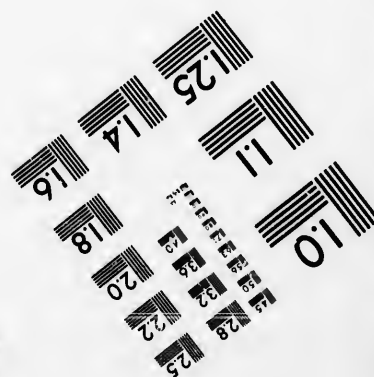
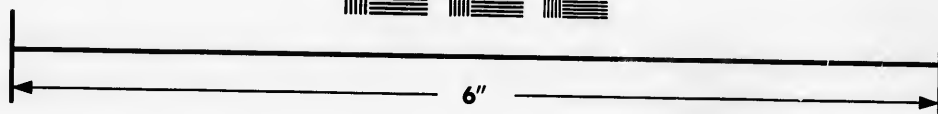
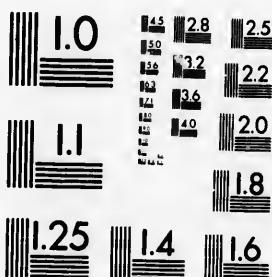


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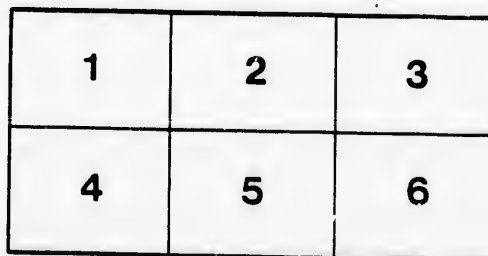
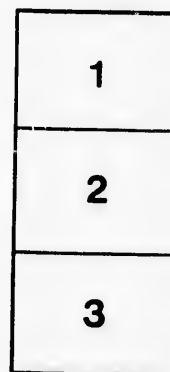
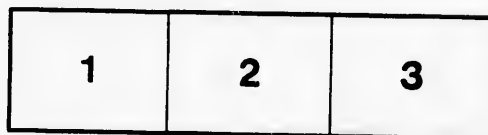
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OF
ALFRED TENNYSON

POET LAUREATE

AUTHOR'S CANADIAN EDITION

MONTREAL
DAWSON BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS.

1881

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JUVENILIA.

CLARIBEL.

A MELODY.

I.

WHERE Claribel low-lieth
The breezes pause and die,
Letting the rose-leaves fall :
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,
With an ancient melody
Of an inward agony,
Where Claribel low-lieth.

II.

At eve the beetle boometh
Athwart the thicket lone :
At noon the wild bee hummeth
About the moss'd headstone :
At midnight the moon cometh,
And looketh down alone.
Her song the lintwhite swelleth,
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,
The callow throstle lispeth,
The slumbrons wave outwelleth,
The babbling runnel crispeth,
The hollow grot replieth
Where Claribel low-lieth.

NOTHING WILL DIE.

WHEN will the stream be aweary of
flowing
Under my eye ?
When will the wind be aweary of blowing
Over the sky ?

When will the clouds be aweary of fleeting?
When will the heart be aweary of beating?
And nature die ?

Never, oh ! never, nothing will die ;
The stream flows,
The wind blows,
The cloud fleets,
The heart beats,
Nothing will die.

Nothing will die ;
All things will change
Thro' eternity.
'Tis the world's winter ;
Autumn and summer
Are gone long ago ;
Earth is dry to the centre,
But spring, a new comer,
A spring rich and strange,
Shall make the winds blow
Round and round,
Thro' and thro',
Here and there,
Till the air
And the ground
Shall be fill'd with life anew.

The world was never made ;
It will change, but it will not fade.
So let the wind range ;
For even and morn
Ever will be
Thro' eternity.
Nothing was born ;
Nothing will die ;
All things will change.

ALL THINGS WILL DIE.

CLEARLY the blue river chimes in its
flowing
Under my eye ;
Warmly and broadly the south winds are
blowing
Over the sky.
One after another the white clouds are
fleeing ;
Every heart this May morning in joyance
is beating

Full merrily ;
Yet all things must die.
The stream will cease to flow ;
The wind will cease to blow ;
The clouds will cease to fleet ;
The heart will cease to beat ;
For all things must die.

All things must die.
Spring will come never more.

Oh ! vanity !
Death waits at the door.
See ! our friends are all forsaking
The wine and the merrymaking.
We are call'd—we must go.
Laid low, very low,
In the dark we must lie.
The merry glees are still ;
The voice of the bird
Shall no more be heard,
Nor the wind on the hill.

Oh ! misery !
Hark ! death is calling
While I speak to ye,
The jaw is falling,
The red cheek paling,
The strong limbs failing ;
Ice with the warm blood mixing ;
The eyeballs fixing,
Nine times goes the passing bell :
Ye merry souls, farewell.

The old earth
Had a birth,
As all men know,
Long ago.

And the old earth must die.
So let the warm winds range,
And the blue wave beat the shore ;
For even and morn
Ye will never see
Thro' eternity.
All things were born.
Ye will come never more,
For all things must die.

THE KRAKEN.

BELOW the thunders of the upper deep ;
Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep
The Kraken sleepeth : faintest sunlights
flee

About his shadowy sides: above him swell
Huge sponges of millennial growth and
height ;

And far away into the sickly light,
From many a wondrous grot and secret cell
Unnumber'd and enormous polypi
Winnow with giant arms the slumbering
green.

There hath he lain for ages and will lie
Battening upon huge seaworms in his
sleep,

Until the latter fire shall heat the deep ;
Then once by man and angels to be seen,
In roaring he shall rise and on the surface
die.

SONG.

The winds, as at their hour of birth,
Leaning upon the ridged sea,
Breathed low around the rolling earth
With mellow preludes, 'We are free.'

The streams through many a lilled row
 Down-carolling to the crisped sea,
 Low-tinkled with a bell-like flow
 Atween the blossoms, 'We are free.'

LILIAN.

I.

AIRY, fairy Lilian,
 Flitting, fairy Lilian,
 When I ask her if she love me,
 Claps her tiny hands above me,
 Laughing all she can ;
 She'll not tell me if she love me,
 Cruel little Lilian.

II.

When my passion seeks
 Pleasance in love-sighs,
 She, looking thro' and thro' me
 Thoroughly to undo me,
 Smiling, never speaks :
 So innocent-arch, so cunning-simple,
 From beneath her gather'd wimple
 Glancing with black-beaded eyes,
 Till the lightning laughter dimple
 The baby-roses in her cheeks ;
 Then away she flies.

III.

Prythee weep, May Lilian !
 Gaiety without eclipse
 Wearieth me, May Lilian :
 Thro' my very heart it thrilleth
 When from crimson-threaded lips
 Silver-treble laughter trilleth :
 Prythee weep, May Lilian.

IV.

Praying all I can,
 If prayers will not hush thee,
 Airy Lilian,
 Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,
 Fairy Lilian.

ISABEL.

I.

EYES not down-dropt nor over bright,
 but fed
 With the clear-pointed flame of chas-
 tity,
 Clear, without heat, undying, tended by
 Pure vestal thoughts in the trans-
 lucent fane
 Of her still spirit ; locks not wide-
 dispread,
 Madonna-wise on either side her
 head ;
 Sweet lips whereon perpetually did
 reign
 The summer calm of golden charity,
 Were fixed shadows of thy fixed mood,
 Revered Isabel, the crown and head,
 The stately flower of female fortitude,
 Of perfect wifehood and pure lowli-
 head.

II.

The intuitive decision of a bright
 And thorough-edged intellect to part
 Error from crime ; a prudence to
 withhold ;
 The laws of marriage character'd in
 gold
 Upon the blanched tablets of her heart ;
 A love still burning upward, giving light
 To read those laws ; an accent very low
 In blandishment, but a most silver flow
 Of subtle-paced counsel in distress,
 Right to the heart and brain, tho' un-
 undescried,
 Winning its way with extreme gen-
 tleness
 Thro' all the outworks of suspicious pride ;
 A courage to endure and to obey ;
 A hate of gossip parlance, and of sway,

Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid life,
The queen of marriage, a most perfect wife.

III.

The mellow'd reflex of a winter moon ;
A clear stream flowing with a muddy
one,
Till in its onward current it absorbs
With swifter movement and in purer
light
The vexed eddies of its wayward
brother :
A leaning and upbearing parasite,
Clothing the stem, which else had
fallen quite
With cluster'd flower-bells and ambro-
sial orbs
Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on each
other—
Shadow forth thee :—the world hath
not another
(Tho' all her fairest forms are types of
thee,
And thou of God in thy great charity)
Of such a finish'd chasten'd purity.

MARIANA.

' Mariana in the moated grange.'
Measure for Measure.

WITH blackest moss the flower-plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all :
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the pear to the gable-wall.
The broken sheds look'd sad and strange :
Unlifted was the clinking latch ;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.
She only said, ' My life is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said ;
She said, ' I am weary, weary,
I would that I were dead !'

Her tears fell with the dews at even ;
Her tears fell ere the dews were
dried ;
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eventide.
After the flitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did trance the
sky,
She drew her casement-curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
She only said, ' The night is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said ;
She said, ' I am weary, weary,
I would that I were dead !'

Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow :
The cock sung out an hour ere light :
From the dark fen the oxen's low
Came to her : without hope of change,
In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,
Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed
morn
About the lonely moated grange.
She only said, ' The day is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said ;
She said, ' I am weary, weary,
I would that I were dead !'

About a stone-cast from the wall
A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.
Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silver-green with gnarled bark :
For leagues no other tree did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.
She only said, ' My life is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said ;
She said, ' I am weary, weary,
I would that I were dead !'

And ever when the moon was low,
 And the shrill winds were up and away,
 In the white curtain, to and fro,
 She saw the gusty shadow sway.
 But when the moon was very low,
 And wild winds bound within their
 cell,
 The shadow of the poplar fell
 Upon her bed, across her brow.
 She only said, 'The night is dreary,
 He cometh not,' she said;
 She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!'

All day within the dreamy house,
 The doors upon their hinges creak'd;
 The blue fly sung in the pane; the mouse
 Behind the mouldering wainscot
 shriek'd,
 Or from the crevice peer'd about.
 Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,
 Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
 Old voices called her from without.
 She only said, 'My life is dreary,
 He cometh not,' she said;
 She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!'

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,
 The slow clock ticking, and the sound
 Which to the wooing wind aloof
 The poplar made, did all confound
 Her sense; but most she loathed the
 hour
 When the thick-moted sunbeam lay
 Athwart the chambers, and the day
 Was sloping toward his western bower.
 Then, said she, 'I am very dreary,
 He will not come,' she said;
 She wept, 'I am aweary, aweary,
 Oh God, that I were dead!'

TO —.

I.

CLEAR-HEADED friend, whose joyful
 scorn,
 Edged with sharp laughter, cuts atwain
 The knots that tangle human creeds,
 The wounding cords that bind and strain
 The heart until it bleeds,
 Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn
 Roof not a glance so keen as thine:
 If aught of prophecy be mine,
 Thou wilt not live in vain.

II.

Low-cowering shall the Sophist sit;
 Falsehood shall bare her plaited brow:
 Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not now
 With shrilling shafts of subtle wit.
 Nor martyr-flames, nor trenchant swords
 Can do away that ancient lie;
 A gentler death shall Falsehood die,
 Shot thro' and thro' with cunning words.

III.

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,
 Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost need,
 Thy kingly intellect shall feed,
 Until she be an athlete bold,
 And weary with a finger's touch
 Those writhed limbs of lightning speed;
 Like that strange angel which of old,
 Until the breaking of the light,
 Wrestled with wandering Israel,
 Past Yabbok brook the livelong night,
 And heaven's mazed signs stood still
 In the dim tract of Penueh.

MADELINE.

I.

THOU art not steep'd in golden languors,
 No tranced summer calm is thine,
 Ever varying Madeline.

Thro' light and shadow thou dost range,
Sudden glances, sweet and strange,
Delicious spites and darling angers,
And airy forms of flitting change.

II.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,
Thou art perfect in love-lore.
Revealings deep and clear are thine
Of wealthy smiles : but who may know
Whether smile or frown be fleetest ?
Whether smile or frown be sweeter,
Who may know ?
Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow
Light-glooming over eyes divine,
Like little clouds sun-fringed, are thine,
Ever varying Madeline.

Thy smile and frown are not aloof
From one another,
Each to each is dearest brother ;
Hues of the silken sheeny woof
Momently shot into each other.
All the mystery is thine ;
Smiling, frowning, evermore,
Thou art perfect in love-lore,
Ever varying Madeline.

III.

A subtle, sudden flame,
By veering passion fann'd,
About thee breaks and dances :
When I would kiss thy hand,
The flush of anger'd shame
O'erflows thy calmer glances,
And o'er black brows drops down
A sudden-curved frown :
Ere when I turn away,
Thou, willing me to stay,
Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest ;
But, looking fixedly the while,
All my bounding heart entanglest
In a golden-netted smile ;

Then in madness and in bliss,
If my lips should dare to kiss
Thy taper fingers amorously,
Again thou blushest angerly ;
And o'er black brows drops down
A sudden-curved frown.

SONG—THE OWL.

I.

WHEN cats run home and light is come,
And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,
And the whirring sail goes round,
And the whirring sail goes round ;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

II.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the
thatch
Twice or thrice his roundelay,
Twice or thrice his roundelay ;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

SECOND SONG.

TO THE SAME.

I.

THY tuwhits are lull'd, I wot,
Thy tuwhoos of yesternight,
Which upon the dark afloat,
So took echo with delight,
So took echo with delight,
That her voice untuneful grown,
Wears all day a fainter tone.

II.

I would mock thy chaunt anew ;
But I cannot mimick it ;

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

Not a whit of thy tuwhoo,
Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
With a lengthen'd loud halloo,
Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tuwhoo-o-o.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE
ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn blew
free

In the silken sail of infancy,
The tide of time flow'd back w'th me,
The forward-flowing tide of time ;
And many a sheeny summer-morn,
Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,
High-walled gardens green and old ;
True Mussulman was I and sworn,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'
The low and bloomed foliage, drove
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove
The citron-shadows in the blue :
By garden porches on the brim,
The costly doors flung open wide,
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,
And broider'd sofas on each side :
In sooth it was a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans guard
The outlet, did I turn away
The boat-head down a broad canal
From the main river sluiced, where all
The sloping of the moon-lit sward
Was damask-work, and deep inlay
Of braided blooms unmown, which crept
Adown to where the water slept.

A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on
My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,
Until another night in night
I enter'd, from the clearer light,
Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,
Imprisoning sweets, which, as they clomb
Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the
dome

Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward ; and the clear canal
Is rounded to as clear a lake.
From the green rivage many a fall
Of diamond rillets musical,
Thro' little crystal arches low
Down from the central fountain's flow
Fall'n silver-chiming, seemed to shake
The sparkling flints beneath the prow.
A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Above thro' many a bowery turn
A walk with vary-colour'd shells
Wander'd engrain'd. On either side
All round about the fragrant marge
From fluted vase, and brazen urn
In order, eastern flowers large,
Some dropping low their crimson bells
Half-closed, and others studded wide
With disks and tiars, fed the time
With odour in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove
In closest coverture upsprung,

The living airs of middle night
Died round the bulbul as he sung ;
Not he : but something which possess'd
The darkness of the world, delight,
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,
Ceasing not, mingled, unrepress'd,
Apart from place, withholding time,
But flattering the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots
Slumber'd : the solemn palms were
ranged

Above, unwoo'd of summer wind :
A sudden splendour from behind
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-green,
And, flowing rapidly between
Their interspaces, counterchanged
The level lake with diamond-plots
Of dark and bright. A lovely time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,
Grew darker from that under-flame :
So, leaping lightly from the boat,
With silver anchor left afloat,
In marvel whence that glory came
Upon me, as in sleep I sank
In cool soft turf upon the bank,
Entranced with that place and time,
So worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—
A realm of pleasance, many a mound,
And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn
Full of the city's stilly sound,
And deep myrrh-thickets blowing round
The stately cedar, tamarisks,
Thick rosaries of scented
Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks

Graven with emblems of the time,
In honour of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

With dazed vision unawares
From the long alley's latticed shade
Emerged, I came upon the great
Pavilion of the Caliphat.
Right to the carven cedarn doors,
Flung inward over spangled floors,
Broad-based flights of marble stairs
Ran up with golden balustrade,
After the fashion of the time,
And humour of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

The fourscore windows all alight
As with the quintessence of flame,
A million tapers flaring bright
From twisted silvers look'd to shame
The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd
Upon the mooned domes aloof
In inmost Baglat, till there seem'd
Hundreds of crescents on the roof
Of night new-risen, that marvellous
time
To celebrate the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly
Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
Serene with argent-lidded eyes
Amorous, and lashes like to rays
Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
Tressed with redolent ebony,
In many a dark delicious curl,
Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone ;
The sweetest lady of the time,
Well worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,
Pure silver, underprompt a rich

Throne of the massive ore, from which
Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,
Engarlanded and diaper'd
With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold.
Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd
With merriment of kingly pride,
Sole star of all that place and time,
I saw him—in his golden prime,
THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID.

ODE TO MEMORY.

ADDRESSED TO —.

I.

THOU who stealest fire,
From the fountains of the past,
To glorify the present; oh, haste,
Visit my low desire!
Strengthen me, enlighten me!
I faint in this obscurity,
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

II.

Come not as thou camest of late,
Flinging the gloom of yesternight
On the white day; but robed in soften'd
light
Of orient state.
Whilome thou camest with the morning
mist,
Even as a maid, whose stately brow
The dew-impearled winds of dawn have
kiss'd,
When, she, as thou,
Stays on her floating locks the lovely
freight
Of overflowing blooms, and earliest shoots
Of orient green, giving safe pledge of
fruits,
Which in wintertide shall star
The black earth with brilliance rare.

III.

Whilome thou camest with the morning
mist,
And with the evening cloud,
Showering thy gleaned wealth into my
open breast
(Those peerless flowers which in the
rudest wind
Never grow sere,
When rooted in the garden of the mind,
Because they are the earliest of the year).
Nor was the night thy shroud.
In sweet dreams softer than unbroken rest
Thou ledest by the hand thine infant
Hope.
The eddying of her garments caught from
thee
The light of thy great presence; and the
cope
Of the half-attain'd futurity,
Tho' deep not fathomless,
Was cloven with the million stars which
tremble
O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy.
Small thought was there of life's distress;
For sure she deem'd no mist of earth could
dull
Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and
beautiful:
Sure she was nigher to heaven's spheres,
Listening the lordly music flowing from
The illimitable years.
O strengthen me, enlighten me!
I faint in this obscurity,
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,
Thou of the many tongues, the myriad
eyes!
Thou comest not with shows of flaunting
vines

Unto mine inner eye,
Divinest Memory !

Thou wert not nursed by the waterfall
Which ever sounds and shines
A pillar of white light upon the wall
Of purple cliffs, aloof descried :
Come from the woods that belt the gray
hill-side,

The seven elms, the poplars four
That stand beside my father's door,
And chiefly from the brook that loves
To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed sand,
Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,
Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,
In every elbow and turn,

The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland.
O ! hither lead thy feet !
Pour round mine ears the livelong bleat
Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wattled
folds,

Upon the ridged wolds,
When the first matin-song hath waken'd
loud
Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,
What time the amber morn
Forth gushes from beneath a low-lung
cloud.

v.

Large dowries doth the raptur'd eye
To the young spirit present

When first she is wed ;
And like a bride of old

In triumph led,

With music and sweet showers
Of festal flowers,

Unto the dwelling she must sway.

Well hast thou done, great artist Me-
mory,

In setting round thy first experiment
With royal frame-work of wrought
gold ;

Needs must thou dearly love thy first
essay,

And foremost in thy various gallery
Place it, where sweetest sunlight falls
Upon the storied walls ;

For the discovery
And newness of thine art so pleased thee,
That all which thou hast drawn of fairest
Or boldest since, but lightly weighs
With thee unto the love thou bearest
The first-born of thy genius. Artist-like,
Ever retiring thou dost gaze
On the prime labour of thine early
days :

No matter what the sketch might be ;
Whether the high field on the bushless
Pike,

Or even a sand-built ridge
Of heaped hills that mound the sea,
Overblown with murmurs harsh,
Or even a lowly cottage whence we see
Stretch'd wide and wild the waste enor-
mous marsh,

Where from the frequent bridge,
Like emblems of infinity,
The trenched waters run from sky to
sky ;

Or a garden bower'd close
With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,
Long alleys falling down to twilight grots,
Or opening upon level plots
Of crowned lilies, standing near
Purple-spiked lavender :
Whither in after life retired
From brawling storms,
From weary wind,
With youthful fancy re-inspired,

We may hold converse with all forms
Of the many-sided mind,
And those whom passion hath not blinded,
Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.

My friend, with you to live alone,
Were how much better than to own
A crown, a sceptre, and a throne !

O strengthen me, enlighten me !
I faint in this obscurity,
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

SONG.

I.

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours
Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers :
To himself he talks ;
For at eventide, listening earnestly,
At his work you may hear him sob and sigh

In the walks ;

Earthward he boweth the heavy
stalks

Of the mouldering flowers :

Heavily hangs the broad sunflower

Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;

Heavily hangs the hollyhock,

Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

II.

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,
As a sick man's room when he taketh
repose

An hour before death ;

My very heart faints and my whole soul
grieves

At the moist rich smell of the rotting
leaves,

And the breath

Of the fading edges of box beneath,

And the year's last rose.

Heavily hangs the broad sunflower

Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;

Heavily hangs the hollyhock,

Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

A CHARACTER.

WITH a half-glance upon the sky
At night he said, 'The wanderings

Of this most intricate Universe
Teach me the nothingness of things.'
Yet could not all creation pierce
Beyond the bottom of his eye.

He spake of beauty : that the dull
Saw no divinity in grass,
Life in dead stones, or spirit in air ;
'Then looking as 'twere in a glass,
He smooth'd his chin and sleek'd his hair,
And said the earth was beautiful.

He spake of virtue : not the gods
More purely, when they wish to charm
Pallas and Juno sitting by :
And with a sweeping of the arm,
And a lack-lustre dead-blue eye,
Devolved his rounded periods.

Most delicately hour by hour
He canvass'd human mysteries,
And trod on silk, as if the winds
Blew his own praises in his eyes,
And stood aloof from other minds
In impotence of fancied power.

With lips depress'd as he were meek,
Himself unto himself he sold :
Upon himself himself did feed :
Quiet, dispassionate, and cold,
And other than his form of creed,
With chisell'd features clear and sleek.

THE POET.

THE poet in a golden clime was born,
With golden stars above ;
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn
of scorn,
The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good
and ill,

He saw thro' his own soul,
The marvel of the everlasting will,
An open scroll,

Before him lay : with echoing feet he
threaded

The secretest walks of fame :
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were
headed
And wing'd with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver
tongue,
And of so fierce a flight,
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which bore
Them earthward till they lit ;
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field
flower,
The fruitful wit

Cleaving, took root, and springing forth
anew
Where'er they fell, behold,
Like to the mother plant in semblance,
grew
A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling
The winged shafts of truth,
To throng with stately blooms the breath-
ing spring
Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with
beams,

Tho' one did fling the fire.
Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many
dreams
Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the
world

Like one great garden show'd,
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark
upcurl'd,
Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august sunrise
Her beautiful bold brow,
When rites and forms before his burning
eyes
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes
Sunn'd by those orient skies ;
But round about the circles of the globes
Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in
flame
WISDOM, a name to shake
All evil dreams of power—a sacred name.
And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,
And as the lightning to the thunder
Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,
Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No
sword

Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,
But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his*
word
She shook the world.

THE POET'S MIND.

I.

VEX not thou the poet's mind
With thy shallow wit :
Vex not thou the poet's mind ;
For thou canst not fathom it.

Clear and bright it should be ever,
Flowing like a crystal river ;
Bright as light, and clear as wind.

II.

Dark-brow'd sophist, come not anear ;
All the place is holy ground ;
Hollow smile and frozen sneer
Come not here.
Holy water will I pour
Into every spicy flower
Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it around.
The flowers would faint at your cruel
cheer.

In your eye there is death,
There is frost in your breath
Which would blight the plants.
Where you stand you cannot hear
From the groves within
The wild-bird's din.

In the heart of the garden the merry bird
chants,
It would fall to the ground if you came
in.

In the middle leaps a fountain
Like sheet lightning,
Ever brightening

With a low melodious thunder ;
All day and all night it is ever drawn
From the brain of the purple mountain
Which stands in the distance yonder :
It springs on a level of bowery lawn,
And the mountain draws it from Heaven
above,

And it sings a song of undying love ;
And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and
full,

You never would hear it ; your ears are
so dull ;

So keep where you are : you are foul
with sin ;

It would shrink to the earth if you came
in.

THE SEA-FAIRIES.

SLOW sail'd the weary mariners and saw,
Betwixt the green brink and the running
foam,
Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms
prest

To little harps of gold ; and while they
mused

Whispering to each other half in fear,
Shrill music reach'd them on the middle
sea.

Whither away, whither away, whither
away ? fly no more.

Whither away from the high green field,
and the happy blossoming shore ?
Day and night to the billow the fountain
calls :

Down shower the gambolling waterfalls
From wandering over the lea :
Out of the live-green heart of the dells
They freshen the silvery-crimson shells,
And thick with white bells the clover-hill
swells

High over the full-toned sea :
O hither, come hither and furl your sails,
Come hither to me and to me :

Hither, come hither and frolic and play ;
Here it is only the mew that wails ;
We will sing to you all the day :

Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,
For here are the blissful downs and dales,
And merrily, merrily carol the gales,
And the spangle dances in bight and
bay,

And the rainbow forms and flies on the
land

Over the islands free ;
And the rainbow lives in the curve of the
sand ;

Hither, come hither and see ;

And the rainbow hangs on the poisoning
 wave,
 And sweet is the colour of cove and cave,
 And sweet shall your welcome be :
 O hither, come hither, and be our lords,
 For merry brides are we :
 We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak sweet
 words :

O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
 With pleasure and love and jubilee :
 O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
 When the sharp clear twang of the golden
 chords
 Runs up the ridged sea.
 Who can light on as happy a shore
 All the world o'er, all the world o'er?
 Whither away? listen and stay : mariner,
 mariner, fly no more.

THE DESERTED HOUSE.

I.

LIFE and Thought have gone away
 Side by side,
 Leaving door and windows wide :
 Careless tenants they !

II.

All within is dark as night :
 In the windows is no light ;
 And no murmur at the door,
 So frequent on its hinge before.

III.

Close the door, the shutters close,
 Or thro' the windows we shall see
 The nakedness and vacancy
 Of the dark deserted house.

IV.

Come away : no more of mirth
 Is here or merry-making sound.
 The house was builded of the earth,
 And shall fall again to ground.

V.

Come away : for Life and Thought
 Here no longer dwell ;
 But in a city glorious—
 A great and distant city—have bought
 A mansion incorruptible.
 Would they could have stayed with us !

THE DYING SWAN.

I.

THE plain was grassy, wild and bare,
 Wide, wild, and open to the air,
 Which had built up everywhere
 An under-roof of doleful gray.
 With an inner voice the river ran,
 Adown it floated a dying swan,
 And loudly did lament.
 It was the middle of the day.
 Ever the weary wind went on,
 And took the reed-tops as it went.

II.

Some blue peaks in the distance rose,
 And white against the cold-white sky,
 Shone out their crowning snows,
 One willow over the river wept,
 And shook the wave as the wind did sigh ;
 Above in the wind was the swallow,
 Chasing itself at its own wild will,
 And far thro' the marish green and
 still

The tangled water-courses slept,
 Shot over with purple, and green, and
 yellow.

III.

The wild swan's death-hymn took the soul
 Of that waste place with joy
 Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear
 The warble was low, and full and clear ;
 And floating about the under-sky,
 Prevailing in weakness, the coronach
 stole

A DIRGE.

Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear ;
 But anon her awful jubilant voice,
 With a music strange and manifold,
 Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold ;
 As when a mighty people rejoice
 With shawms, and with cymbals, and
 harps of gold,
 And the tumult of their acclaim is roll'd
 Thro' the open gates of the city afar,
 To the shepherd who watcheth the even-
 ing star.
 And the creeping mosses and clambering
 weeds,
 And the willow-branches hoar and dank,
 And the wavy swell of the souging
 reeds,
 And the wave-worn horns of the echoing
 bank,
 And the silvery marish - flowers that
 throng
 The desolate creeks and pools among,
 Were flooded over with eddying song.

A DIRGE.

I.

Now is done thy long day's work ;
 Fold thy palms across thy breast,
 Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest.
 Let them rave.
 Shadows of the silver birk
 Sweep the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

II.

Thee nor carketh care nor slander ;
 Nothing but the small cold worm
 Fretteth thine enshrouded form.
 Let them rave.
 Light and shadow ever wander
 O'er the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

III.

Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed ;
 Chaunteth not the brooding bee
 Sweeter tones than calumny ?
 Let them rave.
 Thou wilt never raise thine head
 From the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

IV.

Crocodiles wept tears for thee ;
 The woodbine and eglare
 Drip sweeter dews than traitor's tear.
 Let them rave.
 Rain makes music in the tree
 O'er the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

V.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,
 Bramble roses, faint and pale,
 And long purples of the dale.
 Let them rave.
 These in every shower creep
 Thro' the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

VI.

The gold-eyed kingcups fine ;
 The frail bluebell peereth over
 Rare broidry of the purple clover.
 Let them rave.
 Kings have no such couch as thine,
 As the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

VII.

Wild words wander here and there :
 God's great gift of speech abused
 Makes thy memory confused :
 But let them rave.
 The balm-cricket carols clear
 In the green that folds thy grave.
 Let them rave.

LOVE AND DEATH.

WHAT time the mighty moon was gather-
ing light

Love paced the thymy plots of Paradise,
And all about him roll'd his lustrous eyes ;
When, turning round a cassia, full in view,
Death, walking all alone beneath a yew,
And talking to himself, first met his sight :
'You must begone,' said Death, 'these
walks are mine.'

Love wept and spread his sheeny vans
for flight ;

Yet ere he parted said, 'This hour is
thine :

Thou art the shadow of life, and as the
tree

Stands in the sun and shadows all be-
neath,

So in the light of great eternity
Life eminent creates the shade of death ;
The shadow passeth when the tree shall
fall,

But I shall reign for ever over all.'

THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.

My heart is wasted with my woe,
Oriana.

There is no rest for me below,
Oriana.

When the long dun wolds are ribb'd with
snow,

And loud the Norland whirlwinds blow,
Oriana,

Alone I wander to and fro,
Oriana.

