alone with the dead,
But we know that thy dreaming is blest.

EXTRACTS FROM "MAGDALENE."[AN UNFINISHED FORM.]

SONG.

CEASE, Oh cease, low-sobbing sea!
All thy murmured lore,
Sighed in trancing melody
To the lispingshore,
Wakes my soul to agony,
Raises buried memory
Of days that are no more.

Hush, Oh hush, low-whispering breeze!
Every passing moan,
Softly wailing through the trees,
Bears some cherished tone,
Speaks of rapturous harmonies
Woven through our destinies
In the years long gone.

Splash, O silver sea-spray!

Woo the willing shore.

Wave, O stormy billows!

Wild winds loudly roar.

Mild or wild in wooing,

All your love, I ween,

Knows far less of happiness

Than I and Magdalene.

Flit, O lark, to Heaven!

Warble through the gate

Of the speechless pleasure

In our hearts elate.

Never loves of story

Near and dear have been,

As the sweet, full love, complete,

Of me and Magdalene.

Can this golden day-dream

Ever fade from view?

Can the clouds of heaven

Shadow hearts so true?

Pass, O golden sunlight!

Shroud, O cloud, the scene!

My sunlight lies within the eyes

Of happy Magdalene!

Mocking sun, go hide thee
Down the welcome west.
Jeering night, abide thee
With thy mocking rest.
O, my heart, loud-sobbing
In thy sorrow keen,
Death and Hell are robbing
Thee of Magdalene.

Fall, ye frowning mountains ;
Crush my shrieking soul.
Swell, ye mocking fountains
Till your waters roll,
Wave, and dash in fury
Me and Heaven between :
Lost is Heaven's glory —
Lost is Magdalene.

Saints of Satan, hither
Haste on pinions swift ;
Bear my spirit whither
Hell's black portals lift.
I shall have no measure
Of Heaven's joy, I ween ;
Lost my soul!—my treasure
Is with Magdalene.

THE VISION.

I wake with a cry in the night,
And I see her standing there,
In the golden glare of the bright moon's light
Which kisses her golden hair.

Then I see that two streams of gold
Flow out from her path and away,
Through the shadows gray of the midnight cold,
Like a sea of golden spray.

Then she, as she stands on the floor,
Smiles, ah! so sweet! on me.
A soulless thought comes flutterin' o'er—
Ah me! what that thought can be!

Then all of the moon-lit room
Is lit with more-golden light,
And the shadows of night seem to lose their gloom,
And to hold a presence more bright.

Then over my thirsting soul
Falls a quiet full deep and sweet,
And our lives again seem to smoothly roll,
As two streamlets that softly meet.

But the stream which they make as they meet
Is misty and hidden from me,
Like the golden sea which waves from her feet,
Far over the misty lea.

Then I hear a low babbling noise,
As a brook might babble in glee;
Or a babe might make with its lisping voice—
Ah me! what that noise can be!

Then she, as she stands on the floor,
Gazes, ah! so fondly on me,
And the old, old thought comes fluttering o'er—
Ah me! what that thought can be!