Ere the light on dark was growing,
Oriana,

At midnight the cock was crowing,
Oriana :

Winds were blowing, waters flowing,
We heard the steeds to battle going,
Oriana ;

Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,
Oriana.

In the yew-wood black as night,
Oriana,

Ere I rode into the fight,
Oriana,

While blissful tears blinded my sight
By star-shine and by moonlight,
Oriana,

I to thee my troth did plight,
Oriana.

She stood upon the castle wall,
Oriana :

She watch'd my crest among them all",
Oriana :

She saw me fight, she heard me call,
When forth there stept a foeman tall,
Oriana,

Atween me and the castle wall,
Oriana.

The bitter arrow went aside,
Oriana :

The false, false arrow went aside,
Oriana :

The damned arrow glanced aside,
And pierced thy heart, my love, my bride,
Oriana !

Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,
Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space,
Oriana.

Loud, loud rung out the bugle's brays,
Oriana.

Oh ! deathful stabs were dealt apace,
The battle deepen'd in its place,
Oriana ;

But I was down upon my face,
Oriana.

They should have stabb'd me where I lay,
Oriana !

How could I rise and come away,
Oriana ?

How could I look upon the day ?

They should have stabb'd me where I lay,
Oriana —

They should have trod me into clay,
Oriana.

O breaking heart that will not break,
Oriana !

O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,
Oriana !

Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,
And then the tears run down my cheek,
Oriana :

What wantest thou ? whom dost thou seek,
Oriana ?

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,
Oriana.

Thou comest between me and the skies,
Oriana.

I feel the tears of blood arise
Up from my heart unto my eyes,
Oriana.

Within thy heart my arrow lies,
Oriana.

O cursed hand ! O cursed blow !
Oriana !

O happy thou that liest low,
Oriana !

All night the silence seems to flow
Beside me in my utter woe,
Oriana.

A weary, weary way I go,
Oriana.

When Norland winds pipe down the sea,
Oriana,

I walk, I dare not think of thee,
Oriana.

Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,
I dare not die and come to thee,
Oriana.

I hear the roaring of the sea,
Oriana.

CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbour villages
Playing mad pranks along the heathy leas;
Two strangers meeting at a festival ;

Two lovers whispering by an orchard
wall ;

Two lives bound fast in one with golden
ease ;

Two graves grass-green beside a gray
church-tower,

Wash'd with still rains and daisy-blos-
somed ;

Two children in one hamlet born and
bred ;

So runs the round of life from hour to
hour.

THE MERMAN.

I.

Who would be
A merman bold,
Sitting alone,
Singing alone
Under the sea,
With a crown of gold,
On a throne ?

II.

I would be a merman bold,
I would sit and sing the whole of the day ;
I would fill the sea-halls with a voice of
power ;
But at night I would roam abroad and play
With the mermaids in and out of the
rocks,

Dressing their hair with the white sea-flower ;
 And holding them back by their flowing locks
 I would kiss them often under the sea,
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd me
 Laughingly, laughingly ;
 And then we would wander away, away
 To the pale-green sea-groves straight and high,
 Chasing each other merrily.

III.

There would be neither moon nor star ;
 But the wave would make music above us afar—
 Low thunder and light in the magic night—
 Neither moon nor star.
 We would call aloud in the dreamy dells,
 Call to each other and whoop and cry
 All night, merrily, merrily ;
 They would pelt me with starry spangles and shells,
 Laughing and clapping their hands between,
 All night, merrily, merrily :
 But I would throw to them back in mine
 Turkis and agate and almondine :
 Then leaping out upon them unseen
 I would kiss them often under the sea,
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd me
 Laughingly, laughingly.
 Oh ! what a happy life were mine
 Under the hollow-hung ocean green !
 Soft are the moss-beds under the sea ;
 We would live merrily, merrily.

THE MERMAID.

I.

Who would be
 A mermaid fair,
 Singing alone,

Combing her hair
 Under the sea,
 In a golden curl
 With a comb of pearl,
 On a throne ?

II.

I would be a mermaid fair ;
 I would sing to myself the whole of the day ;
 With a comb of pearl I would comb my hair ;
 And still as I comb'd I would sing and say,
 ' Who is it loves me ? who loves not me ? '
 I would comb my hair till my ringlets would fall

Low adown, low adown,
 From under my starry sea-bud crown
 Low adown and around,
 And I should look like a fountain of gold
 Springing alone
 With a shrill inner sound,
 Over the throne

In the midst of the hall ;
 Till that great sea-snake under the sea
 From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps
 Would slowly trail himself sevenfold
 Round the hall where I sate, and look in at the gate
 With his large calm eyes for the love of me.
 And all the mermen under the sea
 Would feel their immortality
 Die in their hearts for the love of me.

III.

But at night I would wander away, away,
 I would fling on each side my low-flowing locks,
 And lightly vault from the throne and play
 With the mermen in and out of the rocks ;

We would run to and fro, and hide and
 seek,
 On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson
 shells,
 Whose silvery spikes are nighest the sea.
 But if any came near I would call, and
 shriek,
 And adown the steep like a wave I would
 leap
 From the diamond-ledges that jut from
 the dells ;
 For I would not be kiss'd by all who
 would list,
 Of the bold merry mermen under the
 sea ;
 They would sue me, and woo me, and
 flatter me,
 In the purple twilights under the sea ;
 But the king of them all would carry
 me,
 Woo me, and win me, and marry me,
 In the branching jaspers under the sea ;
 Then all the dry pied things that be
 In the hueless mosses under the sea
 Would curl round my silver feet silently,
 All looking up for the love of me.
 And if I should carol aloud, from aloft
 All things that are forked, and horned,
 and soft
 Would lean out from the hollow sphere of
 the sea,
 All looking down for the love of me.

ADELINE.

I.

MYSTERY of mysteries,
 Faintly smiling Adeline,
 Scarce of earth nor all divine,
 Nor unhappy, nor at rest,
 But beyond expression fair
 With thy floating flaxen hair ;

Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes
 Take the heart from out my breast.
 Wherefore those dim looks of thine,
 Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

II.

Whence that aery bloom of thine,
 Like a lily which the sun
 Looks thro' in his sad decline,
 And a rose-bush leans upon,
 Thou that faintly smilest still,
 As a Naiad in a well,
 Looking at the set of day,
 Or a phantom two hours old
 Of a maiden past away,
 Ere the placid lips be cold ?
 Wherefore those faint smiles of thine,
 Spiritual Adeline ?

III.

What hope or fear or joy is thine ?
 Who talketh with thee, Adeline ?
 For sure thou art not all alone.
 Do beating hearts of salient springs
 Keep measure with thine own ?
 Hast thou heard the butterflies
 What they say betwixt their wings ?
 Or in stillest evenings
 With what voice the violet woos
 To his heart the silver dew ?
 Or when little airs arise,
 How the merry bluebell rings
 To the mosses underneath ?
 Hast thou look'd upon the breath
 Of the lilies at sunrise ?
 Wherefore that faint smile of thine,
 Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

IV.

Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,
 Some spirit of a crimson rose
 In love with thee forgets to close
 His curtains, wasting odorous sighs
 All night long on darkness blind.

What aileth thee? whom waitest thou
 With thy soften'd, shadow'd brow,
 And those dew-lit eyes of thine,
 Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

V.

Lovest thou the doleful wind
 When thou gazest at the skies?
 Doth the low-tongued Orient
 Wander from the side of the morn,
 Dripping with Sabæan spice
 On thy pillow, lowly bent
 With melodious airs lovelorn,
 Breathing Light against thy face,
 While his locks a-drooping twined
 Round thy neck in subtle ring
 Make a carcanet of rays,
 And ye talk together still,
 In the language wherewith Spring
 Letters cowslips on the hill?
 Hence that look and smile of thine,
 Spiritual Adeline.

MARGARET.

I.

O SWEET pale Margaret,
 O rare pale Margaret,
 What lit your eyes with tearful power,
 Like moonlight on a falling shower?
 Who lent you, love, your mortal dower
 Of pensive thought and aspect pale,
 Your melancholy sweet and frail
 As perfume of the cuckoo-flower?
 From the westward-winding flood,
 From the evening-lighted wood,
 From all things outward you have
 won
 A tearful grace, as tho' you stood
 Between the rainbow and the sun.
 The very smile before you speak,
 That dimples your transparent cheek,

Encircles all the heart, and feedeth
 The senses with a still delight
 Of dainty sorrow without sound,
 Like the tender amber round,
 Which the moon about her spreadeth,
 Moving thro' a fleecy night.

II.

You love, remaining peacefully,
 To hear the murmur of the strife,
 But enter not the toil of life.
 Your spirit is the calmed sea,
 Laid by the tumult of the fight.
 You are the evening star, alway
 Remaining betwixt dark and bright:
 Lull'd echoes of laborious day
 Come to you, gleams of mellow light
 Float by you on the verge of night.

III.

What can it matter, Margaret,
 What songs below the waning stars
 The lion-heart, Plantagenet,
 Sang looking thro' his prison bars?
 Exquisite Margaret, who can tell
 The last wild thought of Chatelet,
 Just ere the falling axe did part
 The burning brain from the true heart,
 Even in her sight he loved so well?

IV.

A fairy shield your Genius made
 And gave you on your natal day.
 Your sorrow, only sorrow's shade,
 Keeps real sorrow far away.
 You move not in such solitudes,
 You are not less divine,
 But more human in your moods,
 Than your twin-sister, Adeline.
 Your hair is darker, and your eyes
 Touch'd with a somewhat darker hue,
 And less æerially blue,
 But ever trembling thro' the dew
 Of dainty-woeful sympathies.

V.

O sweet pale Margaret,
O rare pale Margaret,
Come down, come down, and hear me
speak :

Tie up the ringlets on your cheek :
The sun is just about to set,
The arching limes are tall and shady,
And faint, rainy lights are seen,
Moving in the leavy beech.
Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,
Where all day long you sit between
Joy and woe, and whisper each.
Or only look across the lawn,
Look out below your bower-eaves,
Look down, and let your blue eyes dawn
Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves.

ELEÄNORE.

I.

Thy dark eyes open'd not,
Nor first reveal'd themselves to English
air,

For there is nothing here,
Which, from the out'ward to the inward
brought,

Moulded thy baby thought.
Far off from human neighbourhood,

Thou wert born, on a summer morn,
A mile beneath the cedar-wood.

Thy bounteous forehead was not fann'd
With breezes from our oaken glades,
But thou wert nursed in some delicious
land

Of lavish lights, and floating shades :
And flattering thy childish thought

The oriental fairy brought,
At the moment of thy birth,
From old well-heads of haunted rills,
And the hearts of purple hills,

And shadow'd coves on a sunny shore,
The choicest wealth of all the earth,
Jewel or shell, or starry ore,
To deck thy cradle, Eleänore.

II.

Or the yellow-banded bees,
'Inro' half-open lattices
Coming in the scented breeze,
Fed thee, a child, lying alone,
With whitest honey in fairy gar-
dens cull'd—
A glorious child, dreaming alone,
In silk-soft folds, upon yielding down,
With the hum of swarming bees
Into dreamful slumber lull'd.

III.

Who may minister to thee ?
Summer herself should minister
To thee, with fruitage golden-rinded
On golden salvers, or it may be,
Youngest Autumn, in a bower
Grape-thicken'd from the light, and
blinded
With many a deep-hued bell-like
flower

Of fragrant trailers, when the air
Sleepeth over all the heaven,
And the crag that fronts the Even,
All along the shadowy shore,
Crimsons over an inland mere,
Eleänore !

IV.

How may full-sail'd verse express,
How may measured words adore
The full-flowing harmony
Of thy swan-like stateliness,
Eleänore ?
The luxuriant symmetry
Of thy floating gracefulness,
Eleänore ?

Every turn and glance of thine,
 Every lineament divine,
 Eleänore,
 And the steady sunset glow,
 That stays upon thee? For in thee
 Is nothing sudden, nothing single;
 Like two streams of incense free
 From one censer in one shrine,
 Thought and motion mingle,
 Mingle ever. Motions flow
 To one another, even as tho'
 They were modulated so
 To an unheard melody,
 Which lives about thee, and a sweep
 Of richest pauses, evermore
 Drawn from each other mellow-deep;
 Who may express thee, Eleänore?

V.

I stand before thee, Eleänore;
 I see thy beauty gradually unfold,
 Daily and hourly, more and more.
 I muse, as in a trance, the while
 Slowly, as from a cloud of gold,
 Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.
 I muse, as in a trance, when'er
 The languors of thy love-deep eyes
 Float on to me. I would I were
 So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,
 To stand apart, and to adore,
 Gazing on thee for evermore,
 Serene, imperial Eleänore!

VI.

Sometimes, with most intensity
 Gazing, I seem to see
 Thought folded over thought, smiling
 asleep,
 Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep
 In thy large eyes, that, overpower'd quite,
 I cannot veil, or droop my sight,
 But am as nothing in its light:
 As tho' a star, in inmost heaven set,

Ev'n while we gaze on it,
 Should slowly round his orb, and slowly
 grow
 To a full face, there like a sun remain
 Fix'd—then as slowly fade again,
 And draw itself to what it was before;
 So full, so deep, so slow,
 Thought seems to come and go
 In thy large eyes, imperial Eleänore.

VII.

As thunder-clouds that, hung on high,
 Roof'd the world with doubt and fear,
 Floating thro' an evening atmosphere,
 Grow golden all about the sky;
 In thee all passion becomes passionless,
 Touch'd by thy spirit's mellowness,
 Losing his fire and active might
 In a silent meditation,
 Falling into a still delight,
 And luxury of contemplation:
 As waves that up a quiet cove
 Rolling slide, and lying still
 Shadow forth the banks at will:
 Or sometimes they swell and move,
 Pressing up against the land,
 With motions of the outer sea:
 And the self-same influence
 Controlleth all the soul and sense
 Of Passion gazing upon thee.
 His bow-string slacken'd, languid Love,
 Leaning his cheek upon his hand,
 Droops both his wings, regarding thee,
 And so would languish evermore,
 Serene, imperial Eleänore.

VIII.

But when I see thee roam, with tresses
 unconfined,
 While the amorous, odorous wind
 Breathes low between the sunset and
 the moon;
 Or, in a shadowy saloon,

On silken cushions half reclined ;
 I watch thy grace ; and in its place
 My heart a charmed slumber keeps,
 While I muse upon thy face ;
 And a languid fire creeps
 Thro' my veins to all my frame,
 Dissolvingly and slowly : soon
 From thy rose-red lips my name
 Floweth ; and then, as in a swoon,
 With dinning sound my ears are rife,
 My tremulous tongue faltereth,
 I lose my colour, I lose my breath,
 I drink the cup of a costly death,
 Brimm'd with delirious draughts of warm-
 est life.

I die with my delight, before
 I hear what I would hear from
 thee ;
 Yet tell my name again to me,
 I *would* be dying evermore,
 So dying ever, Elcănore.

I.

My life is full of weary days,
 But good things have not kept aloof,
 Nor wander'd into other ways :
 I have not lack'd thy mild reproof,
 Nor golden largess of thy praise.

And now shake hands across the brink
 Of that deep grave to which I go :
 Shake hands once more : I cannot sink
 So far—far down, but I shall know
 Thy voice, and answer from below.

II.

When in the darkness over me
 The four-handed mole shall scrape,
 Plant thou no dusky cypress-tree,
 Nor wreathe thy cap with doleful crape,
 But pledge me in the flowing grape.

And when the sappy field and wood
 Grow green beneath the showery gray,
 And rugged barks begin to bud,
 And thro' damp holts new-flush'd with
 may,
 Ring sudden scritchings of the jay,

Then let wise Nature work her will,
 And on my clay her darnel grow ;
 Come only, when the days are still,
 And at my headstone whisper low,
 And tell me if the woodbines blow.

EARLY SONNETS.

I.

TO —.

As when with downcast eyes we muse
 and brood,
 And ebb into a former life, or seem
 To lapse far back in some confused dream
 To states of mystical similitude ;
 If one but speaks or hems or stirs his chair,
 Ever the wonder waxeth more and more,
 So that we say, 'All this hath been before,
 All this hath been, I know not when or
 where.'
 So, friend, when first I look'd upon your
 face,
 Our thought gave answer each to each, so
 true—
 Opposed mirrors each reflecting each—
 That tho' I knew not in what time or place,
 Methought that I had often met with you,
 And either lived in either's heart and
 speech.

II.

TO J. M. K.

My hope and heart is with thee—thou
 wilt be
 A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest

To scare church-harpies from the master's
feast ;
Our dusted velvets have much need of
these :

Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old saws,
Distill'd from some worm-canker'd ho-
mily ;

But spurr'd at heart with fieriest energy
To embattail and to wall about thy cause
With iron-worded proof, hating to hark
The humming of the drowsy pulpit-drone
Half God's good sabbath, while the worn-
out clerk

Brow-beats his desk below. Thou from
a throne

Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the
dark

Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and
mark.

III.

MINE be the strength of spirit, full and
free,

Like some broad river rushing down
alone,

With the selfsame impulse wherewith he
was thrown

From his loud fount upon the echoing
lea :—

Which with increasing might doth forward
flee

By town, and tower, and hill, and cape,
and isle,

And in the middle of the green salt sea
Keeps his blue waters fresh for many a
mile.

Mine be the power which ever to its
sway

Will win the wise at once, and by degrees
May into uncongenial spirits flow ;

Ev'n as the warm gulf-stream of Florida
Floats far away into the Northern seas

The lavish growths of southern Mexico.

IV.

ALEXANDER.

WARRIOR of God, whose strong right
arm debased

The throne of Persia, when her Satrap
bled

At Issus by the Syrian gates, or fled
Beyond the Memmian naphtha-pits, dis-
graced

For ever—thee (thy pathway sand-erased)
Gliding with equal crowns two serpents
led

Joyful to that palm-planted fountain-fed
Ammonian Oasis in the waste.

There in a silent shade of laurel brown
Apart the Chamian Oracle divine
Shelter'd his unapproached mysteries :
High things were spoken there, unhanded
down ;

Only they saw thee from the secret
shrine

Returning with hot cheek and kindled
eyes.

V.

BUONAPARTE.

HE thought to quell the stubborn hearts
of oak,

Madman !—to chain with chains, and bind
with bands

That island queen who sways the floods
and lands

From Ind to Ind, but in fair daylight woke,
When from her wooden walls,—lit by
sure hands,—

With thunders, and with lightnings, and
with smoke,—

Peal after peal, the British battle broke,
Lulling the brine against the Coptic
sands.

We taught him lowlier moods, when El-
sinore

Heard the war moan along the distant sea,
Rocking with shatter'd spars, with sudden
fires

Flamed over : at Trafalgar yet once more
We taught him : late he learned humility
Perforce, like those whom Gideon school'd
with brlrs.

VI.

POLAND.

How long, O God, shall men be ridden
down,

And trampled under by the last and least
Of men? The heart of Poland hath not
ceased

To quiver, tho' her sacred blood doth
drown

The fields, and out of every smouldering
town

Cries to Thee, lest brute Power be in-
creased,

Till that o'ergrown Barbarian in the East
Transgress his ample bound to some new
crown :—

Cries to Thee, 'Lord, how long shall
these things be?

How long this icy-hearted Muscovite
Oppress the region?' Us, O Just and
Good,

Forgive, who smiled when she was torn
in three ;

Us, who stand now, when we should aid
the right—

A matter to be wept with tears of blood !

VII.

CARESS'D or chidden by the slender hand,
And singing airy trifles this or that,
Light Hope at Beauty's call would perch
and stand,

And run thro' every change of sharp
and flat ;

And Fancy came and at her pillow sat,
When Sleep had bound her in his rosy
band,

And chased away the still-recurring
guat,

And woke her with a lay from fairy land.
But now they live with Beauty less and
less,

For Hope is other Hope and wanders
far,

Nor cares to lisp in love's delicious
creeds ;

And Fancy watches in the wilderness,
Poor Fancy sadder than a single star,
That sets at twilight in a land of
reeds.

VIII.

THE form, the form alone is eloquent !
A nobler yearning never broke her
rest

Than but to dance and sing, be gaily
drest,

And win all eyes with all accomplish-
ment :

Yet in the whirling dances as we went,
My fancy made me for a moment blest

To find my heart so near the beauteous
breast

That once had power to rob it of content.
A moment came the tenderness of tears,

The phantom of a wish that once could
move,

A ghost of passion that no smiles
restore—

For ah ! the slight coquette, she can-
not love,

And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand years,
She still would take the praise, and
care no more.

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IX.

Wan Sculptor, weepest thou to take the
cast

Of those dead lineaments that near thee
lie?

O sorrowest thou, pale Painter, for the
past,

In painting some dead friend from
memory?

Weep on : beyond his object Love can
last :

His object lives : more cause to weep
have I :

My tears, no tears of love, are flowing fast,
No tears of love, but tears that Love
can die.

I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,
Nor care to sit beside her where she
sits—

Al pity—hint it not in human tones,
But breathe it into earth and close it up
With secret death for ever, in the pits

Which some green Christmas crams
with weary bones.

X.

If I were loved, as I desire to be,
What is there in the great sphere of the
earth,

And range of evil between death and
birth,

That I should fear,—if I were loved by
thee?

All the inner, all the outer world of pain
Clear Love would pierce and cleave, if
thou wert mine,

As I have heard that, somewhere in the
main,

Fresh-water springs come up through
bitter brine.

'Twere joy, not fear, claspt hand-in-hand
with thee,

To wait for death—mute—careless of all
ills,

Apart upon a mountain, tho' the surge
Of some new deluge from a thousand hills

Flung leagues of roaring foam into the
gorge

Below us, as far on as eye could see.

XI.

THE BRIDESMAID.

O BRIDESMAID, ere the happy knot was
tied,

Thine eyes so wept that they could
hardly see ;

Thy sister smiled and said, 'No tears
for me !

A happy bridesmaid makes a happy
bride.'

And then, the couple standing side by
side,

Love lighted down between them full
of glee,

And over his left shoulder laugh'd at
thee,

'O happy bridesmaid, make a happy
bride.'

And all at once a pleasant truth I learn'd,
For while the tender service made thee

weep,

I loved thee for the tear thou couldst not
hide,

And prest thy hand, and knew the press
return'd,

And thought, 'My life is sick of single
sleep :

O happy bridesmaid, make a happy
bride !'

THE LADY OF SHALOTT, AND OTHER POEMS.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

PART I.

ON either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the
sky ;
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many-tower'd Camelot ;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
Slide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses ; and unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
Skimming down to Camelot :
But who hath seen her wave her hand ?
Or at the casement seen her stand ?
Or is she known in all the land,
The Lady of Shalott ?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
Down to tower'd Camelot :
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers 'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott.'

PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot :
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,

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Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two :
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot :
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed ;
'I am half sick of shadows,' said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III.

A BOW-SHOT from her bower-caves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot :
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,

The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd ;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode ;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
'Tirra lirra,' by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror crack'd from side to side ;
'The curse is come upon me,' cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV.

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complain-
ing,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot ;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seer in a trance,

Seeing all his own mischance—
 With a glassy countenance
 Did she look to Camelot.
 And at the closing of the day
 She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;
 The broad stream bore her far away,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
 That loosely flew to left and right—
 The leaves upon her falling light—
 Thro' the noises of the night
 She floated down to Camelot :
 And as the boat-head wound along
 The willowy hills and fields among,
 They heard her singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
 Till her blood was frozen slowly,
 And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
 Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
 For ere she reached upon the tide
 The first house by the water-side,
 Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
 By garden-wall and gallery,
 A gleaming shape she floated by,
 Dead-pale between the houses high,
 Silent into Camelot.
 Out upon the wharfs they came,
 Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
 And round the prow they read her name,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this ? and what is here ?
 And in the lighted palace near
 Died the sound of royal cheer ;
 And they cross'd themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot :

But Lancelot mused a little space ;
 He said, 'She has a lovely face ;
 God in his mercy lend her grace,
 The Lady of Shalott.'

MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

WITH one black shadow at its feet,
 The house thro' all the level shines,
 Close-latticed to the brooding heat,
 And silent in its dusty vines :
 A faint-blue ridge upon the right,
 An empty river-bed before,
 And shallows on a distant shore,
 In glaring sand and inlets bright.
 But 'Ave Mary,' made she moan,
 And 'Ave Mary,' night and morn,
 And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all alone,
 To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

She, as her carol sadder grew,
 From brow and bosom slowly down
 Thro' rosy taper fingers drew
 Her streaming curls of deepest brown
 To left and right, and made appear
 Still-lighted in a secret shrine,
 Her melancholy eyes divine,
 The home of woe without a tear.
 And 'Ave Mary,' was her moan,
 'Madonna, sad is night and morn ;'
 And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all alone,
 To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

Till all the crimson changed, and past
 Into deep orange o'er the sea,
 Low on her knees herself she cast,
 Before Our Lady murmur'd she ;
 Complaining, 'Mother, give me grace
 To help me of my weary load.'
 And on the liquid mirror glow'd
 The clear perfection of her face.

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THE SOUTH.

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'Is this the form,' she made her
moan,
'That won his praises night and
morn ?'
And 'Ah,' she said, 'but I wake
alone,
I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn.'

Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would
bleat,

Nor any cloud would cross the vault,
But day increased from heat to heat,
On stony drought and steaming salt ;
Till now at noon she slept again,
And seem'd knee-deep in mountain
grass,

And heard her native breezes pass,
And runlets babbling down the glen.
She breathed in sleep a lower moan,
And murmuring, as at night and
morn,

She thought, 'My spirit is here alone,
Walks forgotten, and is forlorn.'

Dreaming, she knew it was a dream :
She felt he was and was not there.
She woke : the babble of the stream
Fell, and, without, the steady glare
Shrank one sick willow sere and small.
The river-bed was dusty-white ;
And all the furnace of the light
Struck up against the blinding wall.
She whisper'd, with a stifled moan
More inward than at night or
morn,
'Sweet Mother, let me not here alone
Live forgotten and die forlorn.'

And, rising, from her bosom drew
Old letters, breathing of her worth,
For 'Love,' they said, 'must needs be
true,
To what is loveliest upon earth.'

An image seem'd to pass the door,
To look at her with slight, and say
'But now thy beauty flows away,
So be alone for evermore.'
'O cruel heart,' she changed her tone,
'And cruel love, whose end is scorn,
Is this the end to be left alone,
To live forgotten, and die 'orlorn?'

But sometimes in the falling day
An image seem'd to pass the door,
To look into her eyes and say,
'But thou shalt be alone no more.'
And flaming downward over all
From heat to heat the day decreased,
And slowly rounded to the east
The one black shadow from the wall.
'The day to night,' she made her
moan,
'The day to night, the night to
morn,
And day and night I am left alone
To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

At eve a dry cicala sung,
There came a sound as of the sea ;
Backward the lattice-blind she flung,
And lean'd upon the balcony.
There all in spaces rosy-bright
Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,
And deepening thro' the silent spheres
Heaven over Heaven rose the night.
And weeping then she made her moan,
'The night comes on that knows not
morn,
When I shall cease to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

THE TWO VOICES.

A STILL small voice spake unto me,
'Thou art so full of misery,
Were it not better not to be?'

Then to the still small voice I said ;
 ' Let me not cast in endless shade
 What is so wonderfully made.'

To which the voice did urge reply ;
 ' To-day I saw the dragon-fly
 Come from the wells where he did lie.

' An inner impulse rent the veil
 Of his old husk : from head to tail
 Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

' He dried his wings : like gauze they
 grew :
 Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew
 A living flash of light he flew.'

I said, ' When first the world began,
 Young Nature thro' five cycles ran,
 And in the sixth she moulded man.

' She gave him mind, the lordliest
 Proportion, and, above the rest,
 Dominion in the head and breast.'

Thereto the silent voice replied ;
 ' Self-blinded are you by your pride :
 Look up thro' night : the world is wide.

' This truth within thy mind rehearse,
 That in a boundless universe
 Is boundless better, boundless worse.

' Think you this mould of hopes and fears
 Could find no statelier than his peers
 In yonder hundred million spheres ?'

It spake, moreover in my mind :
 ' Tho' thou wert scatter'd to the wind,
 Yet is there plenty of the kind.'

Then did my response clearer fall :
 ' No compound of this earthly ball
 Is like another, all in all.'

To which he answer'd scoffingly ;
 ' Good soul ! suppose I grant it thee,
 Who'll weep for thy deficiency ?

' Or will one beam be less intense,
 When thy peculiar difference
 Is cancell'd in the world of sense ?'

I would have said, ' Thou canst not know,'
 But my full heart, that work'd below,
 Rain'd thro' my sight its overflow.

Again the voice spake unto me :
 ' Thou art so steep'd in misery,
 Surely 'twere better not to be.

' Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,
 Nor any train of reason keep :
 Thou canst not think, but thou wilt weep.'

I said, ' The years with change advance :
 If I make dark my countenance,
 I shut my life from happier chance.

' Some turn this sickness yet might take,
 Ev'n yet.' But he : ' What drug can make
 A wither'd palsy cease to shake ?'

I wept, ' Tho' I should die, I know
 That all about the thorn will blow
 In tufts of rosy-tinted snow ;

' And men, thro' novel spheres of thought
 Still moving after truth long sought,
 Will learn new things when I am not.'

' Yet,' said the secret voice, ' some time,
 Sooner or later, will gray prime
 Make thy grass hoar with early rime.

' Not less swift souls that yearn for light,
 Rapt after heaven's starry flight,
 Would sweep the tracts of day and night.

'Not less the bee would range her cells,
The furzy prickles fire the dells,
The foxglove cluster dappled bells.'

I said that 'all the years invent ;
Each month is various to present
The world with some development.

'Were this not well, to bide mine hour,
Tho' watching from a ruin'd tower
How grows the day of human power ?'

'The highest-mounted mind,' he said,
'Still sees the sacred morning spread
The silent summit overhead.

'Will thirty seasons render plain
Those lonely lights that still remain,
Still breaking over land and main ?

'Or make that morn, from his cold crown
And crystal silence creeping down,
Flood with full daylight glebe and town ?

'Forerun thy peers, thy time, and let
Thy feet, millenniums hence, be set
In midst of knowledge, dream'd not yet.

'Thou hast not gain'd a real height,
Nor art thou nearer to the light,
Because the scale is infinite.

'Twere better not to breathe or speak,
Than cry for strength, remaining weak,
And seem to find, but still to seek.

'Moreover, but to seem to find
Asks what thou lackest, thought resign'd,
A healthy frame, a quiet mind.'

I said, 'When I am gone away,
"He dared not tarry," men will say,
Doing dishonour to my clay.'

'This is more vile,' he made reply,
'To breathe and loathe, to live and sigh,
Than once from dread of pain to die.

'Sick art thou—a divided will
Still heaping on the fear of ill
The fear of men, a coward still.

'Do men love thee ? Art thou so bound
To men, that how thy name may sound
Will vex thee lying underground ?

'The memory of the wither'd leaf
In endless time is scarce more brief
Than of the garner'd Autumn-sheaf.

'Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust ;
The right ear, that is fill'd with dust,
Hears little of the false or just.'

'Hard task, to pluck resolve,' I cried,
'From emptiness and the waste wide
Of that abyss, or scornful pride !

'Nay—rather yet that I could raise
One hope that warm'd me in the days
While still I yearn'd for human praise.

'When, wide in soul and bold of tongue,
Among the tents I paused and sung,
The distant battle flash'd and rung.

'I sung the joyful Pæan clear,
And, sitting, burnish'd without fear
The brand, the buckler, and the spear—

'Waiting to strive a happy strife,
To war with falsehood to the knife,
And not to lose the good of life—

'Some hidden principle to move,
To put together, part and prove,
And mete the bounds of hate and love—

'As far as might be, to carve out
Free space for every human doubt,
That the whole mind might orb about—

'To search thro' all I felt or saw,
The springs of life, the depths of awe,
And reach the law within the law :

'At least, not rotting like a weed,
But, having sown some generous seed,
Fruitful of further thought and deed,

'To pass, when Life' her light with-
draws,
Not void of righteous self-applause,
Nor in a merely selfish cause—

'In some good cause, not in mine own,
To perish, wept for, honour'd, known,
And like a warrior overthrown ;

'Whose eyes are dim with glorious
tears,
When, soil'd with noble dust, he hears
His country's war-song thrill his ears :

'Then dying of a mortal stroke,
What time the foeman's line is broke,
And all the war is roll'd in smoke,'

'Yea !' said the voice, 'thy dream was
good,
While thou abodest in the bud.
It was the stirring of the blood.

'If Nature put not forth her power
About the opening of the flower,
Who is it that could live an hour ?

'Then comes the check, the change, the
fall,
Pain rises up, old pleasures pall.
There is one remedy for all.

'Yet hadst thou, thro' enduring pain,
Link'd month to month with such a chain
Of knitted purport, all were vain.

'Thou hadst not between death and birth
Dissolved the riddle of the earth.
So were thy labour little-worth.

'That men with knowledge merely play'd,
I told thee—hardly nigher made,
Tho' scaling slow from grade to grade ;

'Much less this dreamer, deaf and blind,
Named man, may hope some truth to find,
That bears relation to the mind.

'For every worm beneath the moon
Draws different threads, and late and soon
Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.

'Cry, faint not : either Truth is born
Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,
Or in the gateways of the morn.

'Cry, faint not, climb : the summits slope
Beyond the furthest flights of hope,
Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.

'Sometimes a little corner shines,
As over rainy mist inclines
A gleaming crag with belts of pines.

'I will go forward, sayest thou,
I shall not fail to find her now.
Look up, the fold is on her brow.

'If straight thy track, or if oblique,
Thou know'st not. Shadows thou dost
strike,
Embracing cloud, Ixion-like ;

'And owning but a little more
Than beasts, abidest lame and poor,
Calling thyself a little lower

'Than angels. Cease to wail and brawl!
Why inch by inch to darkness crawl?
There is one remedy for all.'

'O dull, one-sided voice,' said I,
'Wilt thou make everything a lie,
To flatter me that I may die?'

'I know that age to age succeeds,
Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,
A dust of systems and of creeds.

'I cannot hide that some have striven,
Achieving calm, to whom was given
The joy that mixes man with Heaven :

'Who, rowing hard against the stream,
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,
And did not dream it was a dream ;

'But heard, by secret transport led,
Ev'n in the charnels of the dead,
The murmur of the fountain-head—

'Which did accomplish their desire,
Bore and forbore, and did not tire,
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.

'He heeded not reviling tones,
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,
Tho' cursed and scorn'd, and bruised with
stones :

'But looking upward, full of grace,
He pray'd, and from a happy place
God's glory smote him on the face.'

The sullen answer slid betwixt :
'Not that the grounds of hope were fix'd,
The elements were kindlier mix'd.'

I said, 'I toil beneath the curse,
But, knowing not the universe,
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

'And that, in seeking to undo
One riddle, and to find the true,
I knit a hundred others new :

'Or that this anguish fleeting hence,
Unmanacled from bonds of sense,
Be fix'd and froz'n to permanence

'For I go, weak from suffering here :
Naked I go, and void of cheer :
What is it that I may not fear?'

'Consider well,' the voice replied,
'His face, that two hours since hath died ;
Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride?'

'Will he obey when one commands?
Or answer should one press his hands?
He answers not, nor understands.

'His palms are folded on his breast :
There is no other thing express'd
But long disquiet merged in rest.

'His lips are very mild and meek .
Tho' one should smite him on the cheek,
And on the mouth, he will not speak.

'His little daughter, whose sweet face
He kiss'd, taking his last embrace,
Becomes dishonour to her race—

'His sons grow up that bear his name,
Some grow to honour, some to shame,—
But he is chill to praise or blame.

'He will not hear the north-wind rave,
Nor, moaning, household shelter crave
From winter rains that beat his grave.

'High up the vapours fold and swim :
About him broods the twilight dim :
The place he knew forgetteth him.'

'If all be dark, vague voice,' I said,
'These things are wrapt in doubt and
dread,
Nor canst thou show the dead are dead.

'The sap dries up : the plant declines.
A deeper tale my heart divines,
Know I not Death ? the outward signs ?

'I found him when my years were few ;
A shadow on the graves I knew,
And darkness in the village yew.

'From grave to grave the shadow crept :
In her still place the morning wept :
Touch'd by his feet the daisy slept.

'The simple senses crown'd his head :
"Omega ! thou art Lord," they said,
"We find no motion in the dead."

'Why, if man rot in dreamless ease,
Should that plain fact, as taught by these,
Not make him sure that he shall cease ?

'Who forged that other influence,
That heat of inward evidence,
By which he doubts against the sense ?

'He owns the fatal gift of eyes,
That read his spirit blindly wise,
Not simple as a thing that dies.

'Here sits he shaping wings to fly :
His heart forebodes a mystery :
He names the name Eternity.

'That type of Perfect in his mind
In Nature can he nowhere find.
He sows himself on every wind.

'He seems to hear a Heavenly Friend,
And thro' thick veils to apprehend
A labour working to an end.

'The end and the beginning vex
His reason : many things perplex,
With motions, checks, and counter-
checks.

'He knows a baseness in his blood
At such strange war with something good,
He may not do the thing he would.

'Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,
Vast images in glimmering dawn,
Half shown, are broken and withdrawn.

'Ah ! sure within him and without,
Could his dark wisdom find it out,
There must be answer to his doubt,

'But thou canst answer not again.
With thine own weapon art thou slain,
Or thou wilt answer but in vain.

'The doubt would rest, I dare not solve.
In the same circle we revolve.
Assurance only breeds resolve.'

As when a billow, blown against,
Falls back, the voice with which I fenced
A little ceased, but recommenced.

'Where wert thou when thy father play'd
In his free field, and pastime made,
A merry boy in sun and shade ?

'A merry boy they called him then,
He sat upon the knees of men
In days that never come again.

'Before the little ducts began
To feed thy bones with lime, and ran
Their course, till thou wert also man :

'Who took a wife, who rear'd his race,
Whose wrinkles gather'd on his face,
Whose troubles number with his days :

'A life of nothings, nothing worth,
From that first nothing ere his birth
To that last nothing under earth !'

'These words,' I said, 'are like the rest ;
No certain clearness, but at best
A vague suspicion of the breast :

'But if I grant, thou mightst defend
The thesis which thy words intend—
That to begin implies to end ;

'Yet how should I for certain hold,
Because my memory is so cold,
That I first was in human mould ?

'I cannot make this matter plain,
But I would shoot, howe'er in vain,
A random arrow from the brain.

'It may be that no life is found,
Which only to one engine bound
Falls off, but cycles always round.

'As old mythologies relate,
Some draught of Lethe might await
The slipping thro' from state to state.

'As here we find in trances, men
Forget the dream that happens then,
Until they fall in trance again.

'So might we, if our state were such
As one before, remember much,
For those two likes might meet and touch.

'But, if I lapsed from nobler place,
Some legend of a fallen race
Alone might hint of my disgrace ;

'Some vague emotion of delight
In gazing up an Alpine height,
Some yearning toward the lamps of night.

'Or if thro' lower lives I came—
Tho' all experience past became
Consolidate in mind and frame—

'I might forget my weaker lot ;
For is not our first year forgot ?
The haunts of memory echo not.

'And men, whose reason long was blind,
From cells of madness unconfined,
Oft lose whole years of darker mind.

'Much more, if first I floated free,
As naked essence, must I be
Incompetent of memory :

'For memory dealing but with time,
And he with matter, should she climb
Beyond her own material prime ?

'Moreover, something is or seems,
That touches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—

'Of something felt, like something here ;
Of something done, I know not where ;
Such as no language may declare.'

The still voice laugh'd. 'I talk,' said he,
'Not with thy dreams. Suffice it thee
Thy pain is a reality.'

'But thou,' said I, 'hast miss'd thy mark,
Who sought'st to wreck my mortal ark,
By making all the horizon dark.

'Why not set forth, if I should do
This rashness, that which might ensue
With this old soul in organs new ?

'Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human breath
Has ever truly long'd for death.

'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
Oh life, not death, for which we pant ;
More life, and fuller, that I want.'

I ceased, and sat as one forlorn,
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn,
'Behold, it is the Sabbath morn.'

And I arose, and I released
The casement, and the light increased
With freshness in the dawning east.

Like soften'd airs that blowing steal,
When meres begin to uncongéal,
The sweet church bells began to peal.

On to God's house the people prest :
Passing the place where each must rest,
Each enter'd like a welcome guest.

One walk'd between his wife and child,
With measured footfall firm and mild,
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood
Lean'd on him, faithful, gentle, good,
Wearing the rose of womanhood.

And in their double love secure,
The little maiden walk'd demure,
Pacing with downward eyelids pure.

These three made unity so sweet,
My frozen heart began to beat,
Remembering its ancient heat.

I blest them, and they wander'd on :
I spoke, but answer came there none :
The dull and bitter voice was gone.

A second voice was at mine ear,
A little whisper silver-clear,
A murmur, 'Be of better cheer.'

As from some blissful neighbourhood,
A notice faintly understood,
'I see the end, and know the good.'

A little hint to solace woe,
A hint, a whisper breathing low,
'I may not speak of what I know.'

Like an Æolian harp that wakes
No certain air, but overtakes
Far thought with music that it makes :

Such seem'd the whisper at my side :
'What is it thou knowest, sweet voice?'
I cried.

'A hidden hope,' the voice replied :

So heavenly-toned, that in that hour
From out my sullen heart a power
Broke, like the rainbow from the shower,

To feel, altho' no tongue can prove,
That every cloud, that spreads above
And veileth love, itself is love.

And forth into the fields I went,
And Nature's living motion lent
The pulse of hope to discontent.

I wonder'd at the bounteous hours,
The slow result of winter showers :
You scarce could see the grass for flowers.

I wonder'd, while I paced along :
The woods were fill'd so full with song,
There seem'd no room for sense of wrong.

So variously seem'd all things wrought,
I marvell'd how the mind was brought
To anchor by one gloomy thought ;

And wherefore rather I made choice
To commune with that barren voice,
Than him that said, 'Rejoice! rejoice!'

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

I SEE the wealthy miller yet,
 His double chin, his portly size,
 And who that knew him could forget
 The busy wrinkles round his eyes?
 The slow wise smile that, round about
 His dusty forehead drily curl'd,
 Seem'd half-within and half-without,
 And full of dealings with the world?

In yonder chair I see him sit,
 Three fingers round the old silver cup—
 I see his gray eyes twinkle yet
 At his own jest—gray eyes lit up
 With summer lightnings of a soul
 So full of summer warmth, so glad,
 So healthy, sound, and clear and whole,
 His memory scarce can make me sad.

Yet fill my glass : give me one kiss :
 My own sweet Alice, we must die.
 There's somewhat in this world amiss
 Shall be unriddled by and by.
 There's somewhat flows to us in life,
 But more is taken quite away.
 Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,
 That we may die the self-same day.

Have I not found a happy earth ?
 I least should breathe a thought of pain.
 Would God renew me from my birth
 I'd almost live my life again.
 So sweet it seems with thee to walk,
 And once again to woo thee mine—
 It seems in after-dinner talk
 Across the walnuts and the wine—

To be the long and listless boy
 Late-left an orphan of the squire,
 Where this old mansion mounted high
 Looks down upon the village spire:

For even here, where I and you
 Have lived and loved alone so long,
 Each morn my sleep was broken thro'
 By some wild skylark's matin song.

And oft I heard the tender dove
 In firry woodlands making moan ;
 But ere I saw your eyes, my love,
 I had no motion of my own.
 For scarce my life with fancy play'd
 Before I dream'd that pleasant dream—
 Still hither thither idly sway'd
 Like those long mosses in the stream.

Or from the bridge I lean'd to hear
 The milldam rushing down with noise,
 And see the minnows everywhere
 In crystal eddies glance and poise,
 The tall flag-flowers when they sprung
 Below the range of stepping-stones,
 Or those three chestnuts near, that hung
 In masses thick with milky cones.

But, Alice, what an hour was that,
 When after roving in the woods
 ('Twas April then), I came and sat
 Below the chestnuts, when their buds
 Were glistening to the breezy blue ;
 And on the slope, an absent fool,
 I cast me down, nor thought of you,
 But angled in the higher pool.

A love-song I had somewhere read,
 An echo from a measured strain,
 Beat time to nothing in my head
 From some odd corner of the brain.
 It haunted me, the morning long,
 With weary sameness in the rhymes,
 The phantom of a silent song,
 That went and came a thousand times.

Then leapt a trout. In lazy mood
 I watch'd the little circles die ;
 They past into the level flood,
 And there a vision caught my eye ;

The reflex of a beauteous form,
A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,
As when a sunbeam wavers warm
Within the dark and dimpled beck.

For you remember, you had set,
That morning, on the casement-edge
A long green box of mignonette,
And you were leaning from the ledge :
And when I raised my eyes, above
They met with two so full and bright—
Such eyes ! I swear to you, my love,
That these have never lost their light.

I loved, and love dispell'd the fear
That I should die an early death :
For love possess'd the atmosphere,
And fill'd the breast with purer breath.
My mother thought, What ails the boy ?
For I was alter'd, and began
To move about the house with joy,
And with the certain step of man.

I loved the brimming wave that swam
Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,
The sleepy pool above the dam,
The pool beneath it never still,
The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,
The dark round of the dripping wheel,
The very air about the door
Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the wold,
When April nights began to blow,
And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,
I saw the village lights below ;
I knew your taper far away,
And full at heart of trembling hope,
From off the wold I came, and lay
Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

The deep brook groan'd beneath the mill ;
And 'by that lamp,' I thought, 'she sits !'
The white chalk-quarry from the hill
Gleam'd to the flying moon by fits.

'O that I were beside her now !
O will she answer if I call ?
O would she give me vow for vow,
Sweet Alice, if I told her all ?'

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin ;
And, in the pauses of the wind,
Sometimes I heard you sing within ;
Sometimes your shadow cross'd the
blind.

At last you rose and moved the light,
And the long shadow of the chair
Flitted across into the night,
And all the casement darken'd there.

But when at last I dared to speak,
The lanes, you know, were white with
may,
Your ripe lips moved not, but your cheek
Flush'd like the coming of the day ;
And so it was—half-sly, half-shy,
You would, and would not, little one !
Although I pleaded tenderly,
And you and I were all alone.

And slowly was my mother brought
To yield consent to my desire :
She wish'd me happy, but she thought
I might have look'd a little higher ;
And I was young—too young to wed :
'Yet must I love her for your sake ;
Go fetch your Alice here,' she said ;
Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride :
But, Alice, you were ill at ease ;
This dress and that by turns you tried,
Too fearful that you should not
please.

I loved you better for your fears,
I knew you could not look but well ;
And dews, that would have fall'n in
tears,

I kiss'd away before they fell.

her now !
 I call?
 vow for vow,
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my bride :
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I watch'd the little flutterings,
 The doubt my mother would not see ;
 She spoke at large of many things,
 And at the last she spoke of me ;
 And turning look'd upon your face,
 As near this door you sat apart,
 And rose, and, with a silent grace
 Approaching, press'd your heart to heart.

Ah, well—but sing the foolish song
 I gave you, Alice, on the day
 When, arm in arm, we went along,
 A pensive pair, and you were gay
 With bridal flowers—that I may seem,
 As in the nights of old, to lie
 Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,
 While those full chestnuts whisper by.

It is the miller's daughter,
 And she is grown so dear, so dear,
 That I would be the jewel
 That trembles in her ear :
 For hid in ringlets day and night,
 I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle
 About her dainty dainty waist,
 And her heart would beat against me,
 In sorrow and in rest :
 And I should know if it beat right,
 I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
 And all day long to fall and rise
 Upon her balmy bosom,
 With her laughter or her sighs,
 And I would lie so light, so light,
 I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

A trifle, sweet ! which true love spells—
 True love interprets—right alone.
 His light upon the letter dwells,
 For all the spirit is his own.
 So, if I waste words now, in truth
 You must blame Love. His early rage
 Had force to make me rhyme in youth,
 And makes me talk too much in age.

And now those vivid hours are gone,
 Like mine own life to me thou art,
 Where Past and Present, wound in one,
 Do make a garland for the heart :
 So sing that other song I made,
 Half-anger'd with my happy lot,
 The day, when in the chestnut shade
 I found the blue Forget-me-not.

Love that hath us in the net,
 Can he pass, and we forget ?
 Many suns arise and set.
 Many a chance the years beget.
 Love the gift is Love the debt.

Even so,
 Love is hurt with jar and fret.
 Love is made a vague regret.
 Eyes with idle tears are wet.
 Idle habit links us yet.
 What is love ? for we forget :
 Ah, no ! no !

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True
 wife,
 Round my true heart thine arms entwine
 My other dearer life in life,
 Look thro' my very soul with thine !
 Untouch'd with any shade of years,
 May those kind eyes for ever dwell !
 They have not shed a many tears,
 Dear eyes, since first I knew them well.

Yet tears they shed : they had their part
 Of sorrow : for when time was ripe,
 The still affection of the heart
 Became an outward breathing type,
 That into stillness past again,
 And left a want unknown before ;
 Although the loss that brought us pain,
 That loss but made us love the more,

With farther lookings on. The kiss,
 The woven arms, seem but to be
 Weak symbols of the settled bliss,
 The comfort, I have found in thee :

But that God bless thee, dear—who
wrought
Two spirits to one equal mind—
With blessings beyond hope or thought,
With blessings which no words can find.

Arise, and let us wander forth,
To yon old mill across the wolds ;
For look, the sunset, south and north,
Winds all the vale in rosy folds,
And fires your narrow casement glass,
Touching the sullen pool below :
On the chalk-hill the bearded grass
Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

FATIMA.

O LOVE, Love, Love! O withering
might !
O sun, that from thy noonday height
Shudderest when I strain my sight,
Throbbing thro' all thy heat and light,
Lo, falling from my constant mind,
Lo, parch'd and wither'd, deaf and
blind,
I whirl like leaves in roaring wind.

Last night I wasted hateful hours
Below the city's eastern towers :
I thirsted for the brooks, the showers :
I roll'd among the tender flowers :
I crush'd them on my breast, my mouth ;
I look'd athwart the burning drouth
Of that long desert to the south.

Last night, when some one spoke his name,
From my swift blood that went and came
A thousand little shafts of flame
Were shiver'd in my narrow frame.
O Love, O fire ! once he drew
With one long kiss my whole soul thro'
My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

Before he mounts the hill, I know
He cometh quickly : from below
Sweet gales, as from deep gardens, blow
Before him, striking on my brow.
In my dry brain my spirit soon,
Down-deepening from swoon to swoon,
Faints like a dazzled morning moon.

The wind sounds like a silver wire,
And from beyond the noon a fire
Is pour'd upon the hills, and nigher
The skies stoop down in their desire ;
And, isled in sudden seas of light,
My heart, pierced thro' with fierce
delight,
Bursts into blossom in his sight.

My whole soul waiting silently,
All naked in a sultry sky,
Droops blinded with his shining eye :
I *will* possess him or will die.
I will grow round him in his place,
Grow, live, die looking on his face,
Die, dying clasp'd in his embrace.

CENONE.

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the
glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine
to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either
hand
The lawns and meadow-ledges midway
down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them
roars
The long brook falling thro' the clov'n
ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.

Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
Stands up and takes the morning : but in
front

The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
The crown of Taurus.

Hither came at noon
Mournful Ænone, wandering forlorn
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round
her neck

Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.
She, leaning on a fragment twined with
vine,

Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-
shade

Sloped downward to her seat from the
upper cliff.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill :
The grasshopper is silent in the grass :
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the cicada sleeps.
The purple flowers droop : the golden bee
Is lily-cradled : I alone awake.
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are
dim,
And I am all aweary of my life.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O
Caves
That house the cold crown'd snake ! O
mountain brooks,
I am the daughter of a River-God,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,
A cloud that gather'd shape : for it may be

That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine :
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,
white-hooved,
Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Far-off the torrent call'd me from the
cleft :
Far up the solitary morning smote
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-
dropt eyes

I sat alone : white-breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved ; a leopard
skin
Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny
hair
Cluster'd about his temples like a God's :
And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-
bow brightens
When the wind blows the foam, and all
my heart
Went forth to embrace him coming ere
he came.

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He smiled, and opening out his milk-
white palm
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,
That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd
And listen'd, the full-flowing river of
speech
Came down upon my heart.

"My own Ænone,
Beautiful-brow'd Ænone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind
ingrav'n

'For the most fair,' would seem to award
it thine,
As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married
brows."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added "This was cast upon the board,
When all the full-faced presence of the
Gods

Ranged in the halls of Peleus; whereupon
Rose feud, with question unto whom
'twere due:

But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
Delivering, that to me, by common voice,
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,
Pallas and Aphrodité, claiming each
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the
cave

Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, un-
heard

Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of
Gods."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
It was the deep midnight: one silvery
cloud

Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower
they came.

Naked they came to that smooth-swarded
bower,

And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
This way and that, in many a wild festoon
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
With bunch and berry and flower thro'
and thro'.

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and
lean'd

Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.
Then first I heard the voice of her, to
whom

Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that
grows

Larger and clearer, with one mind the
Gods

Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
Proffer of royal power, ample rule
Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue

Wherewith to embellish state, "from
many a vale

And river-sunder'd champaign clothed
with corn,

Or labour'd mines undrainable of ore.
Honour," she said, "and homage, tax

and toll,
From many an inland town and haven
large,

Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing
citadel

In glassy bays among her tallest towers."

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Still she spake on and still she spake of
power,

"Which in all action is the end of all;
Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred
And throned of wisdom—from all neigh-
bour crowns

Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon
from me,

From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee
king-born,

A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
Should come most welcome, seeing men,
in power,

Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd

Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
Above the thunder, with undying bliss
In knowledge of their own supremacy."

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
Out at arm's-length, so much the thought
of power
Flatter'd his spirit; but Pallas where she
stood

Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed
spear

Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
The while, above, her full and earnest eye
Over her snow-cold breast and angry
cheek

Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-
control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign
power.

Yet not for power (power of herself
Would come uncall'd for) but to live by
law,

Acting the law we live by without fear;
And, because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of conse-
quence."

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Again she said: "I woo thee not with gifts.
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,
If gazing on divinity disrobed
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
Unbias'd by self-profit, oh! rest thee sure
That I shall love thee well and cleave to
thee,
So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,

Shall strike within thy pulses, like a
God's,

To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown
will,

Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
Commeasure perfect freedom."

"Here she ceas'd,
And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, "O
Paris,
Give it to Pallas!" but he heard me not,
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian
wells,

With rosy slender fingers backward drew
From her warm brows and bosom her
deep hair

Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
And shoulder: from the violets her light
foot

Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded
form

Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she
moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
Half-whisper'd in his ear, "I promise
thee

The fairest and most loving wife in
Greece,"

She spoke and laugh'd: I shut my sight
for fear:

But when I look'd, Paris had raised his
arm,

And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,

As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
And I was left alone within the bower;
And from that time to this I am alone,
And I shall be alone until I die.

'Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not fair?
My love hath told me so a thousand times.
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,
Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail
Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most
loving is she?

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my
arms
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips
prest
Close, close to thine in that quick-falling
dew

Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.
They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
My dark tall pines, that plumed the
craggy ledge

High over the blue gorge, and all between
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
Foster'd the callow eaglet—from beneath
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark
morn

The panther's roar came muffled, while I
sat

Low in the valley. Never, never more
Shall lone Ænone see the morning mist
Sweep thro' them; never see them over-
laid

With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trem-
bling stars.

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd folds,

Among the fragments tumbled from the
glens,

Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her,
The Abominable, that uninvited came
Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
And bred this change; that I might speak
my mind,

And tell her to her face how much I hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and
men.

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand
times,

In this green valley, under this green hill,
Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this
stone?

Seal'd it with kisses? water'd it with tears?
O happy tears, and how unlike to these!
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my
face?

O happy earth, how canst thou bear my
weight?

O death, death, death, thou ever-floating
cloud,

There are enough unhappy on this earth,
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live:
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.
Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,
Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me die.

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
Do shape themselves within me, more and
more,

Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the
inmost hills,

Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
Conjectures of the features of her child

Ere it is born : her child !—a shudder
comes
Across me : never child be born of me,
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes !

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to
me
Walking the cold and starless road of
Death
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
With the Greek woman. I will rise and
go

Down into Troy, and ere the stars come
forth
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she
says

A fire dances before her, and a sound
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.
What this may be I know not, but I
know

That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire.'

THE SISTERS.

We were two daughters of one race :
She was the fairest in the face :
The wind is blowing in turret and tree.
They were together, and she fell ;
Therefore revenge became me well.
O the Earl was fair to see !

She died : she went to burning flame :
She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.
The wind is howling in turret and
tree.

Whole weeks and months, and early and
late,
To win his love I lay in wait :
O the Earl was fair to see !

I made a feast ; I bade him come ;
I won his love, I brought him home.
The wind is roaring in turret and tree.
And after supper, on a bed,
Upon my lap he laid his head :
O the Earl was fair to see !

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest :
His ruddy cheek upon my breast.
The wind is raging in turret and tree.
I hated him with the hate of hell,
But I loved his beauty passing well.
O the Earl was fair to see !

I rose up in the silent night :
I made my dagger sharp and bright.
The wind is raving in turret and tree.
As half-asleep his breath he drew,
Three times I stabb'd him thro' and thro'.
O the Earl was fair to see !

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,
He look'd so grand when he was dead.
The wind is blowing in turret and tree.
I wrapt his body in the sheet,
And laid him at his mother's feet.
O the Earl was fair to see !

TO —.

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I SEND you here a sort of allegory,
(For you will understand it) of a soul,
A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,
A spacious garden full of flowering
weeds,
A glorious Devil, large in heart and
brain,
That did love Beauty only, (Beauty seen
In all varieties of mould and mind)
And Knowledge for its beauty ; or if
Good,

THE PALACE OF ART.

Good only for its beauty, seeing not
That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge, are
three sisters

That doat upon each other, friends to man,
Living together under the same roof,
And never can be sunder'd without tears.
And he that shuts Love out, in turn shall be
Shut out from Love, and on her threshold
lie

Howling in outer darkness. Not for this
Was common clay ta'en from the common
earth,

Moulded by God, and temper'd with the
tears

Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

THE PALACE OF ART.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-
house,

Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.

I said, 'O Soul, make merry and carouse,
Dear soul, for all is well.'

A huge crag-platform, smooth as bur-
nish'd brass

I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
From level meadow-bases of deep grass
Suddenly scaled the light.

There, I built it firm. Of ledge or
shelf

The rock rose clear, or winding stair.
My soul would live alone unto herself
In her high palace there.

And 'while the world runs round and
round,' I said,

'Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast
shade

Sleeps on his luminous ring.'

To which my soul made answer readily :
'Trust me, in bliss I shall abide

In this great mansion, that is built for me,
So royal-rich and wide.'

* * * *

* * * *

Four courts I made, East, West and
South and North,

In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth
A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there
ran a row

Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty
woods,

Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
Of spouted fountain-floods.

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
That lent broad verge to distant lands,
Far as the wild swan wings, to where the
sky

Dipt down to sea and sands,

From those four jets four currents in one
swell

Across the mountain stream'd below
In misty folds, that floating as they fell
Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd
To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
A cloud of incense of all odour steam'd
From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, 'And who shall gaze
upon

My palace with unblinded eyes,
While this great bow will waver in the
sun,

And that sweet incense rise ?'

made answer readily :
 s I shall abide
 , that is built for me,
 and wide.'

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se rise ?'

For that sweet incense rose and never
 fail'd,
 And, while day sank or mounted
 higher,
 The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,
 Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd
 and traced,
 Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires
 From shadow'd grots of arches interlaced,
 And tipt with frost-like spires.

* * * *
 * * * *

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
 That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
 Thro' which the livelong day my soul did
 pass,
 Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace
 stood,

All various, each a perfect whole
 From living Nature, fit for every mood
 And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green and
 blue,

Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
 Where with puff'd cheek the belted
 hunter blew
 His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of
 sand,

And some one pacing there alone,
 Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,
 Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry
 waves.

You seem'd to hear them climb and fall

And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing
 caves,
 Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
 By herds upon an endless plain,
 The ragged rims of thunder brooding low,
 With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.
 In front they bound the sheaves. Be-
 hind

Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,
 And hoary to the wind.

And one a foreground black with stones
 and slags,

Beyond, a line of heights, and higher
 All barr'd with long white cloud the
 scornful crags,
 And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twilight
 pour'd

On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
 Softer than sleep—all things in order
 stored,
 A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,
 As fit for every mood of mind,
 Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was
 there
 Not less than truth design'd.

* * * *
 * * * *

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
 In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
 Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx
 Sat smiling, babe in arm.

THE PALACE OF ART.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecily;
An angel look'd at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise
A group of Houris bow'd to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son
In some fair space of sloping greens
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian
king to hear
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,
And many a tract of palm and rice,
The throne of Indian Cama slowly sail'd
A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blue unclasp'd,
From off her shoulder backward borne:
From one hand droop'd a crocus : one
hand grasp'd
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flushed Ganymede, his rosy thigh
Half-buried in the Eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone : but every legend fair
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,
Not less than life, design'd.