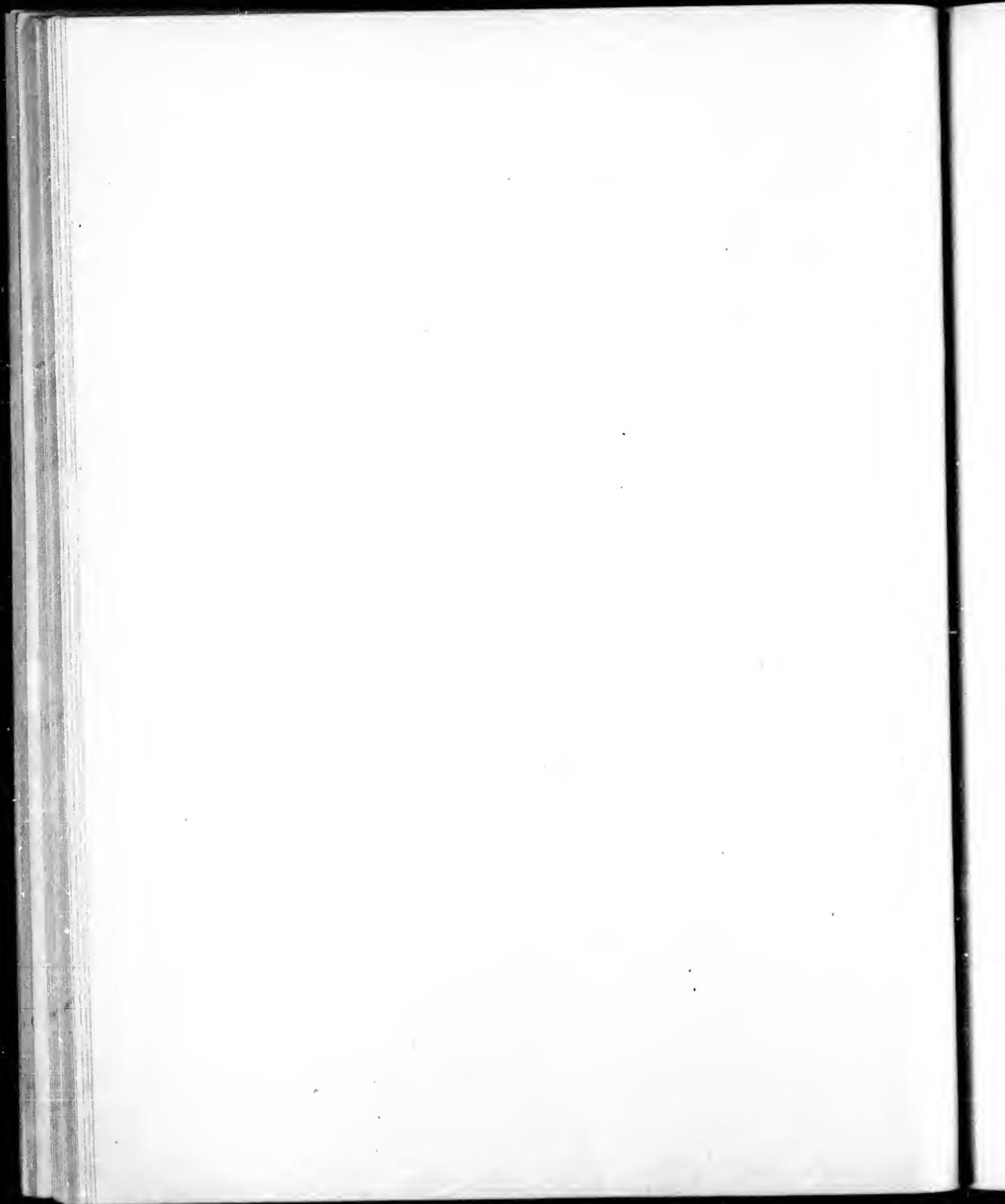
As the flickering moonbeams wane
She taketh her noiseless flight.
The empty night falls cheerless again,
And my soul loses all its light.

Her robe was prest to her breast
As if something she hid from me.
With a sigh I flee to my sleepless rest—
Ah me! what that thought can be!