* * * *
* * * *

Then in the towers I placed great bells
that swung,
Mov'd of themselves, with silver sound;
And with choice paintings of wise men I
hung
The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,
Beside him Shakespeare bland and
mild ;
And there the world-worn Dante grasp'd
his song,
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest ;
A million wrinkles carved his skin ;
A hundred winters snow'd upon his
breast,
From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set
Many an arch high up did lift,
And angels rising and descending met
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd
With cycles of the human tale
Of this wide world, the times of every
land
So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and
stings ;
Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings ;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or
bind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick man
declined,
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod : and those great
bells
Began to chime. She took her throne:
She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost Oriels' coloured
flame
Two godlike faces gazed below ;
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Verulam,
The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their motion
were
Full-welling fountain-heads of change,
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazon'd
fair
In diverse raiment strange :

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, eme-
rald, blue,
Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon,
drew
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echo'd song
Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful
mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive,
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible
earth,
Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself : ' All these are
mine,
And let the world have peace or wars,
'Tis one to me.' She—when young night
divine
Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils—
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven ; and clapt her hands
and cried,
' I marvel if my still delight
In this great house so royal-rich, and wide,
Be flatter'd to the height.

' O all things fair to sate my various
eyes !
O shapes and hues that please me well !
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

' O God-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening droves
of swine
That range on yonder plain.

' In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and
sleep ;
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep.'

Then of the moral instinct would she
prate
And of the rising from the dead,
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd Fate ;
And at the last she said :

' I take possession of man's mind and
deed
I care not what the sects may brawl.
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all.'

* * * *
* * * *

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn
mirth,
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd: so three
years

She prosper'd: on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his
ears,

Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of Personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she
turn'd her sight

The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote 'Mene, mene,' and divided quite
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude
Fell on her, from which mood was born
Scorn of herself; again, from out that
mood

Laughter at her self-scorn.

'What! is not this my place of strength,'
she said,

'My spacious mansion built for me,
Whereof the strong foundation-stones
were laid

Since my first memory?'

But in dark corners of her palace stood
Uncertain shapes; and unawares
On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears
of blood,

And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of
flame,

And, with dim fretted foreheads all,
On corpses three-months-old at noon she
came,

That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light
Or power of movement, seem'd my soul,
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of
sand,

Left on the shore; that hears all night
The plunging seas draw backward from
the land

Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance
Join'd not, but stood, and standing saw
The hollow orb of moving Circumstance
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had
curl'd.

'No voice,' she shriek'd in that lone
hall,

'No voice breaks thro' the stillness of this
world:

One deep, deep silence all!'

She, mouldering with the dull earth's
mouldering sod,

Inwapt tenfold in slothful shame,
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally,
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
And ever worse with growing time,
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
And all alone in crime :

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt
round
With blackness as a solid wall,
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully sound
Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walking
slow,
In doubt and great perplexity,
A little before moon-rise hears the low
Moan of an unknown sea ;

And knows not if it be thunder, or a
sound
Of rocks thrown down, or one deep
cry
Of great wild beasts ; then thinketh, ' I
have found
A new land, but I die.'

She howl'd aloud, ' I am on fire within.
There comes no murmur of reply.
What is it that will take away my sin,
And save me lest I die ?'

So when four years were wholly finished,
She threw her royal robes away.
' Make me a cottage in the vale,' she
said,
' Where I may mourn and pray.

' Yet pull not down my palace towers,
that are
So lightly, beautifully built :
Perchance I may return with others there
When I have purged my guilt.'

LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

LADY Clara Vere de Vere,
Of me you shall not win renown :
You thought to break a country heart
For pastime, ere you went to town.
At me you smiled, but unbeguiled
I saw the snare, and I retired :
The daughter of a hundred Earls,
You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
I know you proud to bear your name,
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,
Too proud to care from whence I came.
Nor would I break for your sweet sake
A heart that doats on truer charms.
A simple maiden in her flower
Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Some meeker pupil you must find,
For were you queen of all that is,
I could not stoop to such a mind.
You sought to prove how I could love,
And my disdain is my reply.
The lion on your old stone gates
Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
You put strange memories in my head.
Not thrice your branching limes have
blown
Since I beheld young Laurence dead.
Oh your sweet eyes, your low replies :
A great enchantress you may be ;
But there was that across his throat
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
When thus he met his mother's view,
She had the passions of her kind,
She spake some certain truths of you.

Indeed I heard one bitter word
That scarce is fit for you to hear ;
Her manners had not that repose
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
There stands a spectre in your hall :
The guilt of blood is at your door :
You changed a wholesome heart to gall.
You held your course without remorse,
To make him trust his modest worth,
And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heavens above us bent
The gardener Adam and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.

Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,
You pine among your halls and towers :
The languid light of your proud eyes
Is wearied of the rolling hours.
In glowing health, with boundless wealth,
But sickening of a vague disease,
You know so ill to deal with time,
You needs must play such pranks as
these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,
If Time be heavy on your hands,
Are there no beggars at your gate,
Nor any poor about your lands?
Oh ! teach the orphan-boy to read,
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,
Pray Heaven for a human heart,
And let the foolish yeoman go.

THE MAY QUEEN.

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear ;
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year ;
Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest merriest day ;
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black black eye, they say, but none so bright as mine ;
There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline :
But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,
So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,
If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break :
But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May

As I came up the valley whom think ye should I see,
But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree ?
He thought of that sharp look, mother, I gave him yesterday,-
But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white,
 And I ran by him without speaking, like a flash of light.
 They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not what they say,
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but that can never be ;
 They say his heart is breaking, mother—what is that to me ?
 There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me any summer day,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,
 And you'll be there, too, mother, to see me made the Queen ;
 For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill come from far away,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has wov'n its wavy bowers,
 And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint sweet cuckoo-flowers ;
 And the wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-grass,
 And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as they pass ;
 There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the livelong day,
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and green and still,
 And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all the hill,
 And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill merrily glance and play,
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

So you must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear,
 To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year:
 To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the maddest merriest day,
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

If you're waking call me early, call me early, mother dear,
 For I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year.
 It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,
 Then you may lay me low i' the mould and think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set: he set and left behind
The good old year, the dear old time, and all my peace of mind ;
And the New-year's coming up, mother, but I shall never see
The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers: we had a merry day ;
Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of May ;
And we danced about the may-pole and in the hazel copse,
Till Charles's Wain came out above the tall white chimney-tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills: the frost is on the pane:
I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again:
I wish the snow would melt and the sun come out on high:
I long to see a flower so before the day I die.

The building rook 'ill caw from the windy tall elm-tree,
And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,
And the swallow 'ill come back again with summer o'er the wave,
But I shall lie alone, mother, within the mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon that grave of mine,
In the early early morning the summer sun 'ill shine,
Before the red cock crows from the farm upon the hill,
When you are warm-asleep, mother, and all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light
You'll never see me more in the long gray fields at night ;
When from the dry dark wold the summer airs blow cool
On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and the bulrush in the pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath the hawthorn shade,
And you'll come sometimes and see me where I am lowly laid.
I shall not forget you, mother, I shall hear you when you pass,
With your feet above my head in the long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now ;
You'll kiss me, my own mother, and forgive me ere I go ;
Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your grief be wild,
You should not fret for me, mother, you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting-place ;
Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your face ;
Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall harken what you say,
And be often, often with you when you think I'm far away.

Goodnight, goodnight, when I have said goodnight for evermore,
 And you see me carried out from the threshold of the door ;
 Don't let Effie come to see me till my grave be growing green :
 She'll be a better child to you than ever I have been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the granary floor :
 Let her take 'em : they are hers : I shall never garden more :
 But tell her, when I'm gone, to train the rose-bush that I set
 About the parlour-window and the box of mignonette.

Goodnight, sweet mother: call me before the day is born.
 All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn ;
 But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year,
 So, if you're waking, call me, call me early, mother dear.

CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yet alive I am ;
 And in the fields all round I hear the bleating of the lamb.
 How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of the year !
 To die before the snowdrop came, and now the violet's here.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,
 And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that cannot rise,
 And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,
 And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessed sun,
 And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet His will be done !
 But still I think it can't be long before I find release ;
 And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair !
 And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me there !
 O blessings on his kindly heart and on his silver head !
 A thousand times I blest him, as he knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he show'd me all the sin.
 Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late, there's One will let me in :
 Nor would I now be well, mother, again if that could be,
 For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch beat,
 There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet ;
 But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,
 And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign.

All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call ;
It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all ;
The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,
And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear ;
I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here ;
With all my strength I pray'd for both, and so I felt resign'd,
And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd in my bed,
And then did something speak to me—I know not what was said ;
For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my mind,
And up the valley came again the music on the wind.

But you were sleeping ; and I said, 'It's not for them : it's mine.'
And if it comes three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.
And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,
Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know
The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go.
And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day.
But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am past away.

And say to Robin a kin'd word, and tell him not to fret ;
There's many a worthier than I, would make him happy yet.
If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might have been his wife ;
But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

O look ! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow ;
He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know.
And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine—
Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is done
The voice, that now is speaking, may be beyond the sun—
For ever and for ever with those just souls and true—
And what is life, that we should moan ? why make we such ado ?

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed home—
And there to wait a little while till you and Effie come—
To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your breast—
And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

THE LOTOS-EATERS.

'COURAGE!' he said, and pointed toward
the land,

'This mounting wave will roll us shore-
ward soon.'

In the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemed always afternoon.

All round the coast the languid air did
swoon,

Breathing like one that hath a weary
dream.

Full-faced above the valley stood the
moon ;

And like a downward smoke, the slender
stream

Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall
did seem.

A land of streams ! some, like a down-
ward smoke,

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did
go ;

And some thro' wavering lights and sha-
dows broke,

Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward
flow

From the inner land : far off, three moun-
tain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flush'd : and, dew'd with
showery drops,

Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the
woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
In the red West : thro' mountain clefts
the dale

Was seen far inland, and the yellow
down

Border'd with palm, and many a winding
vale

And meadow, set with slender galingale ;
A land where all things always seem'd
the same !

And round about the keel with faces
pale,

Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters
came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted
stem,

Laden with flower and fruit, whereof
they gave

To each, but whoso did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the
wave

Far far away did seem to mourn and
rave

On alien shores ; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the
grave ;

And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart
did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow
sand,

Between the sun and moon upon the
shore ;

And sweet it was to dream of Father-
land,

Of child, and wife, and slave ; but ever-
more

Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the
oar,

Weary the wandering fields of barren
foam.

Then some one said, ' We will return no
more ; '

And all at once they sang, ' Our island
home

Is far beyond the wave ; we will no
longer roam.'

CHORIC SONG.

I.

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the
grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between
walls

Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass ;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes ;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from
the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers
weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy
hangs in sleep.

II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from
weariness ?

All things have rest : why should we toil
alone,

We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown :
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy
balm ;

Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
'There is no joy but calm !'

Why should we only toil, the roof and
crown of things ?

III.

Lo ! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud

With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no
care,

Sun-sleep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed ; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.

Lo ! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-
mellow,

Drops in a silent autumn night.

All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no
toil,

Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life ; ah, why
Should life all labour be ?

Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.

I, I alone. What is it that will last ?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.

Let us alone. What pleasure can we
have

To war with evil ? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?
All things have rest, and ripen toward
the grave

In silence ; ripen, fall and cease :
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or
dreamful ease.

V.

How sweet it were, hearing the down-
fall of dream,

With half-shut eyes ever to seem

Falling asleep in a half-dream !

To dream and dream, like yonder amber
light,

Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on
the height ;

To hear each other's whisper'd speech ;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray ;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melan-
choly ;

To muse and brood and live again in
memory,

With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an
urn of brass !

VI.

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears : but all hath
suffer'd change ;

For surely now our household hearths are
cold :

Our sons inherit us : our looks are
strange :

And we should come like ghosts to
trouble joy.

Or else the island princes over-bold

Have eat our substance, and the minstrel
sings

Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten
things.

Is there confusion in the little isle ?

Let what is broken so remain.

The Gods are hard to reconcile :

'Tis hard to settle order once again.

There is confusion worse than death

Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,

Long labour unto aged breath,

Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars

And eyes grown dim with gazing on the
pilot-stars.

VII.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and
moly,

How sweet (while warm airs lull us,
blowing lowly)

With half-dropt eyelid still,

Beneath a heaven dark and holy,

To watch the long bright river drawing
slowly

His waters from the purple hill—

To hear the dewy echoes calling

From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined
vine—

To watch the emerald-colour'd water
falling

Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath
divine !

Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling
brine,

Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out
beneath the pine.

VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren
peak :

The Lotos blows by every winding creek :
All day the wind breathes low with
mellow tone :

Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone

Round and round the spicy downs the
yellow Lotos-dust is blown.

We have had enough of action, and of
motion we,

Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,
when the surge was seething free,

Where the wallowing monster spouted
his foam-fountain in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an
equal mind,

In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie
reclined

On the hills like Gods together, careless
of mankind.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd
 Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly curl'd
 Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world:
 Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
 Plight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands,
 Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying hands.
 But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song
 Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
 Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong;
 Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,
 Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil;
 Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whisper'd—down in hell
 Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.
 Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
 Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;
 Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

Sang by the morning star of song, who made
 His music heard below;
 Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath
 Preluded those melodious bursts that fill
 The spacious times of great Elizabeth
 With sounds that echo still.
 And, for a while, the knowledge of his art
 Held me above the subject, as strong gales
 Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho' my heart,
 Brimful of those wild tales,
 Charged both mine eyes with tears. In every land
 I saw, wherever light illumineth, Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand
 The downward slope to death.
 Those far-renowned brides of ancient song
 Peopled the hollow dark, like burning stars,
 And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and wrong,
 And trumpets blown for wars;
 And clattering flints batter'd with clanging hoofs:
 And I saw crowds in column'd sanctuaries;
 And forms that pass'd at windows and on roofs
 Of marble palaces;
 Crosses across the threshold; heroes tall
 On lodging pinnacle and parapet
 Open the tortoise creeping to the wall;
 Fences in ambush set;

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their shade,
 'The Legend of Good Women,' long ago

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d ; heroes tall
parapet
to the wall ;

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with
heated blasts

That run before the fluttering tongues
of fire ;

White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and
masts,

And ever climbing higher ;

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen
plates,

Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers
woes,

Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron
grates,

And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when
to land

Bluster the winds and tides the self-
same way,

Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level
sand,

Torn from the fringe of spray.

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,
Resolved on noble things, and strove
to speak,

As when a great thought strikes along
the brain,

And flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down

A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,

That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town ;

And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing
thought

Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and
did creep

Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd,
and brought

Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wander'd far
In an old wood : fresh-wash'd in
coolest dew

The maiden splendours of the morning star
Shook in the stedfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree-boles did stoop and
lean

Upon the dusky brushwood underneath
Their broad curved branches, fledged with
clearest green,
New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her journey
done,

And with dead lips smiled at the
twilight plain,
Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,
Not any song of bird or sound of rill ;
Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre
Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine
turn'd

Their humid arms festooning tree to tree,
And at the root thro' lush green grasses
burn'd

The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves,
I knew

The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks
drench'd in dew,
Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,
Pour'd back into my empty soul and
frame

The times when I remember to have been
Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear under-tone
Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that un-
blissful clime,

'Pass freely thro' : the wood is all thine
own,
Until the end of time.'

At length I saw a lady within call,
Still than chisell'd marble, standing
there ;

A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with
surprise

Froze my swift speech : she turning on
my face

The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,
Spoke slowly in her place.

'I had great beauty : ask thou not my
name :

No one can be more wise than destiny.
Many drew swords and died. Where'er
I came

I brought calamity.'

'No marvel, sovereign lady : in fair field
Myself for such a face had boldly died,'
I answer'd free ; and turning I appeal'd
To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks
averse,

To her full height her stately stature
[draws ;
'My youth,' she said, 'was blasted with
a curse :

This woman was the cause.

'I was cut off from hope in that sad place,
Which yet to name my spirit loathes
and fears :

My father held his hand upon his face ;
I, blinded with my tears,

'Still strove to speak : my voice was thick
with sighs

As in a dream. Dimly I could descry
The stern black-bearded kings with
wolfish eyes,
Waiting to see me die.

'The high masts flicker'd as they lay
afloat ;

The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and
the shore ;
The bright death quiver'd at the victim's
throat ;

Touch'd ; and I knew no more.'

Whereto the other with a downward
brow :

'I would the white cold heavy-plunging
foam,

Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me deep
below,

Then when I left my home.'

Her slow full words sank thro' the silence
drear,

As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea :
Sudden I heard a voice that cried, 'Come
here,

That I may look on thee.'

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,
One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd ;

A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold
black eyes,

Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile,
began :

'I govern'd men by change, and so I
sway'd

All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen
a man.

Once, like the moon, I made

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'The ever-shifting currents of the blood
 According to my humour ebb and
 flow.

I have no men to govern in this wood :
 That makes my only woe.

'Nay—yet it chafes me that I could not
 bend

One will ; nor tame and tutor with
 mine eye
 That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Prythee,
 friend,

Where is Mark Antony?

'The man, my lover, with whom I rode
 sublime

On Fortune's neck : we sat as God by
 God :

The Nilus would have risen before his
 time

And flooded at our nod.

'We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep, and
 lit

Lamps which out-burn'd Canopus. O
 my life

In Egypt ! O the dalliance and the wit,
 The flattery and the strife,

'And the wild kiss, when fresh from
 war's alarms,

My Hercules, my Roman Antony,
 My mailed Bacchus leapt into my arms,
 Contented there to die !

'And there he died : and when I heard
 my name

Sigh'd forth with life I would not
 brook my fear
 Of the other : with a worm I balk'd his
 fame.

What else was left ? look here !'

(With that she tore her robe apart, and half
 The polish'd argent of her breast to sight
 Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a
 laugh,
 Showing the aspick's bite.)

'I died a Queen. The Roman soldier
 found

Me lying dead, my crown about my
 brows,

A name for ever !—lying robed and
 crown'd,

Worthy a Roman spouse.'

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range
 Struck by all passion, did fall down

and glance
 From tone to tone, and glided thro' all
 change

Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for
 delight ;

Because with sudden motion from the
 ground

She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd
 with light

The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest
 darts ;

As once they drew into two burning
 rings

All beams of Love, melting the mighty
 hearts

Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I
 heard

A noise of some one coming thro' the
 lawn,

And singing clearer than the crested bird
 That claps his wings at dawn.

F

'The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel
From craggy hollows pouring, late and
soon,
Sound all night long, in falling thro' the
dell,
Far-heard beneath the moon.

'The balmy moon of blessed Israel
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with
beams divine :
All night the splinter'd crags that wall
the dell
With spires of silver shine.'

As one that museth where broad sunshine
laves
The lawn by some cathedral, thro' the
door
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd and
tied
To where he stands,—so stood I, when
that flow
Of music left the lips of her that died
To save her father's vow ;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,
A maiden pure ; as when she went
along
From Mizpah's tower'd gate with welcome
light,
With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth : 'Heaven heads
the count of times
With that wild strain.' She render'd
answer high
'Not so, nor once alone ; a thousand
times
I would be born and die.

'Single I grew, like some green plant,
whose root
Creeps to the garden water-pipes
beneath,
Feeding the flower ; but ere my flower to
fruit
Changed, I was ripe for death.

'My God, my land, my father—these did
move
Me from my bliss of life, that Nature
gave,
Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of
love
Down to a silent grave.

'And I went mourning, "No fair Hebrew
boy
Shall smile away my maiden blame
among
The Hebrew mothers"—emphatic of all
joy,
Leaving the dance and song,

'Leaving the olive-gardens far below,
Leaving the promise of my bridal
bower,
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that glow
Beneath the battled tower.

'The light white cloud swam over us,
Anon
We heard the lion roaring from his den ;
We saw the large white stars rise one by
one,
Or, from the darken'd glen,

'Saw God divide the night with flying
flame,
And thunder on the everlasting hills.
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief
became
A solemn scorn of ills.

like some green plant,
 the garden water-pipes
 ripe for death,
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 l glen,
 ight with flying
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 pake, and grief

'When the next moon was roll'd into the
 sky,
 Strength came to me that equal'd my
 desire.
 How beautiful a thing it was to die
 For God and for my sire !
 'It comforts me in this one thought to
 dwell,
 That I subdued me to my father's will ;
 Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,
 Sweetens the spirit still.
 'Moreover it is written that my race
 Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from
 Aroer
 On Arnon unto Minneth.' Here her face
 Glow'd, as I look'd at her.
 She lock'd her lips : she left me where I
 stood :
 'Glory to God,' she sang, and past afar,
 Thridding the sombre boskage of the
 wood,
 Toward the morning-star.
 Losing her carol I stood pensively,
 As one that from a casement leans his
 head,
 When midnight bells cease ringing sud-
 denly,
 And the old year is dead.
 'Alas ! alas !' a low voice, full of care,
 Murnur'd beside me : 'Turn and look
 on me :
 I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair,
 If what I was I be.
 'Would I had been some maiden coarse
 and poor !
 O me, that I should ever see the light !
 Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor
 Do hunt me, day and night.'

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and
 trust :
 To whom the Egyptian : 'O, you
 tamely died !
 You should have clung to Fulvia's waist,
 and thrust
 The dagger thro' her side.'
 With that sharp sound the white dawn's
 creeping beams,
 Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the
 mystery
 Of folded sleep. The captain of my
 dreams
 Ruled in the eastern sky.
 Morn broaden'd on the borders of the dark,
 Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her last
 trance
 Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of
 Arc,
 A light of ancient France ;
 Or her, who knew that Love can vanquish
 Death,
 Who kneeling, with one arm about her
 king,
 Drew forth the poison with her balmy
 breath,
 Sweet as new buds in Spring.
 No memory labours longer from the deep
 Gold-mines of thought to lift the hidden
 ore
 That glimpses, moving up, than I from
 sleep
 To gather and tell o'er
 Each little sound and sight. With what
 dull pain
 Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to
 strike
 Into that wondrous track of dreams again !
 But no two dreams are like.

THE BLACKBIRD.

As when a soul laments, which hath been
blest,
Desiring what is mingled with past
years,
In yearnings that can never be exprest
By signs or groans or tears ;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with
choicest art,
Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,
Wither beneath the palate, and the heart
Faints, faded by its heat.

THE BLACKBIRD.

O BLACKBIRD ! sing me something well :
While all the neighbours shoot thee
round,

I keep smooth plats of fruitful ground,
Where thou may'st warble, eat and dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all
Are thine ; the range of lawn and park :
The unnetted black-hearts ripen dark,
All thine, against the garden wall.

Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,
With that gold dagger of thy bill
To fret the summer jenneting.

A golden bill ! the silver tongue,
Cold February loved, is dry :
Plenty corrupts the melody
That made thee famous once, when
young :

And in the sultry garden-squares,
Now thy flute-notes are changed to
coarse,
I hear thee not at all, or hoarse
As when a hawker hawks his wares.

Take warning ! he that will not sing
While yon sun prospers in the blue,
Shall sing for want, ere leaves are new,
Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD
YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily
sighing :

Toll ye the church bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying.

Old year, you must not die ;
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still : he doth not move :
He will not see the dawn of day.
He hath no other life above.
He gave me a friend, and a true true-love,
And the New-year will take 'em away.
Old year, you must not go ;
So long as you have been with us,
Such joy as you have seen with us,
Old year, you shall not go.

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim ;
A jollier year we shall not see.
But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,
And tho' his foes speak ill of him,
He was a friend to me.
Old year, you shall not die ;
We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you,
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,
But all his merry quips are o'er.
To see him die, across the waste
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,
But he'll be dead before.

he that will not sing
prosper in the blue,
want, ere leaves are new,
palm of Spring.

OF THE OLD YEAR.

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bell sad and slow,
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e post-haste,

Every one for his own.
The night is starry and cold, my
friend,
And the New-year blithe and bold,
my friend,
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes ! over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows flicker to and fro :
The cricket chirps : the light burns
low :

'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.
Shake hands, before you die.
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you :
What is it we can do for you ?
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.
Alack ! our friend is gone.
Close up his eyes : tie up his chin :
Step from the corpse, and let him in
That standeth there alone,
And waiteth at the door.
There's a new foot on the floor, my
friend,
And a new face at the door, my
friend,
A new face at the door.

TO F. S.

THE wind, that beats the mountain,
blows
More softly round the open wold,
And gently comes the world to those
That are cast in gentle mould.

And me this knowledge bolder made,
Or else I had not dared to flow
In these words toward you, and invade
Even with a verse your holy woe.

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,
Those in whose laps our limbs are
nursed,
Fall into shadow, soonest lost :
Those we love first are taken first.

God gives us love. Something to love
He lends us ; but, when love is
grown
To ripeness, that on which it throve
Falls off, and love is left alone.

This is the curse of time. Alas !
In grief I am not all unlearn'd ;
Once thro' mine own doors Death did
pass ;
One went, who never hath return'd.

He will not smile—not speak to me
Once more. Two years his chair is
seen
Empty before us. That was he
Without whose life I had not been.

Your loss is rarer ; for this star
Rose with you thro' a little arc
Of heaven, nor having wander'd far
Shot on the sudden into dark.

I knew your brother : his mute dust
I honour and his living worth :
A man more pure and bold and just
Was never born into the earth.

I have not look'd upon you nigh,
Since that dear soul hath fall'n asleep.
Great Nature is more wise than I :
I will not tell you not to weep.

And tho' mine own eyes fill with dew,
Drawn from the spirit thro' the brain,
I will not even preach to you,
'Weep, weeping dulls the inward
pain.'

O.V. A MOURNER.

Let Grief be her own mistress still.
 She loveth her own anguish deep
 More than much pleasure. Let her will
 Be done—to weep or not to weep.

I will not say, 'God's ordinance
 Of Death is blown in every wind ;'
 For that is not a common chance
 That takes away a noble mind.

His memory long will live alone
 In all our hearts, as mournful light
 That broods above the fallen sun,
 And dwells in heaven half the night.

Vain solace ! Memory standing near
 Cast down her eyes, and in her throat
 Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear
 Dropt on the letters as I wrote.

I wrote I know not what. In truth,
 How *should* I soothe you anyway,
 Who miss the brother of your youth ?
 Yet something I did wish to say :

For he too was a friend to me :
 Both are my friends, and my true
 breast
 Bleedeth for both ; yet it may be
 That only silence suiteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would
 make
 Grief more. 'Twere better I should
 cease
 Although myself could almost take
 The place of him that sleeps in peace.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart. in peace :
 Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,
 While the stars burn, the moons increase,
 And the great ages onward roll.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.
 Nothing comes to thee new or
 strange.
 Sleep full of rest from head to feet ;
 Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

O.V. A MOURNER.

I.

NATURE, so far as in her lies,
 Imitates God, and turns her face
 To every land beneath the skies,
 Counts nothing that she meets with
 base,
 But lives and loves in every place ;

II.

Fills out the homely quickset-screens,
 And makes the purple lilac ripe,
 Steps from her airy hill, and greens
 The swamp, where hums the dropping
 snipe,
 With moss and braided marish-pipe ;

III.

And on thy heart a finger lays,
 Saying, 'Beat quicker, for the time
 Is pleasant, and the woods and ways
 Are pleasant, and the beech and lime
 Put forth and feel a gladder clime.'

IV.

And murmurs of a deeper voice,
 Going before to some far shrine,
 Teach that sick heart the stronger choice,
 Till all thy life one way incline
 With one wide will that closes thine.

V.

And when the zoning eve has died
 Where yon dark valleys wind forlorn,
 Come Hope and Memory, spouse and
 bride,
 From out the borders of the morn,
 With that fair child betwixt them born.

VI.

And when no mortal motion jars
The blackness round the tumbing sod,
Thro' silence and the trembling stars
Comes Faith from tracts no feet have
trod,
And Virtue, like a household god

VII.

Promising empire ; such as those
That once at dead of night did greet
Troy's wandering prince, so that he rose
With sacrifice, while all the fleet
Had rest by stony hills of Crete.

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,
Within this region I subsist,
Whose spirits falter in the mist ;
And languish for the purple seas ?

It is the land that freemen till,
That sober-suited Freedom chose,
The land, where girt with friends, or
foes
A man may speak the thing he will ;

A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where Freedom broadens slowly
down
From precedent to precedent :

Where faction seldom gathers head,
But by degrees to fullness wrought,
The strength of some diffusive
thought
Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute
Opinion, and induce a time
When single thought is civil crime,
And individual freedom mute ;

'Tho' Power should make from land to
land

The name of Britain trebly great—
Tho' every channel of the State
Should fill and choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth,
Wild wind ! I seek a warmer sky,
And I will see before I die
The palms and temples of the South.

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet :
Above her shook the starry lights :
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,
But fragments of her mighty voice
Came rolling on the wind.

Then stopt she down thro' town and field
To mingle with the human race,
And part by part to men reveal'd
The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,
From her isle-altar gazing down,
Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,
And, King-like, wears the crown :

Her open eyes desire the truth.
The wisdom of a thousand years
Is in them. May perpetual youth
Keep dry their light from tears ;

That her fair form may stand and shine,
Make bright our days and light our
dreams,
Turning to scorn with lips divine
The falsehood of extremes !

LOVE THOU THY LAND.

LOVE thou thy land, with love far-
brought

From out the storied Past, and used
Within the Present, but transfused
Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,
Love, that endures not sordid ends,
For English natures, freemen, friends,
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,
Nor feed with crude imaginings
The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might
To weakness, neither hide the ray
From those, not blind, who wait for
day,
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds;
But let her herald, Reverence, fly
Before her to whatever sky
Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the
years:

Cut Prejudice against the grain:
But gentle words are always gain:
Regard the weakness of thy peers:

Nor toil for title, place, or touch
Of pension, neither count on praise:
It grows to guerdon after-days:
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch:

Not clinging to some ancient saw;
Not master'd by some modern term;
Not swift nor slow to change, but
firm:

And in its season bring the law;

That from Discussion's lip may fall
With Life, that, working strongly,
binds -

Set in all lights by many minds,
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,
And moist and dry, devising long,
Thro' many agents making strong,
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control
Our being, lest we rust in ease.
We all are changed by still degrees,
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free
To ingroove itself with that which flies,
And work, a joint of state, that plies
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act;
For all the past of Time reveals
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
A motion toiling in the gloom--
The Spirit of the years to come
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits
Completion in a painful school;
Phantoms of other forms of rule,
New Majesties of mighty States--

The warders of the growing hour,
But vague in vapour, hard to mark;
And round them sea and air are dark
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,
Is bodied forth the second whole.
Regard gradation, lest the soul
Of Discord race the rising wind;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,
And heap their ashes on the head ;
To shame the boast so often made,
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,
To follow flying steps of Truth
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,
Must ever shock, like armed foes,
And this be true, till Time shall close,
That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,
But with his hand against the hilt,
Would pace the troubled land, like Peace ;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,
Would serve his kind in deed and
word,

Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,
That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that
broke

From either side, nor veil his eyes :
And if some dreadful need should rise
Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke :

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
As we bear blossoms of the dead ;
Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed
Raw Haste, half-sister to Deity.