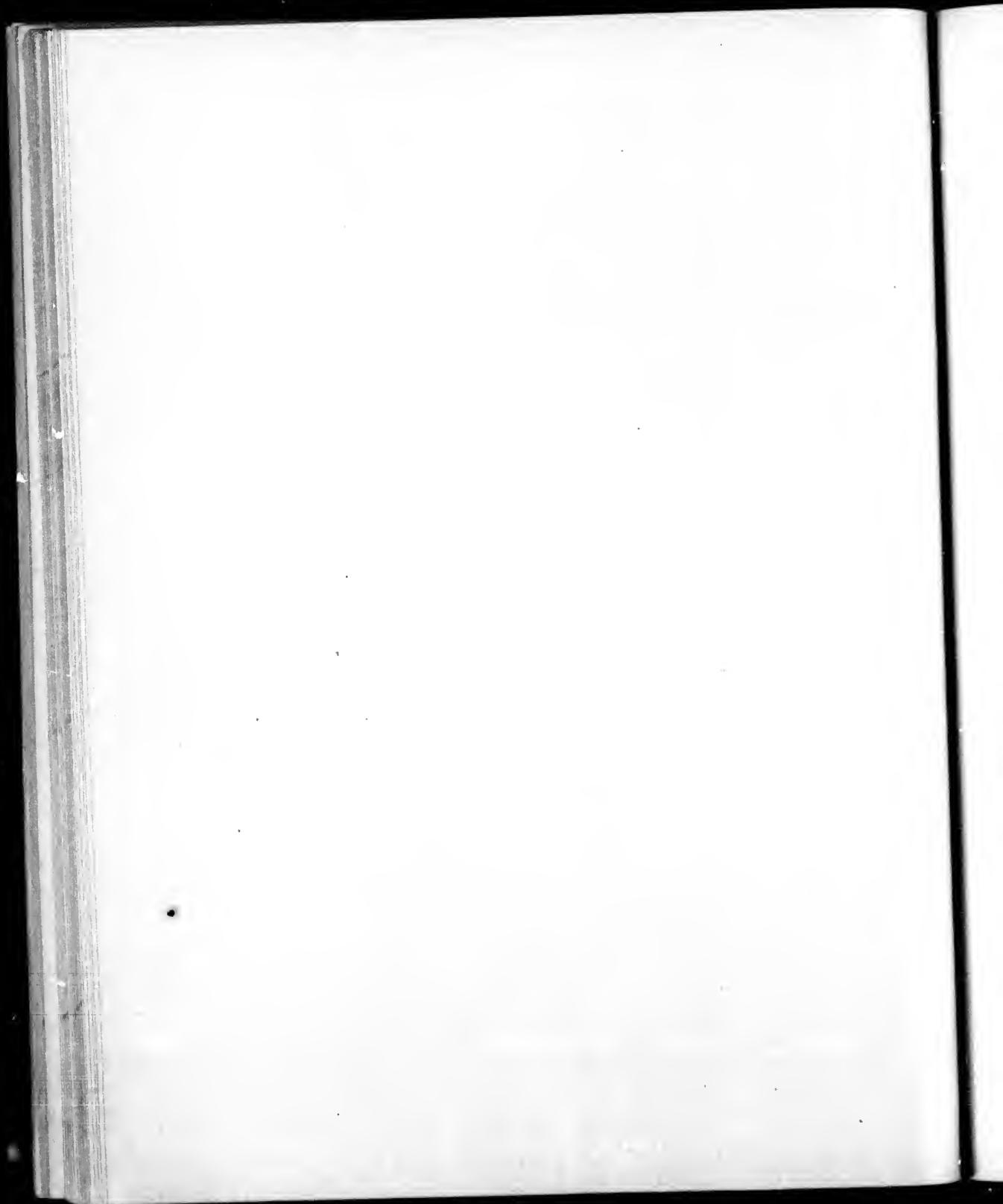
SONG.

BACK to thee! Back to thee!
 Back to thy heart
Speed I on wings of love;
 Why should we part?
Faults I thought faults of thine,
Sweet, were but faults of mine:
Holy as love divine
 Love of thy heart!
Pure as the light of day
 Thoughts of thy breast.
Quick speed the weary way
 Back to my rest.





Miscellaneous Poems.



AMARANTHUS.

In the silence of the night
 Came the word to me—
Whispered by some wingéd fairy—
 ‘Write a song, a *miserere*,
 Some sweet plaint for souls sin-weary,
Groping for the light.’

Then I grasped the chain of thought,
 ’Neath the heavenly glow ;
And the clanking links were slowly
Welded into something holy,
 A soft requiem, a lowly
Song not often wrought.

In the morn my soul was pained,
 For the song had fled :
’T was an Amaranthine flower,
From some sweet Parnassian bower,
Sought by Poets each swift hour,
Sought, but ne’er attained.

MOONBEAMS.

AT night I wandered on the hill :
 Across the fathomless, blue sky,
 The moon majestic drifted by,
While softly sang the rippling rill.

Below me lay the peaceful lea,
 Where balmy breeze with night mist played,
 Where, half in moonlight, half in shade,
The village church rose solemnly.

The low wind, sighing through the trees
 Like some soft whisper from the dead,
 Enchanted held my wandering tread,
And filled my soul with mysteries.

Then thoughts of things which once could be
 Arose with spirit-wringing sigh,
 And thoughts of times and friends gone by,
And thoughts of what we cannot see.

The village church-yard in the vale
Is dwelling of a score of friends :
The pitying moonbeam grave-ward wends
To read a solemn marble tale.

The stones shine white where mist has fled ;
And though I mourn each cherished name,
Yet hope, and faith, and truth proclaim,
“The soul, God’s breath, is never dead.”

And yet—and yet I wish it so—
To clasp once more unto my breast,—
In perfect peace, in utter rest,
The one who loved me most below.

Oh, cease, my heart! The fleecy cloud
Of life which dims the immortal noon
Is passing, and the spirit soon
Shall cast aside its earthly shroud.

* * * * *

Enough. The bounding brooklet here
Has tarried, and its lilled face
Smiles twinkling starlight back to space—
Soft moonlight back to moon-lit air.

Then o'er the ocean of the mind
There flitted misty, dreamy thought
Of Him who earth from chaos brought,
Who gave His image to mankind.

First made He man of mother earth,
And in the image placed a soul
To rule and sanctify the whole—
To make the body something worth.

The clay He moulded moulds our clay,
And down the vista dark of time
We shall prolong the plan sublime,
And He bestow the immortal ray.

In every blowing bud I find,—
In every fruit, in every tree,
In deep blue sky, in deep blue sea,
New proofs of His Almighty mind.

I gaze upon the azure sky
Where whirl the planets round the sun :
What unknown worlds their courses run
In regions far beyond the eye !

And as I gaze on spanless space,
I ask my meagre, mortal mind,
Can I to space a limit find—
Can I such magnitude embrace ?

And failing thus to understand
Things which I gaze on every hour,
I question not the unseen Power,
Nor limit Him to mind and hand.

* * * * *

Say, heart, what thinkest thou of love ?
Ah ! love is sweet, for love is life,
And love is stronger far than strife,
And liveth here, nor dies above.

Death's pillows hold the beauteous head
Which once could nestle on my breast ;
Death's lilies guard her inviolate rest,
And love for her is never dead.

* * * * *

And heart, what thinkest thou of death ?
Ah ! death is dismal, dark and drear—
Death culleth all our blossoms fair—
Death blighteth love with icy breath.

But soul, what thinkest *thou* of death ?
Ah ! death is sweet where lives are holy—
Death bringeth peace to high and lowly,
And sweet his kisses, warm his breath.

Ah ! deathless soul ! the passing night,
Which lifts from hill, and lake, and lea,
Is to the morn as death to thee—
A change from gloom to all things bright.

HAFIZ AND THE PERSIAN KING.

“FOR the beauty which is cradled
In my lady’s dimpled cheek,
Bokhara and Samarcand—
Were the gift mine to bestow it—
Were a price by far too meek;”
So sang Hafiz, Persia’s Poet.

Tamerlane, the King of Persia,
Growled in anger, “Bring him here :”
Chided Hafiz—“Be it known,
Poet, in your love-sick ditties
Bôld it is that you should dare
So to speak of my two cities.”

Softly Hafiz, “Can my lowly
Gifts impoverish Persia’s King?”
Laughed the King in merry mood—
Laughed the dames like brooklets streaming—
“Sweetly, Hafiz, do you sing,
And my anger was but seeming.”

CANUTE AND THE WAVES.

THIS pleasing tale is told:

Canute, the Dane, of old wore England's crown.
His courtiers said: "O King, thy great renown
Could quell the might of ocean wild and bold,
And make the waves bow down."