THE GOOSE.

I KNEW an old wife lean and poor,
Her rags scarce held together ;
There strode a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,
He utter'd rhyme and reason,
'Here, take the goose, and keep you warm,
It is a stormy season.'

She caught the white goose by the leg,
A goose—'twas no great matter.
The goose let fall a golden egg
With cackle and with clatter.

She dropt the goose, and caught the pelf,
And ran to tell her neighbours ;
And bless'd herself, and cursed herself,
And rested from her labours.

And feeding high, and living soft,
Grew plump and able-bodied ;
Until the grave churchwarden doct'd,
The parson smirk'd and nodded.

So sitting, served by man and maid,
She felt her heart grow prouder :
But ah ! the more the white goose laid
It clack'd and cackled louder.

It clatter'd here, it chuckled there ;
It stirr'd the old wife's mettle :
She shifted in her elbow-chair,
And hurl'd the pan and kettle.

'A quinsy choke thy cursed note !
Then wax'd her anger stronger.
'Go, take the goose, and wring her throat,
I will not bear it longer.'

Then yelp'd the cur, and yawl'd the cat ;
Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.
The goose flew this way and flew that,
And fill'd the house with clamour.

As head and heels upon the floor
They flounder'd all together,
There strode a stranger to the door,
And it was windy weather :

He took the goose upon his arm,
 He utter'd words of scorning;
 'So keep you cold, or keep you warm,
 It is a stormy morning.'

The wild wind rang from park and plain,
 And round the attics rumbled,
 Till all the tables danced again,
 And half the chimneys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,
 The blast was hard and harder.
 Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,
 And a whirlwind clear'd the garden:

And while on all sides breaking loose
 Her household fled the danger,
 Quoth she, 'The Devil take the goose,
 And God forget the stranger!'



ENGLISH IDYLLS

AND OTHER POEMS.

THE EPIC.

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas-
 eve,—
 The game of forfeits done—the girls all
 kiss'd
 Beneath the sacred bush and past away—
 The parson Holmes, the poet Everard
 Hall,
 The host, and I sat round the wassail-
 bowl,
 Then half-way ebb'd : and there we held
 a talk,
 How all the old honour had from Christ-
 mas gone,
 Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd
 games
 In some odd nooks like this ; till I, tired
 out
 With cutting eights that day upon the
 pond,
 Where, three times slipping from the
 outer edge,
 I bump'd the ice into three several stars,

Fell in a doze ; and half-awake I heard
 The parson taking wide and wider
 sweeps,
 Now harping on the church-commis-
 sioners,
 Now hawking at Geology and schism ;
 Until I woke, and found him settled down
 Upon the general decay of faith
 Right thro' the world, 'at home was little
 left,
 And none abroad : there was no anchor,
 none,
 To hold by.' Francis, laughing, clapt
 his hand
 On Everard's shoulder, with 'I hold by
 him.'
 'And I,' quoth Everard, 'by the wassail-
 bowl.'
 'Why yes,' I said, 'we knew your gift
 that way
 At college : but another which you had,
 I mean of verse (for so we held it then),
 What came of that?' 'You know,' said
 Frank, 'he burnt

His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve books —

And then to me demanding why? 'Oh, sir,

He thought that nothing new was said, or else

Something so said 'twas nothing that a truth

Looks freshest in the fashion of the day: God knows: he has a mint of reasons: ask.

It pleased me well enough.' 'Nay, nay,' said Hall,

'Why take the style of those heroic times?

For nature brings not back the Mastodon,

Nor we those times; and why should any man

Remodel models? these twelve books of mine

Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing worth,

Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt.' 'But I,'

Said Francis, 'pick'd the 'eleventh from this hearth

And have it: keep a thing, its use will come.

I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes.' He laugh'd, and I, though sleepy, like a horse

That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd my ears;

For I remember'd Everard's college fame When we were Freshmen: the at my request

He brought it; and the poet little urged, But with some prelude of disparagement,

Read, mouching out his hollow oes and aes,

Deep-chested music, and to this result.

MORTE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd Among the mountains by the winter sea;

Until King Arthur's table, man by man, Had fallen in Lyonnese about their Lord,

King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,

The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him, Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,

And bore him to a chapel nigh the field, A broken chancel with a broken cross,

That stood on a dark strait of barren land. On one side lay the Ocean, and on one

Lay a great water, and the moon was full. Then spake King Arthur to Sir

Bedivere:

'The sequel of to-day unsolders all The goodliest fellowship of famous knights

Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep

They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we

Shall never more, at any future time, Delight our souls with talk of knightly

deeds, Walking about the gardens and the halls

Of Camelot, as in the days that were. I perish by this people which I made,—

Tho' Merlinsware that I should come again To rule once more—but let what will be,

be, I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm

That without help I cannot last till morn. Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,

Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how

In those old days, one summer noon, an arm

Rose up from out the bosom of the lake, Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-

ful,

Holding the sword—and how I row'd
across
And took it, and have worn it, like a
king :
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known :
But now delay not : take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere :
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring
me word.'
To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :
'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee
word.'
So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he
stept
And in the moon athwart the place of
tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient
men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind
sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He,
stepping down
By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.
There drew he forth the brand
Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter
moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran
forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the
hilt :
For all the haft twinkled with diamond
sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-
work
Of subtlet jewellery. He gazed so long

That both his eyes were dazzled, as he
stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the
marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded
King.
Then spake King Arthur to Sir
Bedivere :
'Hast thou perform'd my mission which
I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast
heard?'
And answer made the bold Sir
Bedivere :
'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag.'
To whom replied King Arthur, faint
and pale :
'Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy
name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight :
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the
thing
I bid thee, watch, and lightly bring me
word.'
Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the
mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in
thought ;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he
smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud,

'And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the
earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of
many men.
What good should follow this, if this were
done?
What harm, undone? deep harm to dis-
obey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king
demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he
does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt? but were this
kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty
kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lovely maiden of the
Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the
deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills."
So might some old man speak in the
aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame
were lost.'
So spake he, clouded with his own
conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded
King.
Then spoke King Arthur, breathing
heavily:
'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast
heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir
Bedivere:
'I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'
To whom replied King Arthur, much
in wrath:
'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou
art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious
hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee
hence:
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'
Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and
ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly,
plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd
the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The
great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the
moon,
And flashing round and round, and
whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter
sloek
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
 Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
 And lightly went the other to the King.
 Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :
 'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
 Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or seen?'
 And answer made the Lord Sir Bedivere :
 'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
 Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
 Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
 Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
 So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
 Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;
 But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
 That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
 Three times, and drew him under in the mere.'
 And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :
 'My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I were gone.
 Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
 And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
 My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.'
 So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
 Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
 And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
 As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
 Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
 And would have spoken, but he found
 not words,

Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
 O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
 And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.
 But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
 Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
 When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
 Muttering and murmuring at his ear,
 'Quick, quick !
 I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'
 But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
 Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
 Larger than human on the frozen hills.
 He heard the deep behind him, and a cry before.
 His own thought drove him, like a goad.
 Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
 And barren chasms, and all to left and right
 The bare black cliff elang'd round him, as he based
 His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
 Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels --
 And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,
 And the long glories of the winter moon.
 Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
 Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
 Beneath them ; and descending they were ware
 That all the decks were dense with stately forms
 Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream -- by these
 Three Queens with crowns of gold -- and from them rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one
comes,

Or hath come, since the making of the
world,

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in
the barge,'

And to the barge they came. There those
three Queens

Put forth their hands, and took the King,
and wept,

But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and
chafed his hands,

And call'd him by his name, complaining
loud,

And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood : for all his face
was white

And colourless, and like the wither'd
moon

Smote by the fresh beam of the springing
east ;

And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd
with drops

Of onset ; and the light and lustrous
curls--

That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne--were parch'd
with dust ;

Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that
fringed his lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the King ;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in
rest,

From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and
charged

Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
'Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I
go ?

Where shall I hide my forehead and my
eyes ?

For now I see the true old times are
dead,

When every morning brought a noble
chance,

And every chance brought out a noble
knight.

Such times have been not since the light
that led

The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is
dissolved

Which was an image of the mighty world ;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days' darken round me, and the
years,

Among new men, strange faces, other
minds.'

And slowly answered Arthur from the
barge :

'The old order changeth, yielding place
to new,

And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the
world.

Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?
I have lived my life, and that which I
have done

May He within Himself make pure ! but
thou,

If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are
wrought by prayer

Than this world dreams of. Wherefore,
let thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or
goats

That nourish a blind life within the brain,

<p>If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer Both for themselves and those who call them friend? For so the whole round earth is every way Bound by gold chains about the feet of God. But now farewell. I am going a long way With these thou seest—if indeed I go— (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt) To the island-valley of Avilion; Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard- lawns And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea, Where I will heal me of my grievous wound. So said he, and the barge with oar and sail Moved from the brink, like some full- breasted swan That, fluting a wild carol ere her death, Rattles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere Revolving many memories, till the hull Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn, And on the mere the wailing died away. HERE ended Hall, and our last light, that long Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness, flared and fell: At which the Parson, sent to sleep with sound, And waked with silence, grunted 'Good! but we Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he read—</p>	<p>Perhaps some modern touches here and there Redeem'd it from the charge of nothing- ness— Or else we loved the man, and prized his work; I know not: but we sitting, as I said, The cock crew loud; as at that time of year The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn: Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill- used, 'There now—that's nothing!' drew a little back, And drove his heel into the smoulder'd log, That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue; And so to bed; where yet in sleep I seem'd To sail with Arthur under looming shores, Point after point; till on to dawn, when dreams Begin to feel the truth and stir of day, To me, methought, who waited with a crowd, There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore King Arthur, like a modern gentleman Of stateliest port; and all the people cried, 'Arthur is come again: he cannot die.' Then those that stood upon the hills behind Repeated—'Come again, and thrice as fair;' And, further inland, voices echoed— 'Come With all good things, and war shall be no more.' At this a hundred bells began to peal, That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas morn.</p>
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THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER;
OR, THE PICTURES.

THIS morning is the morning of the day,
When I and Eustace from the city went
To see the Gardener's Daughter; I and
he,

Portions in Art; a friendship so complete
Portion'd in halves between us, that we
grew

The fable of the city where we dwelt.

My Eustace might have sat for
Hercules;

So muscular he spread, so broad of breast.
He, by some law that holds in love, and
draws

The greater to the lesser, long desired
A certain miracle of symmetry,

A miniature of loveliness, all grace
Summ'd up and closed in little;—Juliet,

she

So light of foot, so light of spirit—oh, she
To me myself, for some three careless
moons,

The summer pilot of an empty heart
Unto the shores of nothing! Know you
not

Such touches are but embassies of love,
To tamper with the feelings, ere he found

Empire for life? but Eustace painted her,
And said to me, she sitting with us then,

'When will you paint like this?' and I
replied,

(My words were half in earnest, half in
jest.)

'Tis not your work, but Love's. Love,
unperceived,

A more ideal Artist he than all,
Came, drew your pencil from you, made
those eyes

Darker than darkest pansies, and that hair

More black than ashbuds in the front of
March.'

And Juliet answer'd laughing, 'Go and
see

The Gardener's daughter: trust me, after
that,

You scarce can fail to match his master-
piece.'

And up we rose, and on the spur we went.

Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.

News from the humming city comes to it
In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;

And, sitting muffled in dark leaves, you
hear

The windy clanging of the minster clock;
Although between it and the garden lies

A league of grass, wash'd by a slow broad
stream,

That, stirr'd with languid pulses of the oar,
Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,

Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
Crown'd with the minster-towers.

The fields between
Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-udder'd

kine,

And all about the large lime feathers low,
The lime a summer home of murmurous

wings.

In that still place she, hoarded in her-
self,

Grew, seldom seen: not less among us
lived

Her fame from lip to lip. Who had not
heard

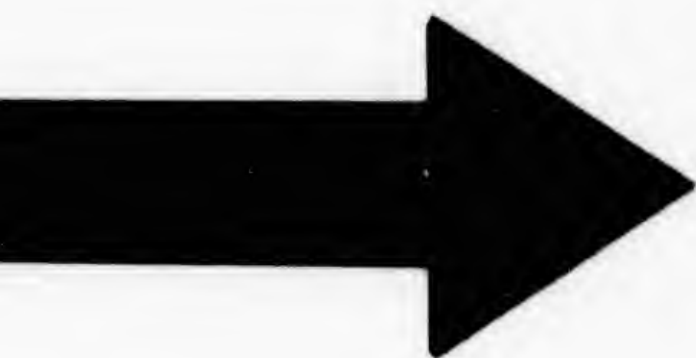
Of Rose, the Gardener's daughter?
Where was he,

So blunt in memory, so old at heart,
At such a distance from his youth in grief,

That, having seen, forgot? The common
mouth,

So gross to express delight, in praise of
her





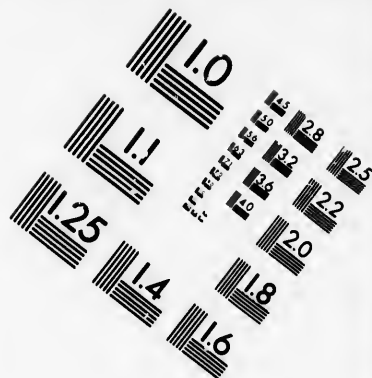
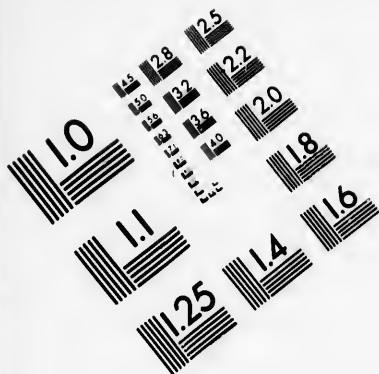
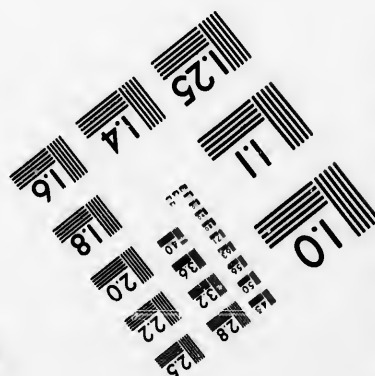
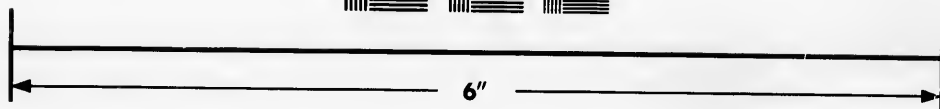
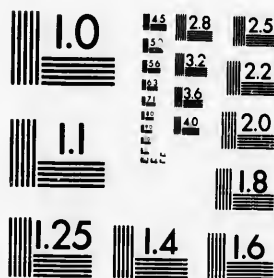


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Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,
And Beauty such a mistress of the world.

And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,
Would play with flying forms and images,
Yet this is also true, that, long before
I look'd upon her, when I heard her name
My heart was like a prophet to my heart,
And told me I should love. A crowd of

hopes,
That sought to sow themselves like
winged seeds,

Born out of everything I heard and saw,
Flutter'd about my senses and my soul ;
And vague desires, like fitful blasts of balm
To one that travels quickly, made the air
Of Life delicious, and all kinds of thought,
That verged upon them, sweeter than the
dream

Dream'd by a happy man, when the dark
East,

Unseen, is brightening to his bridal morn.

And sure this orbit of the memory folds
For ever in itself the day we went
To see her. All the land in flowery
squares,

Beneath a broad and equal-blowing wind,
Smelt of the coming summer, as one large
cloud

Drew downward : but all else of heaven
was pure

Up to the Sun, and May from verge to
verge,

And May with me from head to heel.
And now,

As tho' 'twere yesterday, as tho' it were
The hour just flown, that morn with all
its sound,

(For those old Mays had thrice the life of
these.)

Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot to
graze,

And, where the hedge-row cuts the path-
way, stood,

Leaning his horns into the neighbour field,
And lowing to his fellows. From the
woods

Came voices of the well-contented doves.
The lark could scarce get out his notes
for joy,

But shook his song together as he near'd
His happy home, the ground. To left
and right,

The cuckoo told his name to all the hills ;
The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm ;

The redecap whistled ; and the nightingale
Sang loud, as tho' he were the bird of day.
And Eustace turn'd, and smiling said

to me,
'Hear how the bushes echo ! by my life,
These birds have joyful thoughts. Think
you they sing

Like poets, from the vanity of song ?
Or have they any sense of why they sing ?
And would they praise the heavens for
what they have ?'

And I made answer, 'Were there nothing
else

For which to praise the heavens but
only love,

That only love were cause enough for
praise.'

Lightly he laugh'd, as one that read my
thought,

And on we went ; but ere an hour had
pass'd,

We reach'd a meadow slanting to the
North ;

Down which a well-worn pathway courted
us

To one green wicket in a privet hedge ;
This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk

Thro' crowded lilac-ambush trimly
pruned ;

And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume,
blew

Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.

The garden stretches southward. In the
midst
A cedar spread his dark-green layers of
shade.
The garden-glasses shone, and momentarily
The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver lights.
'Eustace,' I said, 'this wonder keeps
the house.'
He nodded, but a moment afterwards;
He cried, 'Look! look!' Before he
ceased I turn'd,
And, ere a star can wink, beheld her there.
For up the porch there grew an
Eastern rose,
That, flowering high, the last night's gale
had caught,
And blown across the walk. One arm
aloft—
Gown'd in pure white, that fitted to the
shape—
Holding the bush, to fix it back, she
stood.
A single stream of all her soft brown hair
Pour'd on one side: the shadow of the
flowers
Stole all the golden gloss, and, wavering
Lovingly lower, trembled on her waist—
Ah, happy shade—and still went waver-
ing down,
But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might
have danced
The greensward into greener circles, dipt,
And mix'd with shadows of the common
ground!
But the full day dwelt on her brows, and
sunn'd
Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe bloom,
And doubled his own warmth against her
lips,
And on the bounteous wave of such a
breast
As never pencil drew. Half light, half
shade,

She stood, a sight to make an old man
young.
So rapt, we near'd the house; but she,
a Rose
In roses, mingled with her fragrant tolt,
Nor heard us come, nor from her tend-
ance turn'd
Into the world without; till close at hand,
And almost ere I knew mine own intent,
This murmur broke the stillness of that
air
Which brooded round about her:
'Ab, one rose,
One rose, but one, by those fair fingers
cull'd,
Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on
lips
Less exquisite than thine.'
She look'd: but all
Suffused with blushes—neither self-
possess'd
Nor startled, but betwixt this mood and
that,
Divided in a graceful quiet—paused,
And dropt the branch she held, and turn-
ing, wound
Her looser hair in braid, and stirr'd her
lips
For some sweet answer, tho' no answer
came,
Nor yet refused the rose, but granted it,
And moved away, and left me, statue-
like,
In act to render thanks.
I, that whole day,
Saw her no more, altho' I linger'd there
Till every daisy slept, and Love's white
star
Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in the
dusk.
So home we went, and all the livelong
way
With solemn gibe did Eustace banter me.

'Now,' said he, 'will you climb the top
 of Art.
 You cannot fail but work in hues to dim
 The Titianic Flora. Will you match
 My Juliet? you, not you,—the Master,
 Love,
 A more ideal Artist he than all.'
 So home I went, but could not sleep
 for joy,
 Reading her perfect features in the gloom,
 Kissing the rose she gave me o'er and
 o'er,
 And shaping faithful record of the glance
 That graced the giving—such a noise of
 life
 Swarm'd in the golden present, such a
 voice
 Call'd to me from the years to come, and
 such
 A length of bright horizon rimm'd the
 dark.
 And all that night I heard the watchman
 peal
 The sliding season : all that night I heard
 The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy
 hours.
 The drowsy hours, dispensers of all good,
 O'er the mute city stole with folded wings,
 Distilling odours on me as they went
 To greet their fairer sisters of the East.
 Love at first sight, first-born, and heir
 to all,
 Made this night thus. Henceforward
 squall nor storm
 Could keep me from that Eden where
 she dwelt.
 Light pretexts drew me : sometimes a
 Dutch love
 For tulips ; then for roses, moss or musk,
 To grace my city-rooms ; or fruits and
 cream
 Served in the weeping elm ; and more
 and more
 A word could bring the colour to my
 cheek ;
 A thought would fill my eyes with happy
 dew ;
 Love trebled life within me, and with
 each
 The year increased.
 The daughters of the year,
 One after one, thro' that still garden
 pass'd :
 Each garlanded with her peculiar flower
 Danced into light, and died into the
 shade ;
 And each in passing touch'd with some
 new grace
 Or seem'd to touch her, so that day by
 day,
 Like one that never can be wholly known,
 Her beauty grew ; till Autumn brought
 an hour
 For Eustace, when I heard his deep 'I
 will,'
 Breathed, like the covenant of a God, to
 hold
 From thence thro' all the worlds : but I
 ap
 Full of bliss, and following her dark
 eyes
 Felt earth as air beneath me, till I reach'd
 The wicket-gate, and found her standing
 there.
 There sat we down upon a garden
 mound,
 Two mutually enfolded ; Love, the third,
 Between us, in the circle of his arms
 Enwound us both ; and over many a
 range
 Of waning lime the gray cathedral towers,
 Across a hazy glimmer of the west,
 Reveal'd their shining windows : from
 them clash'd
 The bells ; we listen'd ; with the time
 we play'd ;

We spoke of other things ; we coursed
about
The subject most at heart, more near
and near,
Like doves about a dovecote, wheeling
round
The central wish, until we settled there.
Then, in that time and place, I spoke
to her,
Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own,
Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,
Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,
A woman's heart, the heart of her I loved ;
And in that time and place she answer'd
me,
And in the compass of three little words,
More musical than ever came in one,
The silver fragments of a broken voice,
Made me most happy, faltering, 'I am
thine.'
Shall I cease here ? Is this enough to
say
That my desire, like all strongest hopes,
By its own energy fulfill'd itself,
Merged in completion ? Would you
learn at full
How passion rose thro' circumstantial
grades
Beyond all grades develop'd ? and indeed
I had not staid so long to tell you all,
But while I mused came Memory with
sad eyes,
Holding the folded annals of my youth ;
And while I mused, Love with knit
brows went by,
And with a flying finger swept my lips,
And spake, 'Be wise : not easily for-
given
Are those, who setting wide the doors
that bar
The secret bridal chambers of the heart,
Let in the day.' Here, then, my words
have end.

Yet might I tell of meetings, of fare-
wells—
Of that which came between, more sweet
than each,
In whispers, like the whispers of the
leaves
That tremble round a nightingale—in
sighs
Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for utter-
ance,
Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might I
not tell
Of difference, reconciliation, pledges
given,
And vows, where there was never need
of vows,
And kisses, where the heart on one wild
leap
Hung tranced from all pulsation, as above
The heavens between their fairy fleeces
pale
Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleeting
stars ;
Or while the balmy glooming, crescent-
lit,
Spread the light haze along the river-
shores,
And in the hollows ; or as once we met
Unheedful, tho' beneath a whispering rain
Night slid down one long stream of
sighing wind,
And in her bosom bore the baby, Sleep.
But this whole hour your eyes have
been intent
On that veil'd picture—veil'd, for what it
holds
May not be dwelt on by the common day.
This prelude has prepared thee. Raise
thy soul ;
Make thine heart ready with thine eyes ;
the time
Is come to raise the veil.

Behold her there,

As I beheld her ere she knew my heart,
My first, last love ; the idol of my youth,
The darling of my manhood, and, alas !
Now the most blessed memory of mine
age.

DORA.

WITH farmer Allan at the farm abode
William and Dora. William was his son,
And she his niece. He often look'd at
them,
And often thought, 'I'll make them man
and wife.'

Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,
And yearn'd towards William ; but the
youth, because
He had been always with her in the
house,

Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day
When Allan call'd his son, and said,
'My son :

I married late, but I would wish to see
My grandchild on my knees before I die:
And I have set my heart upon a match.
Now therefore look to Dora ; she is well
To look to ; thrifty too beyond her age.
She is my brother's daughter : he and I
Had once hard words, and parted, and
he died

In foreign lands ; but for his sake I bred
His daughter Dora : take her for your
wife ;

For I have wish'd this marriage, night
and day,

For many years.' But William answer'd
short ;

'I cannot marry Dora ; by my life,
I will not marry Dora.' Then the old
man

Was wroth, and doubled up his hands,
and said :

'You will not, boy ! you dare to answer
thus !

But in my time a father's word was law,
And so it shall be now for me. Look to
it ;

Consider, William : take a month to
think,

And let me have an answer to my wish ;
Or, by the Lord that made me, you shall
pack,

And never more darken my doors again.'
But William answer'd madly ; bit his lips,
And broke away. The more he look'd
at her

The less he liked her ; and his ways were
harsh ;

But Dora bore them meekly. Then
before

The month was out he left his father's
house,

And hired himself to work within the
fields ;

And half in love, half spite, he woo'd and
wed

A labourer's daughter, Mary Morrison.

Then, when the bells were ringing,
Allan call'd

His niece and said : 'My girl, I love you
well ;

But if you speak with him that was my
son,

Or change a word with her he calls his
wife,

My home is none of yours. My will is
law.'

And Dora promised, being meek. She
thought,

'It cannot be : my uncle's mind will
change !'

And days went on, and there was born
a boy

To William ; then distresses came on him ;
And day by day he pass'd his father's gate,

Heart-broken, and his father help'd him
not.

But Dora stored what little she could save,
And sent it them by stealth, nor did they
know

Who sent it ; till at last a fever seized
On William, and in harvest time he died.

Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat
And look'd with tears upon her boy, and
thought

Hard things of Dora. Dora came and
said :

' I have obey'd my uncle until now,
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro' me
This evil came on William at the first.

But, Mary, for the sake of him that's gone,
And for your sake, the woman that he
chose,

And for this orphan, I am come to you :
You know there has not been for these
five years

So full a harvest : let me take the boy,
And I will set him in my uncle's eye
Among the wheat ; that when his heart
is glad

Of the full harvest, he may see the boy,
And bless him for the sake of him that's
gone.'

And Dora took the child, and went her
way

Across the wheat, and sat upon a mound
That was unsown, where many poppies
grew.

Far off the farmer came into the field
And spied her not ; for none of all his
men

Dare tell him Dora waited with the child ;
And Dora would have risen and gone to
him,

But her heart fail'd her ; and the reapers
reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was
dark.

But when the morrow came, she rose
and took

The child once more, and sat upon the
mound ;

And made a little wreath of all the flowers
That grew about, and tied it round his hat
To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye.

Then when the farmer pass'd into the field
He spied her, and he left his men at work,
And came and said : ' Where were you
yesterday ?

Whose child is that ? What are you doing
here ?'

So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground,
And answer'd softly, ' This is William's
child !'

' And did I not,' said Allan, ' did I not
Forbid you, Dora ?' Dora said again :

' Do with me as you will, but take the
child,

And bless him for the sake of him that's
gone !'

And Allan said, ' I see it is a trick
Got up betwixt you and the woman there.
I must be taught my duty, and by you !
You knew my word was law, and yet you
dared

To slight it. Well—for I will take the
boy ;

But go you hence, and never see me more.'

So saying, he took the boy, that cried
aloud

And struggled hard. The wreath of
flowers fell

At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her
hands,

And the boy's cry came to her from the
field,

More and more distant. She bow'd down
her head,

Remembering the day when first she came,
And all the things that had been. She
bow'd down

And wept in secret; and the reapers
reap'd,
And the sun fell, and all the land was
dark.
Then Dora went to Mary's house, and
stood
Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy
Was not with Dora. She broke out in
praise
To God, that help'd her in her widowhood.
And Dora said, 'My uncle took the boy;
But, Mary, let me live and work with you:
He says that he will never see me more.'
Then answer'd Mary, 'This shall never
be,
That thou shouldst take my trouble on
thyself:
And, now I think, he shall not have the
boy,
For he will teach him hardness, and to
slight
His mother; therefore thou and I will go,
And I will have my boy, and bring him
home;
And I will beg of him to take thee back:
But if he will not take thee back again,
Then thou and I will live within one
house,
And work for William's child, until he
grows
Of age to help us.'

So the women kiss'd
Each other, and set out, and reach'd the
farm.
The door was off the latch: they peep'd,
and saw
The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's
knees,
Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,
And clapt him on the hands and on the
cheeks,
Like one that loved him: and the lad
stretch'd out

And babbled for the golden seal, that hung
From Allan's watch, and sparkled by the
fire.
Then they came in: but when the boy
beheld
His mother, he cried out to come to her:
And Allan set him down, and Mary said:
'O Father!—if you let me call you so—
I never came a-begging for myself,
Or William, or this child; but now I
come
For Dora: take her back; she loves you
well.
O Sir, when William died, he died at
peace
With all men; for I ask'd him, and he
said,
He could not ever rue his marrying me—
I had been a patient wife: but, Sir, he
said
That he was wrong to cross his father thus:
"God bless him!" he said, "and may
he never know
The troubles I have gone thro'!" Then
he turn'd
His face and pass'd—unhappy that I am!
But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you
will make him hard, and he will learn to
slight
His father's memory; and take Dora back,
And let all this be as it was before.'
So Mary said, and Dora hid her face
By Mary. There was silence in the room;
And all at once the old man burst in
sobs:—
'I have been to blame—to blame. I
have kill'd my son.
I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my
dear son.
May God forgive me!—I have been to
blame.
Kiss me, my children.'

Then they clung about

The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many times.

And all the man was broken with remorse;
And all his love came back a hundred-fold;

And for three hours he sobb'd o'er
William's child

Thinking of William.

So those four abode

Within one house together; and as years
Went forward, Mary took another mate;
But Dora lived unmarried till her death.

AUDLEY COURT.

'THE Bull, the Fleece are cramm'd, and
not a room

For love or money. Let us picnic there
At Audley Court.'

I spoke, while Audley feast
Humm'd like a hive all round the narrow
quay,

To Francis, with a basket on his arm,
To Francis just alighted from the boat,
And breathing of the sea. 'With all my
heart,'

Said Francis. Then we shoulder'd thro'
the swarm,

And rounded by the stillness of the beach
To where the bay runs up its latest horn.