To chide the foolish boast,

The Dane said to the host: "Place here my seat.
O waves, with homage due your Sovereign greet;
Advance no farther on the hallowed coast,
Nor dare to wet my feet."

The rising billows dashed

Against the rocks and lashed the shifting sand;
And as they washed at will across the strand,
Canute spoke to his flatterers abashed,
With chiding noble, grand.

“What strength has mortal King?

The crisping wavelets fling their white sea-spray
Against my robe, and seem to mock as they
From sand and rock re-eddy, whispering
Their ceaseless roundelay.

“Have I almighty will,

That I should seek to still the boundless sea?
Am I a God to hold such power as He
Who in the hour when storm-winds bellowed shrill
Calmed raging Galilee?

“Oh, mortal pride is blind!

This golden crown shall bind no more my brow,
But on the graven type of Christ shall glow.
His word sufficed the winds and waves combined
In awe-hushed peace to bow.”

THE BROOKLET'S LAMENT.

DOWN the hillside, o'er the glen,
Round the rock and through the fen,
Ever with a song of glee
Sped I onward to the sea.

Now, as on my way I go,
All my song is all of woe.
Would you care to know the cause?
Shall I tell you how it was?

Once a pretty village maid
At my brink her footstep stayed,
Softly sank on dimpled knee,
With her ripe lips kissing me.

Lightly, then, did she recline
'Neath my climbing jessamine:
Gazed upon me, called me sweet,
As I touched her pretty feet.

Gazed I back into her eyes,
Blue as are my twin-seen skies,
Till the beauteous, drowsy lid
From my gaze their blue depths hid.

Ah, but she was wondrous fair!
All her wealth of golden hair
Waved and shimmered in the breeze
As she slept to croon of bees.

Every day she came this way:
Humbly did I homage pay;
Every day, in rapture sweet,
Did our lips in kisses meet.

From my grasp her hands would wrest
Lilies for her gentle breast;
Blooms which on my breast were bright
Darkened on her bosom white.

But one day, one dismal day,
As she came along the way,
At her side there walked a man!
Through my flood a flutter ran.

Merrily they came along :
No more thought she of my song.
Sweeter for her willing ear
Was his mellow voice to hear.

All my heart was filled with woe
When I saw him, bending low,
Weave a garland for her hair,
Of my ferns and lilies fair.

All my waves in fury rose,
As I saw my worst of foes
Round her waist his arms entwined,
Touching lips which once touched mine.

There with love and laughter gay
Whiled they golden eve away.
Down the west the red sun went ;
Closer down my willows bent.

Low he knelt before my Queen ;
Both her pretty hands between
Both of his he closely held ;
Willed she not, nor yet rebelled.

Well her eyes the love-light knew!
Down the silken lashes flew.
All my roses, red and sweet,
With her bloom could not compete.

Closer bent he to her face—
Caught her in a warm embrace—
Murmured softly in her ear
Words too low for me to hear.

All my weeping willows wept,
All my sweetest songsters slept,
As she, with a soft caress,
Murmured half, half gazed, her "Yes."

All my lilies felt my woe,
Whispered "Lady, do not go."
All my songsters sleep forgot,
Warbled "Lady, leave us not."

From my bowers went the twain;
Never came she back again—
From my bosom passed the light,
On my waters fell the night.

Were I but some wild cascade,
Perhaps my suit in hope were made.
Were I but some surging sea,
Then she had thought more of me.

Ever, ever, as I go,
Murmur I my song of woe—
“Weep, my willows, weep for me
Sadly toiling to the sea.”



[SONNET.]

AMERICA.

COLUMBUS came to thee and called thee new!
New World to him, but thy rich blood, bright gold,
Lay cold where once the fires manifold
Raged fiercely. New? Primeval forests grew,
Had fallen, and were coal! Thine eagles flew
Undaunted then as now, and where the bold
South Rocky Mountains rise in fold on fold
The Aztec to his God the victim slew.
The tropic verdure of thy far north world
Had passed for ever, moon-like fading out.
Sky-piercing mounts have reared them from the seas—
The lost Atlantis has been depth-ward hurled,
Since thou wert new!—Old! all thy landmarks shout,
And bid us read thy waiting mysteries.