We left the dying ebb that faintly lipp'd
The flat red granite; so by many a sweep
Of meadow smooth from aftermath we
reach'd

The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd thro'
all

The pillar'd dusk of sounding sycamores,
And cross'd the garden to the gardener's
lodge,

With all its casements bedded, and its
walls

And chimneys muffled in the leafy vine.

There, on a slope of orchard, Francis
laid

A damask napkin wrought with horse and
hound,

Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of
home,

And, half-cut-down, a pasty costly-made,
Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret

lay,
Like fossils of the rock, with golden
yolks

Imbedded and injellied; last, with these,
A flask of cider from his father's vats,
Prime, which I knew; and so we sat and
eat

And talk'd old matters over; who was
dead,

Who married, who was like to be, and
how

The races went, and who would rent the
hall;

Then touch'd upon the game, how scarce
it was

This season; glancing thence, discuss'd
the farm,

The four-field system, and the price of
grain;

And struck upon the corn-laws, where we
split,

And came again together on the king
With heated faces; till he laugh'd aloud;

And, while the blackbird on the pippin
hung

To hear him, clapt his hand in mine and
sang--

'Oh! who would fight and march and
countermarch,

Be shot for sixpence in a battle-field,
And shovell'd up into some bloody trench

Where no one knows? but let me live
my life.

'Oh! who would cast and balance at
a desk,

Perch'd like a crow upon a three-legg'd stool,
Till all his juice is dried, and all his joints

Are full of chalk? but let me live my life.
'Who'd serve the state? for if I carved

my name
Upon the cliffs that guard my native land,
I might as well have traced it in the sands;
The sea wastes all: but let me live my life.

'Oh! who would love? I woo'd a woman once,
But she was sharper than an eastern wind,
And all my heart turn'd from her, as a thorn

Turns from the sea; but let me live my life.'

He sang his song, and I replied with mine:

I found it in a volume, all of songs,
Knock'd down to me, when old Sir Robert's pride,

His books—the more the pity, so I said—
Came to the hammer here in March—
and this—

I set the words, and added names I knew.

'Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep, and dream of me:

Sleep, Ellen, folded in thy sister's arm,
And sleeping, haply dream her arm is mine.

'Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's arm;
Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,
For thou art fairer than all else that is.

'Sleep, breathing health and peace upon her breast:

Sleep, breathing love and trust against her lip:

I go to-night: I come to-morrow morn.

'I go, but I return: I would I were
The pilot of the darkness and the dream.
Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream of me.'

So sang we each to either, Francis Hale,
The farmer's son, who lived across the bay,
My friend; and I, that having where-
withal,

And in the fallow leisure of my life
A rolling stone of here and everywhere,
Did what I would; but ere the night we rose

And saunter'd home beneath a moon, that, just

In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf
Twilights of airy silver, till we reach'd
The limit of the hills; and as we sank
From rock to rock upon the glooming quay,
The town was hush'd beneath us: lower down

The bay was oily calm; the harbour-buoy,

Sole star of phosphorescence in the calm,
With one green sparkle ever and anon
Dipt by itself, and we were glad at heart.

WALKING TO THE MAIL.

John. I'm glad I walk'd. How fresh
the meadows look

Above the river, and, but a month ago,
The whole hill-side was redder than a fox.

Is yon plantation where this byway joins
The turnpike?

James. Yes.

John. And when does this come by?

James. The mail? At one o'clock.

John. What is it now?

James. A quarter to.

John. Whose house is that I see?
No, not the County Member's with the vane:

Up higher with the yew-tree by it, and half

A score of gables.

James
But he

John
James

Vex'd
That v

From a

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John.

James

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The farmer

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And all his

boy

Betwixt his

Sets out, an

'W

James. That? Sir Edward Head's :
But he's abroad : the place is to be sold.

John. Oh, his. He was not broken.

James. No, sir, he,
Vex'd with a morbid devil in his blood
That veil'd the world with jaundice, hid
his face

From all men, and commercing with him-
self,

He lost the sense that handles daily life—
That keeps us all in order more or less—
And sick of home went overseas for
change.

John. And whither?

James. Nay, who knows? he's here
and there.

But let him go; his devil goes with him,
As well as with his tenant, Jocky Dawes.

John. What's that?

James. You saw the man—on Monday,
was it?—

There by the humpback'd willow; half
stands up

And bristles; half has fall'n and made a
bridge;

And there he caught the younker tickling
trout—

Caught in *flagrante*—what's the Latin
word?—

Delicto: but his house, for so they say,
Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that
shook

The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt at
doors,

And rummaged like a rat : no servant
stay'd :

The farmer vext packs up his beds and
chairs,

And all his household stuff; and with his
boy

Betwixt his knees, his wife upon the tilt,
Sets out, and meets a friend who hails him,

'What!

You're flitting!' 'Yes, we're flitting,'
says the ghost

(For they had pack'd the thing among
the beds,)

'Oh well,' says he, 'you flitting with us
too—

Jack, turn the horses' heads and home
again.'

John. He left his wife behind; for so I
heard.

James. He left her, yes. I met my
lady once :

A woman like a butt, and harsh as crabs.

John. Oh yet but I remember, ten years
back—

'Tis now at least ten years—and then she
was—

You could not light upon a sweeter thing :
A body slight and round, and like a pear
In growing, modest eyes, a hand, a foot
Lessening in perfect cadence, and a skin
As clean and white as privet when it
flowers.

James. Ay, ay, the blossom fades, and
they that loved

At first like dove and dove were cat and
dog.

She was the daughter of a cottager,
Out of her sphere. What betwixt shame
and pride,

New things and old, himself and her, she
sour'd

To what she is : a nature never kind !
Like men, like manners : like breeds like,
they say :

Kind nature is the best : those manners
next

That fit us like a nature second-hand ;
Which are indeed the manners of the great.

John. But I had heard it was this bill
that past,

And fear of change at home, that drove
him hence.

James. That was the last drop in the
cup of gall.
I once was near him, when his bailiff
brought
A Chartist pike. You should have seen
him wince
As from a venomous thing : he thought
himself
A mark for all, and shudder'd, lest a
cry
Should break his sleep by night, and his
nice eyes
Should see the raw mechanic's bloody
thumbs
Sweat on his blazon'd chairs ; but, sir,
you know
That these two parties still divide the
world—
Of those that want, and those that have :
and still
The same old sore breaks out from age to
age
With much the same result. Now I
myself,
A Tory to the quick, was as a boy
Destructive, when I had not what I
would.
I was at school—a college in the South :
There lived a flayflint near ; we stole his
fruit,
His hens, his eggs ; but there was law
for us ;
We paid in person. He had a sow, sir.
She,
With meditative grunts of much content,
Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun and
mud.
By night we dragg'd her to the college
tower
From her warm bed, and up the cork-
screw stair
With hand and rope we haled the groan-
ing sow,
And on the leads we kept her till she
pigg'd.
Large range of prospect had the mother
sow,
And but for daily loss of one she loved
As one by one we took them—but for
this—
As never sow was higher in this world—
Might have been happy : but what lot is
pure ?
We took them all, till she was left alone
Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine,
And so return'd unfarrow'd to her sty.
John. They found you out ?
James. Not they.
John. Well—after all --
What know we of the secret of a man ?
His nerves were wrong. What ails us,
who are sound,
That we should mimic this raw fool the
world,
Which charts us all in its coarse blacks
or whites,
As ruthless as a baby with a worm,
As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows
To Pity—more from ignorance than will.
But put your best boot forward, or I
fear
That we shall miss the mail : and here it
comes
With five at top : as quaint a four-in-
hand
As you shall see—three pycbalds and a
roan.

EDWIN MORRIS ;
OR, THE LAKE.
O ME, my pleasant rambles by the lake,
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters of a
year,
My one Oasis in the dust and drouth

Of city life ! I was a sketcher then :
 See here, my doing : curves of mountain,
 bridge,
 Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built
 When men knew how to build, upon a
 rock
 With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock :
 And here, new-comers in an ancient hold,
 New-comers from the Mersey, million-
 aires,
 Here lived the Hills—a Tudor-chimney
 bulk
 Of mellow brickwork on an isle of
 bowers.
 O me, my pleasant rambles by the lake
 With Edwin Morris and with Edward
 Bull
 The curate ; he was fatter than his cure.

 But Edwin Morris, he that knew the
 names,
 Long learned names of agaric, moss and
 fern,
 Who forged a thousand theories of the
 rocks,
 Who taught me how to skate, to row, to
 swim,
 Who read me rhymes elaborately good,
 His own—I call'd him Crichton, for he
 seem'd
 All-perfect, finish'd to the finger nail. •

 And once I ask'd him of his early life,
 And his first passion ; and he answer'd
 me ;
 And well his words became him : was he
 not
 A full-cell'd honeycomb of eloquence
 Stored from all flowers ? Poet-like he
 spoke.

 'My love for Nature is as old as I ;
 But thirty moons, one honeymoon to that,
 And three rich sennights more, my love
 for her.
 My love for Nature and my love for her,
 Of different ages, like twin-sisters grew,
 Twin-sisters differently beautiful.
 To some full music rose and sank the
 sun,
 And some full music seem'd to move and
 change
 With all the varied changes of the dark,
 And either twilight and the day between ;
 For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again
 Revolving toward fulfilment, made it
 sweet
 To walk, to sit, to sleep, to wake, to
 breathe.'
 Or this or something like to this he
 spoke.
 Then said the fat-faced curate Edward
 Bull,
 'I take it, God made the woman for
 the man,
 And for the good and increase of the
 world.
 A pretty face is well, and this is well,
 To have a dame indoors, that trims us
 up,
 And keeps us tight ; but these unreal
 ways
 Seem but the theme of writers, and indeed
 Worn threadbare. Man is made of solid
 stuff.
 I say, God made the woman for the man,
 And for the good and increase of the
 world.'

 'Parson,' said I, 'you pitch the pipe
 too low :
 But I have sudden touches, and can run
 My faith beyond my practice into his :
 Tho' if, in dancing after Letty Hill,
 I do not hear the bells upon my cap,
 I scarce have other music : yet say on.

What should one give to light on such a dream ?'

I ask'd him half-sardonically.

'Give ?

Give all thou art,' he answer'd, and a light

Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy cheek ;

'I would have hid her needle in my heart,

To save her little finger from a scratch
No deeper than the skin : my ears could hear

Her lightest breath : her least remark was worth

The experience of the wise. I went and came ;

Her voice fled always thro' the summer land ;

I spoke her name alone. Thrice-happy days !

The flower of each, those moments when we met,

The crown of all, we met to part no more.'

Were not his words delicious, I a beast

To take them as I did ? but something jarr'd ;

Whether he spoke too largely ; that there seem'd

A touch of something false, some self-conceit,

Or over-smoothness : howsое'er it was,
He scarcely hit my humour, and I said :

'Friend Edwin, do not think yourself alone

Of all men happy. Shall not Love to me,
As in the Latin song I learnt at school,
Sneeze out a full God-bless-you right and left ?

But you can talk : yours is a kindly vein :
I have, I think,—Heaven knows—as much within ;

Have, or should have, but for a thought or two,

That like a purple beech among the greens
Looks out of place : 'tis from no want in her :

It is my shyness, or my self-distrust,
Or something of a wayward modern mind
Dissecting passion. Time will set me right.'

So spoke I knowing not the things that were.

Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward Bull :

'God make the woman for the use of man,
And for the good and increase of the world.'

And I and Edwin laugh'd ; and now we paused

About the windings of the marge to hear
The soft wind blowing over meadowy holms

And alders, garden-isles ; and now we left

The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran
By ripply shallows of the lispings lake,
Delighted with the freshness and the sound.

But, when the bracken rusted on their crags,

My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by him

That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk,
The rentroll Cupid of our rainy isles.

'Tis true, we met ; one hour I had, no more :

She sent a note, the seal an *Elle vous suit*,
The close 'Your Letty, only yours ;' and this

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Thrice underscored. The friendly mist
 of morn
 Clung to the lake. I boated over, ran
 My craft aground, and heard with beating
 heart
 The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelving
 keel ;
 And out I stept, and up I crept : she
 moved,
 Like Proserpine in Enna, gathering
 flowers :
 Then low and sweet I whistled thrice ;
 and she,
 She turn'd, we ciosed, we kiss'd, . . . ore
 faith, I breathed
 In some new planet : a silent cousin stole
 Upon us and departed : 'Leave,' she
 cried,
 'O leave me !' 'Never, dearest, never :
 here
 I brave the worst :' and while we stood
 like fools
 Embracing, all at once a score of pugs
 And poodles yell'd within, and out they
 came
 Trustees and Aunts and Uncles. 'What,
 with him !
 Go' (shrill'd the cotton-spinning chorus) ;
 'him !'
 I choked. Again they shriek'd the
 burthen—'Him !'
 Again with hands of wild rejection 'Go !—
 Girl, get you in !' She went—and in one
 month
 They wedded her to sixty thousand
 pounds,
 To lands in Kent and messuages in York,
 And slight Sir Robert with his watery
 smile
 And educated whisker. But for me,
 They set an ancient creditor to work :
 It seems I broke a close with force and
 arms :

There came a mystic token from the king
 To greet the sheriff, needless courtesy !
 I read, and fled by night, and flying
 turn'd :
 Her taper glimmer'd in the lake below :
 I turn'd once more, close-button'd to the
 storm ;
 So left the place, left Edwin, nor have
 seen
 Him since, nor heard of her, nor cared
 to hear.
 Nor cared to hear ? perhaps : yet long
 ago
 I have pardon'd little Letty ; not indeed,
 It may be, for her own dear sake but this,
 She seems a part of those fresh days to
 me ;
 For in the dust and drouth of London life
 She moves among my visions of the lake,
 While the prime swallow dips his wing,
 or then
 While the gold-lily blows, and overhead
 The light cloud smoulders on the summer
 crag.

ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

ALTHO' I be the basest of mankind,
 From scalp to sole one slough and crust
 of sin,
 Unfit for earth, unfit for heaven, scarce
 meet
 For troops of devils, mad with blasphemy,
 I will not cease to grasp the hope I hold
 Of saintdom, and to clamour, mourn and
 sob,
 Battering the gates of heaven with storms
 of prayer,
 Have mercy, Lord, and take away my
 sin.
 Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty
 God,

<p>This not be all in vain, that thrice ten years, Thrice multiplied by superhuman pangs, In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and cold, In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous throes and cramps, A sign betwixt the meadow and the cloud, Patient on this tall pillar I have borne Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and sleet, and snow ; And I had hoped that ere this period closed Thou wouldst have caught me up into thy rest, Denying not these weather-beaten limbs The meed of saints, the white robe and the palm. O take the meaning, Lord : I do not breathe, Not whisper, any murmur of complaint. Pain heap'd ten-hundred-fold to this, were still Less burthen, by ten-hundred-fold, to bear, Than were those lead-like tons of sin, that crush'd My spirit flat before thee.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">O Lord, Lord,</p> <p>Thou knowest I bore this better at the first, For I was strong and hale of body then ; And tho' my teeth, which now are dropt away, Would chatter with the cold, and all my beard Was tagg'd with icy fringes in the moon, I drown'd the whoopings of the owl with sound Of pious hymns and psalms, and some- times saw An angel stand and watch me, as I sang. Now am I feeble grown ; my end draws nigh ;</p>	<p>I hope my end draws nigh : half deaf I am, So that I scarce can hear the people hum About the column's base, and almost blind, And scarce can recognise the fields I know ; And both my thighs are rotted with the dew ; Yet cease I not to clamour and to cry, While my stiff spine can hold my weary head, Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from the stone, Have mercy, mercy : take away my sin. O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my soul, Who may be saved ? who is it may be saved ? Who may be made a saint, if I fail here ? Show me the man hath suffer'd more than I. For did not all thy martyrs die one death ? For either they were stoned, or crucified, Or burn'd in fire, or boil'd in oil, or sawn In twain beneath the ribs ; but I die here To-day, and whole years long, a life of death, Bear witness, if I could have found a way (And heedfully I sifted all my thought) More slowly-painful to subdue this home Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and hate, I had not stinted practice, O my God. For not alone this pillar-punishment. Not this alone I bore : but while I lived In the white convent down the valley there, For many weeks about my loins I wore The rope that haled the buckets from the well, Twisted as tight as I could knot the noose ; And spake not of it to a single soul, Until the ulcer, eating thro' my skin,</p>
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Betray'd my secret penance, so that all
 My brethren marvell'd greatly. More
 than this
 I bore, whereof, O God, thou knowest all.
 Three winters, that my soul might
 grow to thee,
 I lived up there on yonder mountain side.
 My right leg chain'd into the crag, I lay
 Pent in a roofless close of ragged stones ;
 Inswathed sometimes in wandering mist,
 and twice
 Black'd with thy branding thunder, and
 sometimes
 Sucking the damps for drink, and eating
 not,
 Except the spare chance-gift of those that
 came
 To touch my body and be heal'd, and
 live :
 And they say then that I work'd miracles,
 Whereof my fame is loud amongst man-
 kind,
 Cured lameness, palsies, cancers. Thou,
 O God,
 Knowest alone whether this was or no.
 Have mercy, mercy ; cover all my sin.
 Then, that I might be more alone with
 thee,
 Three years I lived upon a pillar, high
 Six cubits, and three years on one of
 twelve ;
 And twice three years I crouch'd on one
 that rose
 Twenty by measure ; last of all, I grew
 Twice ten long weary weary years to this,
 That numbers forty cubits from the soil.
 I think that I have borne as much as
 this—
 Or else I dream—and for so long a time,
 If I may measure time by yon slow light,
 And this high dial, which my sorrow
 crowns—
 So much—even so.

And yet I know not well,
 For that the evil ones come here, and say,
 ' Fall down, O Simeon : thou hast suffer'd
 long
 For ages and for ages ! ' then they prate
 Of penances I cannot have gone thro',
 Perplexing me with lies ; and oft I fall,
 Maybe for months, in such blind lethar-
 gies,
 That Heaven, and Earth, and Time are
 choked.
 But yet
 Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all
 the saints
 Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men on
 earth
 House in the shade of comfortable roofs,
 Sit with their wives by fires, eat whole-
 some food,
 And wear warm clothes, and even beasts
 have stalls,
 I, 'twixt the spring and downfall of the
 light,
 Bow down one thousand and two hundred
 times,
 To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the
 Saints ;
 Or in the night, after a little sleep,
 I wake : the chill stars sparkle ; I am wet
 With drenching dews, or stiff with crack-
 ling frost.
 I wear an undress'd goatskin on my
 back ;
 A grazing iron collar grinds my neck ;
 And in my weak, lean arms I lift the
 cross,
 And strive and wrestle with thee till I die :
 O mercy, mercy ! wash away my sin.
 O Lord, thou knowest what a man I
 am ;
 A sinful man, conceived and born in sin :
 'Tis their own doing ; this is none of
 mine ;

Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for this,
That here come those that worship me?
I! a! ha!
They think that I am somewhat. What am I?
The silly people take me for a saint,
And bring me offerings of fruit and flowers:
And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness here)
Have all in all endured as much, and more
Than many just and holy men, whose names
Are register'd and calendar'd for saints.
Good people, you do ill to kneel to me.
What is it I can have done to merit this?
I am a sinner viler than you all.
It may be I have wrought some miracles,
And cured some halt and maim'd; but what of that?
It may be, no one, even among the saints,
May match his pains with mine; but what of that?
Yet do not rise; for you may look on me,
And in your looking you may kneel to God.
Speak! is there any of you, halt or maim'd?
I think you know I have some power with Heaven.
From my long penance: let him speak his wish.
Yes, I can heal him. Power goes forth from me.
They say that they are heal'd. Ah, hark! they shout
'St. Simeon Stylites.' Why, if so,
God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul,
God reaps a harvest in thee. If this be,
Can I work miracles and not be saved?
This is not told of any. They were saints.

It cannot be but that I shall be saved;
Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout,
'Behold a saint!'
And lower voices saint me from above.
Courage, St. Simeon! This dull chrysalis
Cracks into shining wings, and hope ere death
Spreads more and more and more, that
God hath now
Sponged and made blank of crime's record all
My mortal archives.
O my sons, my sons,
I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname
Stylites, among men; I, Simeon,
The watcher on the column till the end;
I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine
bakes;
I, whose bald brows in silent hours
become
Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now
From my high nest of penance here pro-
claim
That Pontius and Iscariot by my side
Show'd like fair seraphs. On the coals I
lay,
A vessel full of sin: all hell beneath
Made me boil over. Devils pluck'd my
sleeve,
Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at me.
I smote them with the cross; they
swarm'd again.
In bed like monstrous apes they crush'd
my chest:
They flapp'd my light out as I read: I
saw
Their faces grow between me and my
book;
With colt-like whinny and with hoggish
whine
They burst my prayer. Yet this way was
left,
And by this way I escap'd them. Mortify

Your flesh, like me, with scourges and
 with thorns ;
 Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it may
 be, fast
 Whole Lents, and pray. I hardly, with
 slow steps,
 With slow, faint steps, and much exceed-
 ing pain,
 Have scrambled past those pits of fire,
 that still
 Sing in mine ears. But yield not me the
 praise :
 God only thro' his bounty hath thought
 fit,
 Among the powers and princes of this
 world,
 To make me an example to mankind,
 Which few can reach to. Yet I do not
 say
 But that a time may come—yea, even
 now,
 Now, now, his footsteps smite the
 threshold stairs
 Of life—I say, that time is at the doors
 When you may worship me without
 reproach ;
 For I will leave my relics in your land,
 And you may carve a shrine about my
 dust,
 And burn a fragrant lamp before my
 bones,
 When I am gather'd to the glorious
 saints.
 While I spake then, a sting of shrewd-
 est pain
 Ran shrivelling thro' me, and a cloudlike
 change,
 In passing, with a grosser film made
 thick
 These heavy, horny eyes. . . The end ! the
 end !
 Surely the end ! What's here ? a shape,
 a shade,

A flash of light. Is that the angel there
 That holds a crown ? Come, blessed
 brother, come.
 I know thy glittering face. I waited
 long ;
 My brows are ready. What ! deny it
 now ?
 Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh. So I
 clutch it. Christ !
 'Tis gone : 'tis here again ; the crown !
 the crown !
 So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me,
 And from it melt the dews of Paradise,
 Sweet ! sweet ! spikenard, and balm, and
 frankincense.
 Ah ! let me not be fool'd, sweet saints :
 I trust
 That I am whole, and clean, and meet
 for Heaven.
 Speak, if there be a priest, a man of
 God,
 Among you there, and let him presently
 Approach, and lean a ladder on the shaft,
 And climbing up into my airy home,
 Deliver me the blessed sacrament ;
 For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,
 I prophesy that I shall die to-night,
 A quarter before twelve.
 But thou, O Lord,
 Aid all this foolish people ; let them take
 Example, pattern : lead them to thy light.

THE TALKING OAK.

ONCE more the gate behind me falls
 Once more before my face
 I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,
 That stand within the chace.
 Beyond the lodge the city lies,
 Beneath its drift of smoke ;
 And ah ! with what delighted eyes
 I turn to yonder oak.

For when my passion first began,
Ere that, which in me burn'd,
The love, that makes me thrice a man,
Could hope itself return'd ;

To yonder oak within the field
I spoke without restraint,
And with a larger faith appeal'd
Than Papist unto Saint.

For oft I talk'd with him apart,
And told him of my choice,
Until he plagiarised a heart,
And answer'd with a voice.

Tho' what he whisper'd, under Heaven
None else could understand ;
I found him garrulously given,
A babbler in the land.

But since I heard him make reply
Is many a weary hour ;
'Twere well to question him, and try
If yet he keeps the power.

Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,
Broad Oak of Sumner-chace,
Whose topmost branches can discern
The roofs of Sumner-place !

Say thou, whereon I carved her name,
If ever maid or spouse,
As fair as my Olivia, came
To rest beneath thy boughs. —

'O Walter, I have shelter'd here
Whatever maiden grace
The good old Summers, year by year
Made ripe in Sumner-chace :

'Old Summers, when the monk was fat,
And, issuing shorn and sleek,
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat
The girls upon the cheek,

'Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,
And number'd bead, and shrift,
Bluff Harry broke into the spence
And turn'd the cowls adrift :

'And I have seen some score of those
Fresh faces, that would thrive
When his man-minded offset rose
To chase the deer at five ;

'And all that from the town would stroll,
Till that wild wind made work
In which the gloomy brewer's soul
Went by me, like a stork :

'The slight she-slips of loyal blood,
And others, passing praise,
Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud
For puritanic stays :

'And I have shadow'd many a group
Of beauties, that were born
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,
Or while the patch was worn ;

'And, leg and arm with love-knots gay,
About me leap'd and laugh'd
The modest Cupid of the day,
And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.

'I swear (and else may insects prick
Each leaf into a gall)
This girl, for whom your heart is sick,
Is three times worth them all ;

'For those and theirs, by Nature's law,
Have faded long ago ;
But in these latter springs I saw
Your own Olivia blow,

'From when she gamboll'd on the greens
A baby-germ, to when
The maiden blossoms of her teens
Could number five from ten.

'I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,
(And hear me with thine ears,)
That, tho' I circle in the grain
Five hundred rings of years—

'Yet, since I first could cast a shade,
Did never creature pass
So slightly, musically made,
So light upon the grass :

'For as to fairies, that will fit
To make the greensward fresh,
I hold them exquisitely knit,
But far too spare of flesh.'

Oh, hide thy knotted knees in fern,
And overlook the chace ;
And from thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Summer-place.

But thou, whereon I carved her name,
That oft hast heard my vows,
Declare when last Olivia came
To sport beneath thy boughs.

'O yesterday, you know, the fair
Was holden at the town ;
Her father left his good arm-chair,
And rode his hunter down.

'And with him Albert came on his.
I look'd at him with joy :
As cowslip unto oxlip is,
So seems she to the boy.

'An hour had past—and, sitting straight
Within the low-wheel'd chaise,
Her mother trundled to the gate
Behind the dappled grays.

'But, as for her, she stay'd at home,
And on the roof she went,
And down the way you use to come,
She look'd with discontent.

'She left the novel half-uncut
Upon the rosewood shelf ;
She left the new piano shut :
She could not please herself.

'Then ran she, gamesome as the colt,
And livelier than a lark
She sent her voice thro' all the holt
Before her, and the park.

'A light wind chased her on the wing,
And in the chase grew wild,
As close as might be would he cling
About the darling child :

'But light as any wind that blows
So fleetly did she stir,
The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and rose,
And turn'd to look at her.

'And here she came, and round me play'd,
And sang to me the whole
Of those three stanzas that you made
About my "giant bole ;"

'And in a fit of frolic mirth
She strove to span my waist :
Alas, I was so broad of girth,
I could not be embraced.

'I wish'd myself the fair young beech
That here beside me stands,
That round me, clasping each in each,
She might have lock'd her hands.

'Yet seem'd the pressure thrice as sweet
As woodbine's fragile hold,
Or when I feel about my feet
The berried briony fold.'

O muffle round thy knees with fern,
And shadow Summer-chace !
Long may thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Summer-place !

But tell me, did she read the name
I carved with many vows
When last with throbbing heart I came:
To rest beneath thy boughs?

'O yes, she wander'd round and round
These knotted knees of mine,
And found, and kiss'd the name she found,
And sweetly murmur'd thine.

'A teardrop trembled from its source,
And down my surface crept.
My sense of touch is something coarse,
But I believe she wept.

'Then flush'd her cheek with rosy light,
She glanced across the plain;
But not a creature was in sight:
She kiss'd me once again.

'Her kisses were so close and kind,
That, trust me on my word,
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,
But yet my sap was stirr'd:

'And even into my inmost ring
A pleasure I discern'd,
Like those blind motions of the Spring,
That show the year is turn'd.

'Thrice-happy he that may caress
The ringlet's waving balm—
The cushions of whose touch may press
The maiden's tender palm.

'I, rooted here among the groves,
But languidly adjust
My rapid vegetable loves
With anthers and with dust:

'For ah! my friend, the days were brief
Whereof the poets talk,
When that, which breathes within the leaf,
Could slip its bark and walk.

'But could I, as in times foregone,
From spray, and branch, and stem,
Have suck'd and gather'd into one
The life that spreads in them,

'She had not found me so remiss;
But lightly issuing thro',
I would have paid her kiss for kiss,
With usury thereto.'

O flourish high, with leafy towers,
And overlook the lea,
Pursue thy loves among the bowers
But leave thou mine to me.

O flourish, hidden deep in fern,
Old oak, I love thee well;
A thousand thanks for what I learn
And what remains to tell.

'Tis little more: the day was warm;
At last, tired out with play,
She sank her head upon her arm
And at my feet she lay.

'Her eyelids dropp'd their silken eaves.
I breathed upon her eyes
Thro' all the summer of my leaves
A welcome mix'd with sighs.

'I took the swarming sound of life—
The music from the town—
The murmurs of the drum and fife
And lull'd them in my own.

'Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,
To light her shaded eye;
A second flutter'd round her lip
Like a golden butterfly;

'A third would glimmer on her neck
To make the necklace shine;
Another slid, a sunny fleck,
From head to ancle fine.

'Then close and dark my arms I spread,
And shadow'd all her rest—
Dropt dews upon her golden head,
An acorn in her breast.

'But in a pet she started up,
And pluck'd it out, and drew
My little oakling from the cup,
And flung him in the dew.

'And yet it was a graceful gift—
I felt a pang within
As when I see the woodman lift
His axe to slay my kin.

'I shook him down because he was
The finest on the tree.
He lies beside thee on the grass.
O kiss him once for me.

'O kiss him twice and thrice for me,
That have no lips to kiss,
For never yet was oak on leaf
Shall grow so fair as this.'

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,
Look further thro' the chace,
Spread upward till thy boughs discern
The front of Summer-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blest,
That but a moment lay
Where fairer fruit of Love may rest
Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,
The warmth it thence shall win
To ripen life may magnetise
The baby-oak within.

But thou, while kingdoms overset,
Or lapse from hand to hand,
Thy leaf shall never fail, nor yet
Thine acorn in the land.

May never saw dismember thee,
Nor wielded axe disjoint,
That art the fairest-spoken tree
From here to Lizard-point.

O rock upon thy towery top
All throats that gurgle sweet !
All starry culmination drop
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet !

All grass of silky feather grow—
And while he sinks or swells
The full south-breeze around thee blow
The sound of minster bells.

The fat earth feed thy branchy root,
That under deeply strikes !
The northern morning o'er thee shoot,
High up, in silver spikes !