[SONG.]

"THE WILD LEE SHORE."

SEE out on the Ocean the dark clouds descending !
The billows are seething and far flies the foam.
A beautiful vessel, with gallant masts bending,
Is painfully beating her stormy way home.
Oh, say, will she weather the wild lee shore,
Or add to the dismal host
Haunting the rock-bound coast
One phantom more ?

She rises and sinks on the high-swelling billows ;
She groans as she trembles from top-mast to keel ;
Roars the wind through her cordage like gales through
the willows,
And two gallant seamen are lashed to the wheel.
Oh, pray she may weather the wild lee shore,
And folding her wings to rest,
Unto the maiden's breast
Her love restore.

AT CHRISTMAS TIME.

THE yule-log blazes bright to-night
 Within the old baronial castle,
And in its cheerful, dancing light
 Meet Lord and Vassal.

Rich banners on the walls are hung ;
 And where the vacant mail reposes,
Some sire is crowned by maidens young
 With wreath of roses.

And where the vines entwining droop
 Their graceful arches from the ceiling
The ruddy holly-berries group,
 Their glow revealing.

The poor man by the rich is hailed,
 And greeted as an honoured brother,
And hands are clasped which once were mailed
 'Gainst e another.

For 'tis the gladsome Christmas time,
And hearts with love and kindness flutter,
Full-flooded by a joy sublime
They cannot utter.

Below the magic mistletoe
Gleams golden wealth of waving tresses,
And red cheeks wear a riper glow
From youth's caresses.

Far floats the music through the Hall:
Full merry grow the jest and dancing,
And under lids that coyly fall
Are bright eyes glancing.

* * * * *

But list! The welcome Christmas Bells
Are from the Abbey loudly ringing:
Sweeter the tale their music tells
Than mortal singing!

EVENING ON THE MARSHES.

WE have roamed the marshes, keen with expectation ;
Lain at eve in ambush, where the ducks are wont to fly ;
Felt the feverish fervor, the thrilling, full pulsation,
As the flocks came whirring from the rosy western sky.

All day long the sun, with heat, and breeze with coolness,
Smote or kissed the grasses, and it seemed another lake
Flooded o'er the land and up the hills in fullness,
Shadows for the billows, sunshine for the waves that break.

Now beneath the pine, whose branches voice the breezes,
Passed the toil of day, we lie like gods in utter peace.
This is life's full nectar, this from care releases ;
Oh, to rest for ever here where toil and tumult cease !

Slowly down the west the weary day is dying ;
Slowly up the east ascends the mellow, mystic moon ;

Swiftly swoop the hawks; the hooting owls are flying;
Through the darksome splendor breaks the lonesome cry
of loon.

Ghost-like move the sails along the lake's long distance;
Faintly wafts the sailors' weirdsome song the waters o'er;
Faint the wavelets' music, as with low insistence,
Break they softly siaging on the drowsy sandy shore.

Wooing us in whispers, water, earth and heaven—
Mystic whispers wafted o'er the darksome, waving deep—
Win us to themselves, our old creative leaven,
And we, mingling with them, softly sink to dreamless
sleep.



SUNRISE ON THE OCEAN.

I STAND beside the sleeping Sea
To view the morn. The shades of night
Rise from its bosom silently.
The golden light from out the Gate
Of Heaven streams and takes its flight
O'er wakening wave and whispering beach.
As far as eager eye can reach,
O'er verdant isle and mirroring strait,
The soft refulgence falls and glows.
The sunrays break across the sea;
O'er mountain, meadow, lake and lea
The rich light leaps, and sweeps, and flows,
Till all the swelling radiancy
Springs perfect in a new-born day.

Along the Ocean's level tide
The pale mists glide and flee the sun.
Like midnight phantoms, swift they run

Before the searching day and hide
Far down the west. From rest the waves
Awake and shake their robes of foam
Beneath the glorious morning sky,
And sparkling in the sunbeams, roam
To whisper in resounding caves
Weird notes of Neptune's melody.

Fresh from the darksome realms of night
The breezes ruff the Ocean's breast ;
The slumbering vessels start from rest
And spread their lofty sails of white.
Oh! safely, swiftly wing the seas,
Ye lonesome wanderers o'er the deep,
Below whose ways vast navies sleep,
And bear to waiting native quays
The rich returns from crowded marts,
The sun-born fruits of tropic lands,
The regal gifts of golden strands,
The loves of constant, longing hearts.

Who knows the dangers of the deep—
The ships that go, but never come—
The widowed hearts that wait and weep—
The missing sunshine of the home—
The stalwart forms—the honest hands
That grace no more their natal lands—
The thunder's crash—the lightning's glare—
The wrack upon the middle seas—
The famine and the wild despair,—
The sweetest gift that reason flees,—
May hold our hardy sailors brave,
May breathe a prayer such lives to save.

The glowing sun mounts high in air!
Come! Flee his burning rays that fall,
And in some shady grotto, where
The droning waves break dreamily,
And faintly floats the sea-mew's call,
Recount strange lays of hoary sea.

SUNSET ON THE OCEAN.

THE sun has made the sea his bed.

In gold and red arrayed, the West
Shines as if Heaven's portal bright
Were oped to cast immortal light
Upon the Ocean's breast.

The sapphire waves through coral sweep ;
The mermaids leap from caves below ;
Lulled on the kissing wavelet's crest,
They sing with harps to bosoms prest
Beneath the sunset's glow.

From wind-kissed lips of purling foam
Sweet echoes roam, and tips of waves
Weave golden snakes and flakes of flame
To light the merry mermens' game,
And gild the deep sea-caves.

The sea-mew wings the breathing air,
And half in fear he sings his call,
As over such enchanted seas
To reach his mate he quickly flees,
While twilight shadows fall.

The mists of night like ghosts arise,
And from the skies the light erase.
With one long sigh in sympathy,
We homeward turn, O my : sea,
With solemn, lingering pace.



CHARITY.

COME! walk with the world and go down to the destitute
homes of the poor,
Where weeping is louder than laughter, where sorrow and
famine abide ;
Where Azrael reaps a full harvest and darkens each
desolate door ;
And learn of the lowly and meek to lessen your thought-
less pride.

I have seen my Lady flash by — a beauteous vision of
ease ;
I have seen the widow at work till the shadows of night
fled the day ;
I have seen God's poor drink the cup of sorrow and
toil to the lees ;
I have seen the wicked get wealth, and the good go
empty away.

“The poor are unworthy, and sinning is found in the
homes of the low.

If we give we but pander to vice . the beggars our gifts
will abuse."

So say you, and pass in your pride, but your heart cries
out as you go,

"The vile are the first to ape virtue; the wicked the first
to accuse!"

Communist? Not I! But I hold that the miser who
hugs to his heart

What for him is but clay and a curse, but to some would
be blessing and bread,

Is selling his merciful Saviour. Better throw down the
price and depart;

Better, belike, do as Judas, put a rope to his miserable
head.

'Twould be well with you, Midas, to pity the poor who
are tarrying here.

They may count to your just condemnation the tears
which their hungry babes weep.

Though you harden your heart for a lifetime, and turn
an adamant ear,

Their wails may pierce through to your coffin and trouble
your long, last sleep.

How read you the Scriptures? What say they? "These
three with the world now abide,
Hope, charity, faith, and the greatest is charity — blessed
above all."

Our hands should be fruitful and open. The field for our
giving is wide,
And blessing shall follow the gifts, though the power to
give may be small.

Then time may toil on with its tumults, its troubles and
tempests of tears;
The sweet, voiceless shadows shall hold us till striving
and sorrow are past.
We shall wake full refreshed to the judgment, though we
slumber for eons of years;
And the Lord shall show us His glory, we shall be like
to God at the last.



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