Nor ever lightning char thy grain,
But, rolling as in sleep,
Low thunders bring the mellow rain,
That makes thee broad and deep !

And hear me swear a solemn oath,
That only by thy side
Will I to Olive plight my troth,
And gain her for my bride.

And when my marriage morn may fall,
She, Dryad-like, shall wear
Alternate leaf and acorn-ball
In wreath about her hair.

And I will work in prose and rhyme,
And praise thee more in both
Than bard has honour'd beech or lime,
Or that Thessalian growth,

In which the swarthy ringdove sat,
And mystic sentence spoke ;
And more than England honours that,
Thy famous brother-oak,

Wherein the younger Charles abode
Till all the paths were dim,
And far below the Roundhead rode,
And humm'd a surly hymn.

LOVE AND DUTY.

Of love that never found his earthly close,
What sequel? Streaming eyes and break-
ing hearts?

Or all the same as if he had not been?
Not so. Shall Error in the round of
time

Still father Truth? O shall the braggart
shout
For some blind glimpse of freedom work
itself

Thro' madness, hated by the wise, to law
System and empire? Sin itself be found
The cloudy porch oft opening on the Sun?
And only he, this wonder, dead, become
Mere highway dust? or year by year alone
Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,
Nightmare of youth, its spectre of him-
self?

If this were thus, if this, indeed, were
all,

Better the narrow brain, the stony heart,
The staring eye glazed o'er with sapless
days,

The long mechanic paces to and fro,
The set gray life, and apathetic end.

But am I not the nobler thro' thy love?
O three times less unworthy! likewise
thou

Art more thro' Love, and greater than thy
years

The Sun will run his orbit, and the Moon
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself will
bring

The drooping flower of knowledge
changed to fruit

Of wisdom. Wait: my faith is large in
Time,

And that which shapes it to some perfect
end.

Will some one say, Then why not ill
for good?

Why took ye not your pastime? To that
man

My work shall answer, since I knew the
right

And did it; for a man is not as God,
But then most Godlike being most a man.
—So let me think 'tis well for thee and
me—

Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine
Whose foresight preaches peace, my heart
so slow

To feel it! For how hard it seem'd to
me,

When eyes, love-languid thro' half-tears
would dwell

One earnest, earnest moment upon mine,
Then not to dare to see! when thy low
voice,

Faltering, would break its syllables, to
keep

My own full-tuned,—hold passion in a
leash,

And not leap forth and fall about thy neck,
And on thy bosom, (deep-desired relief!)

Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that
weigh'd

Upon my brain, my senses and my soul!

For Love himself took part against
himself

To warn us off, and Duty loved of Love—
O this world's curse,—beloved but hated
—came

Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace and
mine,

And crying, 'Who is this? behold thy
bride,'

She push'd me from thee.

If the sense is hard
 To alien ears, I did not speak to these—
 No, not to thee, but to thyself in me:
 Hard is my doom and thine: thou
 knowest it all.
 Could Love part thus? was it not well
 to speak,
 To have spoken once? It could not but
 be well.
 The slow sweet hours that bring us all
 things good,
 The slow sad hours that bring us all
 things ill,
 And all good things from evil, brought
 the night
 In which we sat together and alone,
 And to the want, that hollow'd all the
 heart,
 Gave utterance by the yearning of an eye,
 That burn'd upon its object thro' such
 tears
 As flow but once a life.
 The trance gave way
 To those caresses, when a hundred times
 In that last kiss, which never was the last,
 Farewell, like endless welcome, lived and
 died.
 Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and the
 words
 That make a man feel strong in speaking
 truth;
 Till now the dark was worn, and overhead
 The lights of sunset and of sunrise mix'd
 In that brief night; the summer night,
 that paused
 Among her stars to hear us; stars that
 hung
 Love-charm'd to listen: all the wheels of
 Time
 Spun round in station, but the end had
 come.
 O then like those, who clench their
 nerves to rush

Upon their dissolution, we two rose,
 There—closing like an individual life—
 In one blind cry of passion and of pain,
 Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,
 Caught up the whole of love and utter'd
 it,
 And bade adieu for ever.
 Live—yet live—
 Shall sharpest pathos blight us, knowing
 all
 Life needs for life is possible to will—
 Live happy; tend thy flowers; be tended
 by
 My blessing! Should my Shadow cross
 thy thoughts
 Too sadly for their peace, remand it thou
 For calmer hours to Memory's do ke
 hold,
 If not to be forgotten—not at once—
 Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy
 dreams,
 O might it come like one that looks
 content,
 With quiet eyes unfaithful to the truth,
 And point thee forward to a distant light,
 Or seem to lift a burthen from thy heart
 And leave thee freer, till thou wake
 refresh'd
 Then when the first low matin-chirp hath
 grown
 Full quire, and morning driv'n her plow
 of pearl
 Far furrowing into light the mounded rack,
 Beyond the fair green field and eastern sea.

THE GOLDEN YEAR.

WELL, you shall have that song which
 Leonard wrote:
 It was last summer on a tour in Wales:
 Old James was with me: we that day had
 been

Up Snowden; and I wish'd for Leonard
 there,
 And found him in the lake; then we
 crost
 Between the lakes, and clamber'd half
 way up
 The counter side; and that same song of
 his
 He told me; for I banter'd him, and
 swore
 They said he liv'd shut up within himself,
 A tongue-tied Poet in the feverous days,
 That, setting the *how much* before the
how,
 Cry, like the daughters of the horseleech,
 'Give,
 Cram us with all,' but count not me the
 herd!
 To which 'They call me what they
 will,' he said:
 'But I was born too late: the fair new
 forms,
 That float about the threshold of an age,
 Like truths of Science waiting to be
 caught—
 Catch me who can, and make the catcher
 crown'd—
 Are taken by the forelock. Let it be.
 But if you care indeed to listen, hear
 These measured words, my work of
 yesternorn.
 'We sleep and wake and sleep, but
 all things move;
 The Sun flies forward to his brother Sun;
 The dark Earth follows wheel'd in her
 ellipse;
 And human things returning on them-
 selves
 Move onward, leading up the golden year.
 'Ah, tho' the times, when some new
 thought can bud,
 As 'twere as poets' seasons when they
 flower,
 Yet seas, that daily gain upon the shore,
 Have ebb and flow conditioning their
 march,
 And slow and sure comes up the golden
 year.
 'When wealth no more shall rest in
 mounded heaps,
 But smit with freer light shall slowly melt
 In many streams to fatten lower lands,
 And light shall spread, and man be liker
 man
 Thro' all the season of the golden year.
 'Shall eagles not be eagles? wrens be
 wrens?
 If all the world were falcons, what of that?
 The wonder of the eagle were the less,
 But he not less the eagle. Happy days
 Roll onward, leading up the golden year.
 'Fly, happy happy sails and bear the
 Press;
 Fly happy with the mission of the Cross;
 Knit land to land, and blowing haven-
 ward
 With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear of
 toll,
 Enrich the markets of the golden year.
 'But we grow old. Ah! when shall
 all men's good
 Be each man's rule, and universal Peace
 Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
 And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
 Thro' all the circle of the golden year?'
 Thus far he flow'd, and ended; where-
 upon
 'Ah, folly!' in mimic audience answer'd
 James—
 'Ah, folly! for it lies so far away,
 Not in our time, nor in our children's
 time,
 'Tis like the second world to us that live;
 'Twere all as one to fix our hopes on
 Heaven
 As on this vision of the golden year.'

<p>With that he struck his staff against the rocks And broke it,—James,—you know him, —old, but full Of force and choler, and firm upon his feet, And like an oaken stock in winters wood, O'erflourish'd with the hoary clematis : Then added, all in heat : 'What stuff is this ! Old writers push'd the happy season back,— The more fools they,—we forward : dreamers both : You most, that in an age, when every hour Must sweat her sixty minutes to the death, Live on, God love us, as if the seedsman, rapt Upon the teeming harvest, should not plunge His hand into the bag : but well I know That unto him who works, and feels he works, This same grand year is ever at the doors.' He spoke ; and, high above, I heard them blast The steep slate-quarry, and the great echo flap And buffet round the hills from bluff to bluff.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ULYSSES.</p> <p>It little profits that an idle king, By this still hearth, among these barren craggs, Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole Unequal laws unto a savage race,</p>	<p>That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me : I cannot rest from travel : I will drink Life to the lees : all times I have enjoy'd Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those That lov'd me, and alone ; on shore, and when Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ; For always roaming with a hungry heart Much have I seen and known ; cities of men And manners, climates, councils, govern- ments, Myself not least, but honour'd of them all ; And drunk delight of battle with my peers, Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy. I am a part of all that I have met ; Yet all experience is an arch wherethro' Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades For ever and for ever when I move. How dull it is to pause, to make an end, To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use ! As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life Were all too little, and of one to me Little remains : but every hour is saved From that eternal silence, something more, A bringer of new things ; and vile it were For some three suns to store and hoard myself, And this gray spirit yearning in desire To follow knowledge like a sinking star, Beyond the utmost bound of human thought. This is my son, mine own Telemachus, To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—</p>
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Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make
mild

A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the
sphere

Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work,
I mine.

There lies the port : the vessel puffs
her sail :

There gloom the dark broad seas. My
mariners,

Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and
thought with me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and
opposed

Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I
are old ;

Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ;
Death closes all : but something ere the
end,

Some work of noble note, may yet be
done,

Not unbecoming men that strove with
Gods.

The lights begin to twinkle from the
rocks :

The long day wanes : the slow moon
climbs : the deep

Moans round with many voices. Come,
my friends,

'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.

Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows ; for my purpose
holds

To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.

It may be that the gulfs will wash us down :

It may be we shall touch the Happy
Isles,

And see the great Achilles, whom we
knew.

Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and
tho'

We are not now that strength which in
old days

Moved earth and heaven ; that which we
are, we are ;

One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong
in will

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to
yield.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA IN 1782.

O THOU, that sendest out the man
To rule by land and sea,
Strong mother of a Lion-line,
Be proud of those strong sons of thine
Who wrench'd their rights from thee !

What wonder, if in noble heat
Those men thine arms withstood,
Retought the lesson thou hadst taught,
And in thy spirit with thee fought—
Who sprang from English blood !

But Thou rejoice with liberal joy,
Lift up thy rocky face,
And shatter, when the storms are black,
In many a streaming torrent back,
The seas that shock thy base !

Whatever harmonies of law
The growing world assume,
Thy work is thine—The single note
From that deep chord which Hampden
smote

Will vibrate to the doom.

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Immortal ag

And all I w

Thy beauty,

Close over us

Shines in th

with t

TITHONUS.

THE woods decay, the woods decay and
fall,
The vapours weep their burthen to the
ground,
Man comes and tills the field and lies
beneath,
And after many a summer dies the swan.
Me only cruel immortality
Consumes : I wither slowly in thine arms,
Here at the quiet limit of the world,
A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a
dream
The ever-silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of
morn.

Alas ! for this gray shadow, once a
man—
So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he
seem'd
To his great heart none other than a God !
I ask'd thee, 'Give me immortality.'
Then didst thou grant mine asking with a
smile,
Like wealthy men who care not how they
give.
But thy strong Hours indignant work'd
their wills,
And beat me down and marr'd and wasted
me,
And tho' they could not end me, left me
maim'd
To dwell in presence of immortal youth,
Immortal age beside immortal youth,
And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even now,
Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill
with tears

To hear me ? Let me go : take back thy
gift :
Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance
Where all should pause, as is most meet
for all ?

A soft air fans the cloud apart ; there
comes
A glimpse of that dark world where I was
born.
Once more the old mysterious glimmer
steals
From thy pure brows, and from thy
shoulders pure,
And bosom beating with a heart renew'd.
Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the
gloom,
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to
mine,
Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild
team
Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke,
arise,
And shake the darkness from their
loosen'd manes,
And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

Lo ! ever thus thou growest beautiful
In silence, then before thine answer given
Departest, and thy tears are on my cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy
tears,
And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be
true ?
'The Gods themselves cannot recall their
gifts.'

Ay me ! ay me ! with what another
heart

In days far-off, and with what other eyes
 I used to watch—if I be he that watch'd—
 The lucid outline forming round thee;
 saw
 The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;
 Changed with thy mystic change, and felt
 my blood
 Glow with the glow that slowly crimson'd
 all
 Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,
 Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-
 warm
 With kisses balmier than half-opening
 buds
 Of April, and could hear the lips that
 kiss'd
 Whispering I knew not what of wild and
 sweet,
 Like that strange song I heard Apollo
 sing,
 While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East :
 How can my nature longer mix with
 thine ?
 Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
 Arc all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled
 feet
 Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the
 steam
 Floats up from those dim fields about the
 homes
 Of happy men that have the power to
 die,
 And grassy barrows of the happier dead.
 Release me, and restore me to the
 ground ;
 Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my
 grave :
 Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by
 morn ;
 I earth in earth forget these empty courts,
 And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

LOCKSLEY HALL.

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn :
 Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
 Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall ;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
 Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
 With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time ;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed ;

When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed :

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see ;
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be. —

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast ;
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest ;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove ;
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, 'My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee.'

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a colour and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, 'I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong ;'

Saying, 'Dost thou love me, cousin ?' weeping, 'I have loved thee long.'

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands ;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might ;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fullness of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my Amy, mine no more !
O the dreary, dreary moorland ! O the barren, barren shore !

Falsèr than all fancy fathoms, falsèr than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue !

Is it well to wish thee happy ?—haying known me—to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine !

Yet it shall be : thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathise with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is : thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy: think not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him: it is thy duty: kiss him: take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought:
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit?
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she speak and move:
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?
No—she never loved me truly: love is lov'd for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the 'Never, never,' whisper'd by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow : get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace ; for a tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine ; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down : my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his : it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

'They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffer'd'—Perish in thy self-contempt !

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy ! wherefore should I care ?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these ?
Every door is bar'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy : what is that which I should do ?

I had been content to perish, falling on the Joeman's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapour, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honour feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness ? I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age !

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life ;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn ;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men :

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new :
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do :
For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be ;
Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales ;
Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue ;
Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm ;
Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.
There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.
So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye ;
Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint :
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point :
Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.
Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.
What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's ?
Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.
Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.
Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn :
Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string ?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.
Weakness to be wroth with weakness ! woman's pleasure, woman's pain —
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat ;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd ;—
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag ;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing-space ;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but *I know* my words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime ?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon !

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day :
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun :
 Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun.
 O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
 Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.
 Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !
 Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.
 Comes a vapour from the margin, blackening over heath andholt,
 Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.
 Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ;
 For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

GODIVA.

*I waited for the train at Coventry ;
 I hung with grooms and porters on the
 bridge,
 To watch the three tall spires ; and there
 I shaped
 The city's ancient legend into this : —*
 Not only we, the latest seed of Time,
 New men, that in the flying of a wheel
 Cry down the past, not only we, that prate
 Of rights and wrongs, have loved the
 people well,
 And loathed to see them overtax'd ; but
 she
 Did more, and underwent, and overcame,
 The woman of a thousand summers back,
 Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who ruled
 In Coventry: for when he laid a tax
 Upon his town, and all the mothers
 brought
 Their children, clamouring, ' If we pay,
 we starve !'
 She sought her lord, and found him,
 where he strode
 About the hall, among his dogs, alone,
 His beard a foot before him, and his hair
 A yard behind. She told him of their
 tears,

And pray'd him, ' If they pay this tax,
 they starve.'
 Whereat he stared, replying, half-amazed,
 ' You would not let your little finger ache
 For such as these ?' — ' But I would die,'
 said she.
 He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by
 Paul:
 Then fillip'd at the diamond in her ear;
 ' O ay, ay, ay, you talk !' — ' Alas !' she
 said,
 ' But prove me what it is I would not do.'
 And from a heart as rough as Esau's
 hand,
 He answer'd, ' Ride you naked thro' the
 town,
 And I repeat it ;' and nodding, as in
 scorn,
 He parted, with great strides among his
 dogs.
 So left alone, the passions of her mind,
 As winds from all the compass shift and
 blow,
 Made war upon each other for an hour,
 Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,
 And bade him cry, with sound of trumpet,
 all
 The hard condition ; but that she would
 loose

<p>The people : therefore, as they loved her well, From then till noon no foot should pace the street, No eye look down, she passing ; but that all Should keep within, door shut, and window barr'd. Then fled she to her inmost bower, and there Unclass'd the wedded eagles of her belt, The grim Earl's gift ; but ever at a breath She linger'd, looking like a summer moon Half-dipt in cloud : anon she shook her head, And shower'd the rippled ringlets to her knee ; Unclad herself in haste ; adown the stair Stole on ; and, like a creeping sunbeam, slid From pillar unto pillar, until she reach'd The gateway ; there she found her palfrey In purple blazon'd with armorial gold. Then she rode forth, clothed on with chastity : The deep air listen'd round her as she rode, And all the low wind hardly breathed for fear. The little wide-mouth'd heads upon the spout Had cunning eyes to see : the barking cur Made her cheek flame : her palfrey's footfall shot Light horrors thro' her pulses : the blind walls Were full of chinks and holes ; and over- head Fantastic gables, crowding, stared : but she Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she saw</p>	<p>The white-flower'd elder-thicket from the field Gleam thro' the Gothic archways in the wall. Then she rode back, clothed on with chastity : And one low churl, compact of thankless earth, The fatal byword of all years to come, Boring a little auger-hole in fear, Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had their will, Were shrivell'd into darkness in his head, And dropt before him. So the Powers, who wait On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense mis- used ; And she, that knew not, pass'd : and all at once, With twelve great shocks of sound, the shameless noon Was clush'd and hammer'd from a hundred towers, One after one : but even then she gain'd Her bower ; whence reissuing, robed and crown'd, To meet her lord, she took the tax away And built herself an everlasting name.</p>
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THE DAY-DREAM.

PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak :
 A pleasant hour has passed away
 While, dreaming on your damask cheek,
 The dewy sister-cyelids lay.
 As by the lattice you reclined,
 I went thro' many wayward moods
 To see you dreaming—and, behind,
 A summer crisp with shining woods.

And I too dream'd, until at last
 Across my fancy, brooding warm,
 The reflex of a legend past,
 And loosely settled into form.
 And would you have the thought I had,
 And see the vision that I saw,
 Then take the broidery-frame, and add
 A crimson to the quaint Macaw,
 And I will tell it. Turn your face,
 Nor look with that too-earnest eye—
 The rhymes are dazzled from their place,
 And order'd words asunder fly.

THE SLEEPING PALACE.

I.

THE varying year with blade and sheaf
 Clothes and reclothes the happy plains;
 Here rests the sap within the leaf,
 Here stays the blood along the veins.
 Faint shadows, vapours lightly curl'd,
 Faint murmurs from the meadows come,
 Like hints and echoes of the world
 To spirits folded in the womb.

II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
 On every slanting terrace-lawn.
 The fountain to his place returns
 Deep in the garden lake withdrawn
 Here droops the banner on the tower,
 On the hall-hearths the festal fires,
 The peacock in his laurel bower,
 The parrot in his gilded wires.

III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their eggs:
 In these, in those the life is stay'd.
 The mantles from the golden pegs
 Droop sleepily: no sound is made,
 Not even of a gnat that sings.
 More like a picture seemeth all
 Than those old portraits of old kings,
 That watch the sleepers from the wall.

IV.

Here sits the Butler with a flask
 Between his knees, half-drain'd; and
 there
 The wrinkled steward at his task,
 The maid-of-honour blooming fair;
 The page has caught her hand in his:
 Her lips are sever'd as to speak:
 His own are pouted to a kiss:
 The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,
 The beams, that thro' the Oriel shine,
 Make prisms in every carven glass,
 And beaker brimm'd with noble
 wine.
 Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
 Grave faces gather'd in a ring.
 His state the king reposing keeps.
 He must have been a jovial king.

VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
 At distance like a little wood;
 Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
 And grapes with bunches red as blood;
 All creeping plants, a wall of green
 Close-matted, bur and brake and
 briar,
 And glimpsing over these, just seen,
 High up, the topmost palace-spire.

VII.

When will the hundred summers die,
 And thought and time be born again,
 And never knowledge, drawing nigh,
 Bring truth that sways the soul of
 men?
 Here all things in their place remain,
 As all were order'd, ages since.
 Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and
 Pain,
 And bring the fated fairy Prince.

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THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,
 She lying on her couch alone,
 Across the purpled coverlet,
 The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,
 On either side her tranced form
 Forth streaming from a braid of pearl :
 The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
 And moves not on the rounded curl.

II.

The silk star-broider'd coverlid
 Unto her limbs itself doth mould
 Languidly ever ; and, amid
 Her full black ringlets downward roll'd,
 Glows forth each softly-shadow'd arm
 With bracelets of the diamond bright :
 Her constant beauty doth inform
 Stillness with love, and day with light.

III.

She sleeps : her breathings are not heard
 In palace chambers far apart.
 The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd
 That lie upon her charmed heart.
 She sleeps : on either hand upswells
 The gold-fringed pillow lightly prest :
 She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells
 A perfect form in perfect rest.

THE ARRIVAL.

I.

ALL precious things, discover'd late, ..
 To those that seek them issue forth ;
 For love in sequel works with fate,
 And draws the veil from hidden worth.
 He travels far from other skies—
 His mantle glitters on the rocks—
 A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,
 And lighter-footed than the fox.

II.

The bodies and the bones of those
 That strove in other days to pass,
 Are wither'd in the thorny close,
 Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.
 He gazes on the silent dead :
 ' They perish'd in their daring deeds,'
 This proverb flashes thro' his head,
 ' The many fail : the one succeeds.'

III.

He comes, scarce knowing what he
 seeks :
 He breaks the hedge : he enters there :
 The colour flies into his cheeks :
 He trusts to light on something fair ;
 For all his life the charm did talk
 About his path, and hover near
 With words of promise in his walk,
 And whisper'd voices at his ear.

IV.

More close and close his footsteps wind :
 The Magic Music in his heart
 Beats quick and quicker, till he find
 The quiet chamber far apart.
 His spirit flutters like a lark,
 He stoops—to kiss her—on his knee.
 ' Love, if thy tresses be so dark,
 How dark those hidden eyes must be !'

THE REVIVAL.

I.

A TOUCH, a kiss ! the charm was snapt.
 There rose a noise of striking clocks,
 And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
 And barking dogs, and crowing
 cocks ;
 A fuller light illumined all,
 A breeze thro' all the garden swept,
 A sudden hubbub shook the hall,
 And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

II.

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
The butler drank, the steward scrawl'd,
The fire shot up, the martin flew,
The parrot scream'd, the peacock
squall'd,

The maid and page renew'd their strife,
The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and
clack't,

And all the long-pent stream of life
Dash'd downward in a cataract.

III.

And last with these the king awoke,
And in his chair himself uprear'd,
And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and
spoke,

'By holy rood, a royal beard!
How say you? we have slept, my lords.
My beard has grown into my lap.'
The barons swore, with many words,
'Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

IV.

'Pardy,' return'd the king, 'but still
My joints are somewhat stiff or so.
My lord, and shall we pass the bill
I mention'd half an hour ago?'
The chancellor, sedate and vain,
In courteous words return'd reply:
But dallied with his golden chain,
And, smiling, put the question by.

THE DEPARTURE.

I.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,
And far across the hills they went
In that new world which is the old:
Across the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
And deep into the dying day
The happy princess follow'd him.

II.

'I'd sleep another hundred years,
O love, for such another kiss;
'O wake for ever, love,' she hears,
'O love, 'twas such as this and this.'
And o'er them many a sliding star,
And many a merry wind was borne,
And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,
The twilight melted into morn.

III.

'O eyes long laid in happy sleep!
'O happy sleep, that lightly fled!
'O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep!
'O love, thy kiss would wake the
dead!'

And o'er them many a flowing range
Of vapour buoy'd the crescent-bark,
And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
The twilight died into the dark.

IV.

'A hundred summers! can it be?
And whither goest thou, tell me where?'
'O seek my father's court with me,
For there are greater wonders there.'
And o'er the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

MORAL.

I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And if you find no moral there,
Go, look in any glass and say,
What moral is in being fair.
Oh, to what uses shall we put
The wildweed-flower that simply
blows?
And is there any moral shut
Within the bosom of the rose?

II.

But any man that walks the mead,
In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,
According as his humours lead,
A meaning suited to his mind.
And liberal applications lie
In Art like Nature, dearest friend ;
So 'twere to cramp its use, if I
Should hook it to some useful end.

L'ENVOI.

I.

You shake your head. A random string
Your finer female sense offends.
Well—were it not a pleasant thing
To fall asleep with all one's friends ;
To pass with all our social ties
To silence on the paths of men ;
And every hundred years to rise
And learn the world, and sleep again ;
To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
And wake on science grown to more,
On secrets of the brain, the stars,
As wild as aught of fairy lore ;
And all that else the years will show,
The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
The vast Republics that may grow,
The Federations and the Powers ;
Titanic forces taking birth
In divers seasons, divers climes :
For we are Ancients of the earth,
And in the morning of the times.

II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
Thro' sunny decads new and strange,
Or gay quinquennials would we reap
The flower and quintessence of change.

III.

Ah, yet would I—and would I might !
So much your eyes my fancy take—
Be still the first to leap to light
That I might kiss those eyes awake !

For, am I right, or am I wrong,
To choose your own you did not care ;
You'd have my moral from the song,
And I will take my pleasure there :
And, am I right or am I wrong,
My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
To search a meaning for the song,
Perforce will still revert to you ;
Nor finds a closer truth than this
All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,
And evermore a costly kiss
The prelude to some brighter world.

IV.

For since the time when Adam first
Embraced his Eve in happy hour,
And every bird of Eden burst
In carol, every bud to flower,
What eyes, like thine, have waken'd
hopes,
What lips, like thine, so sweetly join'd ?
Where on the double rosebud droops
The fullness of the pensive mind ;
Which all too dearly self-involved,
Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me ;
A sleep by kisses undissolved,
That lets thee neither hear nor see :
But break it. In the name of wife,
And in the rights that name may give,
Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,
And that for which I care to live.

EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And, if you find a meaning there,
O whisper to your glass, and say,
'What wonder, if he thinks me fair ?'
What wonder I was all unwise,
To shape the song for your delight
Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise
That float thro' Heaven, and cannot
light ?

Or old-world trains, upheld at court
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue—
But take it—earnest wed with sport,
And either sacred unto you.

AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,
But it is wild and barren,
A garden too with scarce a tree,
And waster than a warren:
Yet say the neighbours when they call,
It is not bad but good land,
And in it is the germ of all
That grows within the woodland.

O had I lived when song was great
In days of old Amphion,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
Nor cared for seed or scion!
And had I lived when song was great,
And legs of trees were limber,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
And fiddled in the timber!

'Tis said he had a tuneful tongue,
Such happy intonation,
Wherever he sat down and sung
He left a small plantation;
Wherever in a lonely grove
He set up his forlorn pipes,
The gouty oak began to move,
And flounder into hornpipes.

The mountain stirr'd its bushy crown,
And, as tradition teaches,
Young ashes pirouetted down
Coquetting with young beeches;
And briony-vine and ivy-wreath
Ran forward to his rhyming,
And from the valleys underneath
Came little copses climbing.

The linden broke her ranks and rent
The woodbine wreaths that bind her,

And down the middle, buzz! she went
With all her bees behind her:
The poplars, in long order due,
With cypress promenaded,
The shock-head willows two and two
By rivers galloped.

Came wet-shot alder from the wave,
Came yews, a dismal coterie;
Each pluck'd his one foot from the
grave,

Poussetting with a sloe-tree:
Old elms came breaking from the vine,
The vine stream'd out to follow,
And, sweating rosin, plump'd the pine
From many a cloudy hollow.

And wasn't it a sight to see,
When, ere his song was ended,
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,
The country-side descended;
And shepherds from the mountain-caves
Look'd down, half-pleas'd, half-
frighten'd,
As dash'd about the drunken leaves
The random sunshine lighten'd!

Oh, nature first was fresh to men,
And wanton without measure;
So youthful and so flexile then,
You moved her at your pleasure.
Twang out, my fiddle! shake the twigs!
And make her dance attendance;
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set sprigs,
And scirrhous roots and tendons.

'Tis vain! in such a brassy age
I could not move a thistle;
The very sparrows in the hedge
Scarce answer to my whistle;
Or at the most, when three-parts-sick
With strumming and with scraping,
A jackass heehaws from the rick,
The passive oxen gaping.

But what is that I hear? a sound
 Like sleepy counsel pleading;
 O Lord!—'tis in my neighbour's ground,
 The modern Muses reading.
 They read Botanic Treatises,
 And Works on Gardening thro' there,
 And Methods of transplanting trees
 To look as if they grew there.

The wither'd Misses! how they prose
 O'er books of travell'd seamen,
 And show you slips of all that grows
 From England to Van Diemen.
 They read in arbours clipt and cut,
 And alleys, faded places,
 By squares of tropic summer shut
 And warm'd in crystal cases.

But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,
 Are neither green nor sappy;
 Half-conscious of the garden-squirt,
 The spindlings look unhappy.
 Better to me the meanest weed
 That blows upon its mountain,
 The vilest herb that runs to seed
 Beside its native fountain.

And I must work thro' months of toil,
 And years of cultivation,
 Upon my proper patch of soil
 To grow my own plantation.
 I'll take the showers as they fall,
 I will not vex my bosom:
 Enough if at the end of all
 A little garden blossom.

ST. AGNES' EVE.

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows
 Are sparkling to the moon:
 My breath to heaven like vapour goes:
 May my soul follow soon!

The shadows of the convent-towers
 Slant down the snowy sward,
 Still creeping with the creeping hours
 That lead me to my Lord:
 Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
 As are the frosty skies,
 Or this first snowdrop of the year
 That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
 To yonder shining ground;
 As this pale taper's earthly spark,
 To yonder argent round;
 So shows my soul before the Lamb,
 My spirit before Thee;
 So in mine earthly house I am,
 To that I hope to be.
 Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,
 Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
 In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors;
 The flashes come and go;
 All heaven bursts her starry floors,
 And strows her lights below,
 And deepens on and up! the gates
 Roll back, and far within
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
 To make me pure of sin.
 The sabbaths of Eternity,
 One sabbath deep and wide—
 A light upon the shining sea—
 The Bridegroom with his bride!

SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of
 men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
 My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.

The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
 The horse and rider reel :
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands,
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favours fall !
 For them I battle till the end,
 To save from shame and hrral :
 But all my heart is drawn above,
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :
 I never felt the kiss of love,
 Nor maiden's hand in mine.
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and thrill ;
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
 A light before me swims,
 Between dark stems the forest glows,
 I hear a noise of hymns :
 Then by some secret shrine I ride ;
 I hear a voice, but none are there ;
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
 The tapers burning fair.
 Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
 And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
 I find a magic bark ;
 I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
 I float till all is dark.
 A gentle sound, an awful light !
 Three angels bear the holy Grail :
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,
 On sleeping wings they sail.

Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,
 As down dark tides the glory slides,
 And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
 Thro' dreaming towns I go,
 The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
 The streets are dumb with snow.
 The tempest crackles on the leads,
 And, ringing, springs from brand and
 mail ;

But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
 And gilds the driving hail.
 I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
 No branchy thicket shelter yields ;
 But blessed forms in whistling storms
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
 Such hope, I know not fear ;
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
 That often meet me here.
 I muse on joy that will not cease,
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,
 Whose odours haunt my dreams ;
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,
 This mortal armour that I wear,
 This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls
 A rolling organ-harmony
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
 'O just and faithful knight of God I
 Ride on ! the prize is near.'
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
 Until I find the holy Grail.

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EDWARD GRAY.

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder town
Met me walking on yonder way,
'And have you lost your heart?' she said ;
'And are you married yet, Edward
Gray?'

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :
'Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more
Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.

'Ellen Adair she loved me well,
Against her father's and mother's will :
To-day I sat for an hour and wept,
By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

'Shy she was, and I thought her cold ;
Thought her proud, and fled over the sea ;
Fill'd I was with folly and spite,
When Ellen Adair was dying for me.

'Cruel, cruel the words I said !
Cruelly came they back to-day :
'You're too slight and fickle,' I said,
'To trouble the heart of Edward Gray.'

'There I put my face in the grass—
Whisper'd, "Listen to my despair :
I repent me of all I did :
Speak a little, Ellen Adair !"

'Then I took a pencil, and wrote
On the mossy stone, as I lay,
'Here lies the body of Ellen Adair ;
And here the heart of Edward Gray !'

'Love may come, and love may go,
And fly, like a bird, from tree to tree :
But I will love no more, no more,
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

'Bitterly wept I over the stone :
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :
There lies the body of Ellen Adair !
And there the heart of Edward Gray !'

WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL
MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUMP head-waiter at The Cock,
To which I most resort,
How goes the time ? 'Tis five o'clock.
Go fetch a pint of port :
But let it not be such as that
You set before chance-comers,
But such whose father-grape grew fat
On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,
But may she still be kind,
And whisper lovely words, and use
Her influence on the mind,
To make me write my random rhymes,
Ere they be half-forgotten ;
Nor add and alter, many times,
Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips
Her laurel in the wine,
And lays it thrice upon my lips,
These favour'd lips of mine ;
Until the charm have power to make
New lifeblood warm the bosom,
And barren commonplaces break
In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board ;
Her gradual fingers steal
And touch upon the master-chord
Of all I felt and feel.
Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,
And phantom hopes assemble ;
And that child's heart within the man's
Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns,
By many pleasant ways,
Against its fountain upward runs
The current of my days :

I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd ;
The gas-light wavers dimmer ;
And softly, thro' a vinous mist,
My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,
Unboding critic-pen,
Or that eternal want of pence,
Which vexes public men,
Who hold their hands to all, and cry
For that which all deny them—
Who sweep the crossings, wet or dry,
And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,
Tho' fortune clip my wings,
I will not cramp my heart, nor take
Half-views of men and things.
Let Whig and Tory stir their blood ;
There must be stormy weather ;
But for some true result of good
All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes ;
If old things, there are new ;
Ten thousand broken lights and shapes,
Yet glimpses of the true.
Let riffs be rife in prose and rhyme,
We lack not rhymes and reasons,
As on this whirligig of Time
We circle with the seasons.

This earth is rich in man and maid ;
With fair horizons bound :
This whole wide earth of light and shade
Comes out, a perfect round.
High over roaring Temple-bar,
And set in Heaven's third story,
I look at all things as they are,
But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honour'd by the guest
Half-mused, or reeling ripe,
The pint, you brought me, was the best
That ever came from pipe.

But tho' the port surpasses praise,
My nerves have dealt with stiffer.
Is there some magic in the place ?
Or do my peptics differ ?

For since I came to live and learn,
No pint of white or red
Had ever half the power to turn
This wheel within my head,
Which bears a season'd brain about,
Unsubject to confusion,
Tho' soak'd and saturate, out and out,
Thro' every convolution.

For I am of a numerous house,
With many kinsmen gay,
Where long and largely we carouse
As who shall say me nay :
Each month, a birth-day coming on,
We drink defying trouble,
Or sometimes two would meet in one,
And then we drank it double ;

Whether the vintage, yet unkept,
Had relish fiery-new,
Or, elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,
As old as Waterloo ;
Or stow'd, when classic Canning died,
In musty bins and chambers,
Had cast upon its crusty side
The gloom of ten Decembers.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is !
She answer'd to my call,
She changes with that mood or this,
Is all-in-all to all :
She lit the spark within my throat,
To make my blood run quicker,
Used all her fiery will, and smote
Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about
The waiter's hands, that reach
To each his perfect pint of stout,
His prep. chop to each.

He looks not like the common breed
That with the napkin dally ;
I think he came like Ganymede,
From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg
Than modern poultry drop,
Stept forward on a firmer leg,
And cram'd a plumper crop ;
Upon an ampler dunghill trod,
Crow'd lustier late and early,
Sipt wine from silver, praising God,
And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,
Till in a court he saw
A something-pottle-bodied boy
That knuckled at the taw :
He stoop'd and clutch'd him, fair and good,
Flew over roof and easement :
His brothers of the weather stood
Stock-still for sheer amazement.

But he, by farmstead, thorpe and spire,
And follow'd with acclaims,
A sign to many a staring shire
Came crowing over Thames.
Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,
Till, where the street grows straiter,
One fix'd for ever at the door,
And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go ?
How out of place she makes
The violet of a legend blow
Among the chops and steaks !
'Tis but a steward of the can,
One shade more plump than common ;
As just and mere a serving-man
As any born of woman.

I ranged too high : what draws me down
Into the common day ?
Is it the weight of that half-crown,
Which I shall have to pay ?

For, something duller than at first,
Nor wholly comfortable,
I sit, my empty glass reversed,
And thrumming on the table :

Half fearful that, with self at strife,
I take myself to task ;
Lest of the fullness of my life
I leave an empty flask :
For I had hope, by something rare,
To prove myself a poet :
But, while I plan and plan, my hair
Is gray before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,
Till they be gather'd up ;
The truth, that flies the flowing can,
Will haunt the vacant cup :
And others' follies teach us not,
Nor much their wisdom teaches ;
And mest, of sterling worth, is what
Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone !
We know not what we know.
But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone ;
'Tis gone, and let it go.
'Tis gone : a thousand such have slipt
Away from my embraces,
And fall'n into the dusty crypt
Of darken'd forms and faces.

Go, therefore, thou ! thy betters went
Long since, and came no more ;
With peals of genial clamour sent
From many a tavern-door,
With twisted quirks and happy lits,
From misty men of letters ;
The tavern-hours of mighty wits—
Thine elders and thy betters.

Hours, when the Poet's words and looks
Had yet their native glow :
Nor yet the fear of little books
Had made him talk for show ;

But, all his vast heart sherris-warm'd,
He flash'd his random speeches,
Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd
His literary leeches.

So mix for ever with the past,
Like all good things on earth !
For should I prize thee, couldst thou last,
At half thy real worth ?
I hold it good, good things should pass :
With time I will not quarrel :
It is but yonder empty glass
That makes me maudlin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,
To which I most resort,
I too must part : I hold thee dear
For this good pint of port.
For this, thou shalt from all things suck
Marrow of mirth and laughter ;
And wheresoe'er thou move, good luck
Shall fling her old shoe after.

But thou wilt never move from hence,
The sphere thy fate allots :
Thy latter days increased with pence
Go down among the pots :
Thou battenest by the greasy gleam
In haunts of hungry sinners,
Old boxes, larded with the steam
Of thirty thousand dinners.

We fret, we fume, would shift our skins,
Would quarrel with our lot ;
Thy care is, under polish'd tins,
To serve the hot-and-hot ;
To come and go, and come again,
Returning like the pewit,
And watch'd by silent gentlemen,
That trifle with the cruet.

Live long, ere from thy topmost head
The thick-set hazel dies ;
Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread
The corners of thine eyes :

Live long, nor feel in head or chest
Our changeful equinoxes,
Till mellow Death, like some late guest,
Shall call thee from the boxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt cease
To pace the gritted floor,
And, laying down an unctuous lease
Of life, shalt earn no more ;
No carved cross-bones, the types of
Death,
Shall show thee past to Heaven :
But carved cross-pipes, and, underneath,
A pint-pot neatly graven.

LADY CLARE.

It was the time when lilies blow,
And clouds are highest up in air,
Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn :
Lovers long-betroth'd were they :
They too will wed the morrow morn :
God's blessing on the day !

'He does not love me for my birth,
Nor for my lands so broad and fair ;
He loves me for my own true worth,
And that is well,' said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,
Said, 'Who was this that went from
thee ?'

'It was my cousin,' said Lady Clare,
'To-morrow he weds with me.'

'O God be thank'd!' said Alice the
nurse,
'That all comes round so just and fair :
Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
And you are not the Lady Clare.'

'Are ye out of your mind, my nurse, my nurse?'

Said Lady Clare, 'that ye speak so wild?'

'As God's above,' said Alice the nurse,
'I speak the truth: you are my child.'

'The old Earl's daughter died at my breast;

I speak the truth, as I live by bread!
I buried her like my own sweet child,
And put my child in her stead.'

'Falsely, falsely have ye done,
O mother,' she said, 'if this be true,
To keep the best man under the sun
So many years from his due.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the nurse,
'But keep the secret for your life,
And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,
When you are man and wife.'

'If I'm a beggar born,' she said,
'I will speak out, for I dare not lie.
Pull off, pull off, the brooch of gold,
And fling the diamond necklace by.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the nurse,
'But keep the secret all ye can.'
She said, 'Not so: but I will know
If there be any faith in man.'

'Nay now, what faith?' said Alice the nurse,

'The man will cleave unto his right.'
'And he shall have it,' the lady replied,
'Tho' I should die to-night.'

'Yet give one kiss to your mother dear!
Alas, my child, I sinn'd for thee.'
'O mother, mother, mother,' she said,
'So strange it seems to me.'

'Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so,

And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, ere I go.'

She clad herself in a russet gown,
She was no longer Lady Clare:
She went by dale, and she went by
down,
With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had
brought
Leapt up from where she lay,
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,
And follow'd her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower:
'O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!
Why come you drest like a village maid,
That are the flower of the earth?'

'If I come drest like a village maid,
I am but as my fortunes are:
I am a beggar born,' she said,
'And not the Lady Clare.'

'Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,
'For I am yours in word and in deed.
Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,
'Your riddle is hard to read.'

O and proudly stood she up!
Her heart within her did not fail:
She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn:
He turn'd and kiss'd her where she
stood:

'If you are not the heiress born,
And I,' said he, 'the next in blood—'

'If you are not the heiress born,
And I,' said he, 'the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare.'

THE CAPTAIN.

A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.

HE that only rules by terror
 Doeth grievous wrong.
 Deep as Hell I count his error.
 Let him hear my song.
 Brave the Captain was : the seamen
 Made a gallant crew,
 Gallant sons of English freemen,
 Sailors bold and true.
 But they hated his oppression,
 Stern he was and rash ;
 So for every light transgression
 Doom'd them to the lash.
 Day by day more harsh and cruel
 Seem'd the Captain's mood.
 Secret wrath like smother'd fuel
 Burnt in each man's blood.
 Yet he hoped to purchase glory,
 Hoped to make the name
 Of his vessel great in story,
 Wheresoe'er he came.
 So they past by capes and islands,
 Many a harbour-mouth,
 Sailing under palmy highlands
 Far within the South.
 On a day when they were going
 O'er the lone expanse,
 In the north, her canvas flowing,
 Rose a ship of France.
 Then the Captain's colour heighten'd,
 Joyful came his speech :
 But a cloudy gladness lighten'd
 In the eyes of each,
 'Chase,' he said : the ship flew forward,
 And the wind did blow ;
 Stately, lightly, went she Norward,
 Till she near'd the foe.
 Then they look'd at him they hated,
 Had what they desired :

Mute with folded arms they waited —
 Not a gun was fired.
 But they heard the foeman's thunder
 Roaring out their doom ;
 All the air was torn in sunder,
 Crashing went the boom,
 Spars were splinter'd, decks were shat-
 ter'd,
 Bullets fell like rain ;
 Over mast and deck were scatter'd
 Blood and brains of men.
 Spars were splinter'd ; decks were broken :
 Every mother's son —
 Down they dropt — no word was spoken —
 Each beside his gun.
 On the decks as they were lying,
 Were their faces grim.
 In their blood, as they lay dying,
 Did they smile on him.
 Those, in whom he had reliance
 For his noble name,
 With one smile of still defiance
 Sold him unto shame.
 Shame and wrath his heart confounded,
 Pale he turn'd and red,
 Till himself was deadly wounded
 Falling on the dead.
 Dismal error ! fearful slaughter !
 Years have wander'd by,
 Side by side beneath the water
 Crew and Captain lie ;
 There the sunlit ocean tosses
 O'er them mouldering,
 And the lonely seabird crosses
 With one waft of the wing.

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

IN her ear he whispers gaily,
 'If my heart by signs can tell,
 Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,
 And I think thou lov'st me well.'

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She replies, in accents fainter,
 'There is none I love like thee.'
 He is but a landscape-painter,
 And a village maiden she.
 He to lips, that fondly falter,
 Presses his without reproof:
 Leads her to the village altar,
 And they leave her father's roof.
 'I can make no marriage present:
 Little can I give my wife.
 Love will make our cottage pleasant,
 And I love thee more than life.'
 They by parks and lodges going
 See the lordly castles stand:
 Summer woods, about them blowing,
 Made a murmur in the land.
 From deep thought himself he rouses,
 Says to her that loves him well,
 'Let us see these handsome houses
 Where the wealthy nobles dwell.'
 So she goes by him attended,
 Hears him lovingly converse,
 Sees whatever fair and splendid
 Lay betwixt his home and hers;
 Parks with oak and chestnut shady,
 Parks and order'd gardens great,
 Ancient homes of lord and lady,
 Built for pleasure and for state.
 All he shows her makes him dearer:
 Evermore she seems to gaze
 On that cottage growing nearer,
 Where they twain will spend their
 days.
 O but she will love him truly!
 He shall have a cheerful home;
 She will order all things duly,
 When beneath his roof they come.
 Thus her heart rejoices greatly,
 Till a gateway she discerns
 With armorial bearings stately,
 And beneath the gate she turns;
 Sees a mansion more majestic
 Than all those she saw before:

Many a gallant gay domestic
 Bows before him at the door.
 And they speak in gentle murmur,
 When they answer to his call,
 While he treads with footstep firmer,
 Leading on from hall to hall.
 And, while now she wonders blindly,
 Nor the meaning can divine,
 Proudly turns he round and kindly,
 'All of this is mine and thine.'
 Here he lives in state and bounty,
 Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,
 Not a lord in all the county
 Is so great a lord as he.
 All at once the colour flushes
 Her sweet face from brow to chin:
 As it were with shame she blushes,
 And her spirit changed within.
 Then her countenance all over
 Pale again as death did prove:
 But he clasp'd her like a lover,
 And he cheer'd her soul with love.
 So she strove against her weakness,
 Tho' at times her spirit sank:
 Shaped her heart with woman's meek-
 ness
 To all duties of her rank:
 And a gentle consort made he,
 And her gentle mind was such
 That she grew a noble lady,
 And the people loved her much.
 But a trouble weigh'd upon her,
 And perplex'd her, night and morn,
 With the burthen of an honour
 Unto which she was not born.
 Faint she grew, and ever fainter,
 And she murmur'd, 'Oh, that he
 Were once more that landscape-painter,
 Which did win my heart from me!'
 So she droop'd and droop'd before him,
 Fading slowly from his side:
 Three fair children first she bore him,
 Then before her time she died.

Weeping, weeping late and early,
 Walking up and pacing down,
 Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,
 Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.
 And he came to look upon her,
 And he look'd at her and said,
 'Bring the dress and put it on her,
 That she wore when she was wed.'
 Then her people, softly treading,
 Bore to earth her body, drest
 In the dress that she was wed in,
 That her spirit might have rest.

THE VOYAGE.

I.

We left behind the painted buoy
 That tosses at the harbour-mouth ;
 And madly danced our hearts with joy,
 As fast we fled to the South :
 How fresh was every sight and sound
 On open main or winding shore !
 We knew the merry world was round,
 And we might sail for evermore.

II.

Warm broke the breeze against the brow,
 Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail :
 The Lady's-head upon the prow
 Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the
 gale.

The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,
 And swept behind ; so quick the run,
 We felt the good ship shake and reel,
 We seem'd to sail into the Sun !

III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,
 And burn the threshold of the night,
 Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
 And sleep beneath his pillar'd light !
 How oft the purple-skirted robe
 Of twilight slowly downward drawn,
 As thro' the slumber of the globe
 Again we dash'd into the dawn !

IV.

New stars all night above the brim
 Of waters lighten'd into view ;
 They climb'd as quickly, for the rim
 Changed every moment as we flew.
 Far ran the naked moon across
 The houseless ocean's heaving field,
 Or flying shone, the silver boss
 Of her own halo's dusky shield ;

V.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,
 High towns on hills were dimly seen,
 We past long lines of Northern capes
 And dewy Northern meadows green.
 We came to warmer waves, and deep
 Across the boundless east we drove,
 Where those long swells of breaker sweep
 The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove.

VI.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
 Gloom'd the low coast and quivering
 brine
 With ashy rains, that spreading made
 Fantastic plume or salte pine ;
 By sands and steaming flats, and floods
 Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
 And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
 Glow'd for a moment as we past.

VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,
 How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark !
 At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
 With wakes of fire we tore the dark ;
 At times a carven craft would shoot
 From havens hid in fairy bowers,
 With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,
 But we nor paused for fruit nor flowers.

VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled
 Down the waste waters day and night,
 And still we follow'd where she led,
 In hope to gain upon her flight.

Her face was evermore unseen,
And fixt upon the far sea-line ;
But each man murmur'd, ' O my Queen,
I follow till I make thee mine.'

IX.

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd
Like Fancy made of golden air,
Now nearer to the prow she seem'd
Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,
Now high on waves that idly burst
Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd the
sea,
And now, the bloodless point reversed,
She bore the blade of Liberty.

X.

And only one among us — him
We pleas'd not — he was seldom pleas'd :
He saw not far : his eyes were dim :
But ours he swore were all diseased.
' A ship of fools,' he shriek'd in spite,
' A ship of fools,' he sneer'd and wept.
And overboard one stormy night
He cast his body, and on we swept.

XI.

And never sail of ours was furl'd,
Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn ;
We lov'd the glories of the world,
But laws of nature were our scorn.
For blasts would rise and rave and cease,
But whence were those that drove the
sail
Across the whirlwind's heart of peace,
And to and thro' the counter gale ?

XII.

Again to colder climes we came,
For still we follow'd where she led :
Now mate is blind and captain lame,
And half the crew are sick or dead,
But, blind or lame or sick or sound,
We follow that which flies before :
We know the merry world is round,
And we may sail for evermore.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN
GUINEVERE.

A FRAGMENT.

LIKE souls that balance joy and pain,
With tears and smiles from heaven again
The maiden Spring upon the plain
Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.
In crystal vapour everywhere
Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,
And far, in forest-deeps unseen,
The topmost elm-tree gather'd green
From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song :
Sometimes the throstle whistled strong :
Sometimes the sparrow, wheel'd along,
Hush'd all the groves from fear of wrong :
By grassy capes with fuller sound
In curves the yellowing river ran,
And drooping chestnut-buds began
To spread into the perfect fan,
Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,
Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere
Rode thro' the covert of the deer,
With blissful treble ringing clear.
She seem'd a part of joyous Spring :
A gown of grass-green silk she wore,
Buckled with golden clasps before ;
A light-green tuft of plumes she bore
Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,
Now by some tinkling rivulet,
In mosses mixt with violet
Her cream-white mule his pastern set :
And fleetly now she skimm'd the plains
Than she whose elfin prancer springs
By night to eery warblings,
When all the glimmering moorland rings
With jingling bridle-reins.

As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,
The happy winds upon her play'd,
Blowing the ringlet from the braid :
She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd
The rein with dainty finger-tips,
A man had given all other bliss,
And all his worldly worth for this,
To waste his whole heart in one kiss
Upon her perfect lips.

A FAREWELL.

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver :
No more by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet then a river :
No where by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,
And here thine aspen shiver ;
And here by thee will hum the bee,
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver ;
But not by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

THE BEGGAR MAID.

HER arms across her breast she laid ;
She was more fair than words can say :
Bare-footed came the beggar maid
Before the king Cophetua.

In robe and crown the king stept down,
To meet and greet her on her way ;
'It is no wonder,' said the lords,
'She is more beautiful than day.'

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
She in her poor attire was seen :
One praised her ancles, one her eyes,
One her dark hair and lovesome mien.

So sweet a face, such angel grace,
In all that land had never been :
Cophetua sware a royal oath :
'This beggar maid shall be my queen !'

THE EAGLE.

FRAGMENT.

HE clasps the crag with crooked hands ;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

Move eastward, happy earth, and leave
You orange sunset waning slow :
From fringes of the faded eve,
O, happy planet, eastward go ;
Till over thy dark shoulder glow
Thy silver sister-world, and rise
To glass herself in dewy eyes
That watch me from the glen below.
Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,
Dip forward under starry light,
And move me to my marriage-morn,
And round again to happy night.

COME not, when I am dead,
To drop thy foolish tears upon my grave,
To trample round my fallen head,
And vex the unhappy dust thou wouldst
not save.
There let the wind sweep and the plover cry ;
But thou, go by.
Child, if it were thine error or thy crime
I care no longer, being all unblest :
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of
Time,
And I desire to rest.
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where
I lie :
Go by, go by.

THE LETTERS.

I.

STILL on the tower stood the vane,
A black yew gloom'd the stagnant air,
I peer'd athwart the chancel pane
And saw the altar cold and bare.
A clog of lead was round my feet,
A band of pain across my brow ;
' Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall meet
Before you hear my marriage vow.'

II.

I turn'd and humm'd a bitter song
That mock'd the wholesome human
heart,
And then we met in wrath and wrong,
We met, but only meant to part.
Full cold my greeting was and dry ;
She faintly smiled, she hardly moved ;
I saw with half-unconscious eye
She wore the colours I approved.

III.

She took the little ivory chest,
With half a sigh she turn'd the key,
Then raised her head with lips comprest,
And gave my letters back to me.
And gave the trinkets and the rings,
My gifts, when gifts of mine could please ;
As looks a father on the things
Of his dead son, I look'd on these.

IV.

She told me all her friends had said ;
I raged against the public liar ;
She talk'd as if her love were dead,
But in my words were seeds of fire.
' No more of love ; your sex is known :
I never will be twice deceived,
Henceforth I trust the man alone,
The woman cannot be believed.

V.

' Thro' slander, meanest spawn of Hell—
And women's slander is the worst,

And you, whom once I lov'd so well,
Thro' you, my life will be accurst.'
I spoke with heart, and heat and force,
I shook her breast with vague alarms—
Like torrents from a mountain source
We rush'd into each other's arms.

VI.

We parted : sweetly gleam'd the stars,
And sweet the vapour-braided blue,
Low breezes fann'd the belfry bars,
As homeward by the church I drew.
The very graves appear'd to smile,
So fresh they rose in shadow'd swells ;
' Dark porch,' I said, 'and silent aisle,
There comes a sound of marriage bells.'

THE VISION OF SIN.

I.

I HAD a vision when the night was late :
A youth came riding toward a palace-gate.
He rode a horse with wings, that would
have flown,
But that his heavy rider kept him down.
And from the palace came a child of sin,
And took him by the curls, and led him in,
Where sat a company with heated eyes,
Expecting when a fountain should arise :
A sleepy light upon their brows and lips—
As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and
capes—
Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid
shapes,
By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine,
and piles of grapes

II.

Then methought I heard a mellow sound,
Gathering up from all the lower ground ;
Narrowing in to where they sat assembled
Low voluptuous music winding trembled,
Wov'n in circles : they that heard it sigh'd,
Panted hand in hand with faces pale,

Swung themselves, and in low tones
replied ;

Till the fountain spouted, showering wide
Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail ;
Then the music touch'd the gates and died ;
Rose again from where it seem'd to fail,
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing gale ;
Till thronging in and in, to where they
waited,

As 'twere a hundred-throated nightingale,
The strong tempestuous treble throb'd
and palpitated ;

Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,
Caught the sparkles, and in circles,
Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid mazes,
Flung the torrent rainbow round :
Then they started from their places,
Moved with violence, changed in hue,
Caught each other with wild grimaces,
Half-invisible to the view,
Wheeling with precipitate paces
To the melody, till they flew,
Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,
Twisted hard in fierce embraces,
Like to Furies, like to Graces,
Dash'd together in blinding dew :
Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,
The nerve-dissolving melody
Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

III.

And then I look'd up toward a mountain-
tract,
That girt the region with high cliff and
lawn :
I saw that every morning, far withdrawn
Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
God made himself an awful rose of
dawn,
Unheeded : and detaching, fold by fold,
From those still heights, and, slowly
drawing near,
A vapour heavy, hueless, formless, cold,

Came floating on for many a month and
year,

Unheeded : and I thought I would have
spoken,

And warn'd that madman ere it grew too
late :

But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine was
broken,

When that cold vapour touch'd the palace
gate,

And link'd again. I saw within my head
A grey and gap-tooth'd man as lean as
death,

Who slowly rode across a wither'd heath,
And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said :

IV.

'Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !

Here is custom come your way ;

Take my brute, and lead him in,
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

'Bitter barmaid, waning fast !

See that sheets are on my bed ;

What ! the flower of life is past :
It is long before you wed.

'Slip-shod waiter, lank and sour,

At the Dragon on the heath !

Let us have a quiet hour,

Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

'I am old, but let me drink ;

Bring me spices, bring me wine ;

I remember, when I think,

That my youth was half divine.

'Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,

When a blanket wraps the day,

When the rotten-woodland drips,

And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

'Sit thee down, and have no shame,

Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee :

What care I for any name ?

What for order or degree ?

'Let me screw thee up a peg :
Let me loose thy tongue with wine :
Callest thou that thing a leg ?
Which is thinnest ? thine or mine ?

'Thou shalt not be saved by works :
Thou hast been a sinner too :
Ruin'd trunks on wadded forks,
Empty scarecrows, I and you !

'Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Have a rouse before the morn :
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

'We are men of ruin'd blood ;
Therefore comes it we are wise.
Fish are we that love the mud,
Rising to no fancy-flies.

'Name and fame ! to fly sublime
Thro' the courts, the camps, the schools,
Is to be the ball of Time,
Banded by the hands of fools.

'Friendship !—to be two in one—
Let the canting liar pack !
Well I know, when I am gone,
How she mouths behind my back.

'Virtue !—to be good and just—
Every heart, when sifted well,
Is a clot of warmer dust,
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

'O ! we two as well can look
Whited thought and cleanly life
As the priest, above his book
Leering at his neighbour's wife.

'Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Have a rouse before the morn :
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

'Drink, and let the parties rave :
They are fill'd with idle spleen ;
Rising, falling, like a wave,
For they know not what they mean.

'He that roars for liberty
Faster binds a tyrant's power ;
And the tyrant's cruel glee
Forces on the freer hour.

'Fill the can, and fill the cup :
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

'Greet her with applausive breath,
Freedom, gaily doth she tread ;
In her right a civic wreath,
In her left a human head.

'No, I love not what is new ;
She is of an ancient house :
And I think we know the hue
Of that cap upon her brows.

'Let her go ! her thirst she slakes
Where the bloody conduit runs,
Then her sweetest meal she makes
On the first-born of her sons.

'Drink to lofty hopes that cool—
Visions of a perfect State :
Drink we, last, the public fool,
Frantic love and frantic hate.

'Chant me now some wicked stave,
Till thy drooping courage rise,
And the glow-worm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

'Fear not thou to loose thy tongue ;
Set thy hoary fancies free ;
What is loathsome to the young
Savours well to thee and me.

'Change, reverting to the years,
When thy nerves could understand
What there is in loving tears,
And the warmth of hand in hand.

'Tell me tales of thy first love—
April hopes, the fools of chance;
Till the graves begin to move,
And the dead begin to dance.

'Fill the can, and fill the cup :
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

'Trooping from their mouldy dens
The chap-fallen circle spreads :
Welcome, fellow-citizens,
Hollow hearts and empty heads !

'You are bones, and what of that ?
Every face, however full,
Padded round with flesh and fat,
Is but modell'd on a skull.

'Death is king, and Vivat Rex !
Tread a measure on the stones,
Madam--if I know your sex,
From the fashion of your bones.

'No, I cannot praise the fire
In your eye--nor yet your lip :
All the more do I admire
Joints of cunning workmanship.

'Lo ! God's likeness--the ground-plan--
Neither modell'd, glazed, nor framed :
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,
Far too naked to be shamed !

'Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath !
Drink to heavy Ignorance !
Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

'Thou art mazed, the night is long,
And the longer night is near :

What ! I am not all as wrong
As a bitter jest is dear.

'Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,
When the locks are crisp and curl'd ;
Unto me my maudlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.

'Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Mingle madness, mingle scorn !
Dregs of life, and lees of man :
Yet we will not die forlorn.'

V.

The voice grew faint : there came a further
change :

Once more uprose the mystic mountain-
range :

Below were men and horses pierced with
worms,

And slowly quickening into lower forms ;
By shards and scurf of salt, and scum of
dross,

Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd
with moss.

Then some one spake : 'Behold ! it was
a crime

Of sense avenged by sense that wore with
time.'

Another said : 'The crime of sense
became

The crime of malice, and is equal blame.'

And one : 'He had not wholly quench'd
his power ;

A little grain of conscience made him sour.'

At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, 'Is there any hope ?'

To which an answer peal'd from that high
land,

But in a tongue no man could understand ;
And on the glimmering limit far with-
drawn

God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.

TO —,

AFTER READING A LIFE AND
LETTERS.

'Cursed be he that moves my bones.'
Shakespeare's Epitaph.

You might have won the Poet's name,
If such be worth the winning now,
And gain'd a laurel for your brow
Of sounder leaf than I can claim ;

But you have made the wiser choice,
A life that moves to gracious ends
'Thro' troops of unrecording friends,
A useful life, a silent voice :

And you have miss'd the irreverent doom
Of those that wear the Poet's crown :
Hereafter, neither knave nor clown
Shall hold their orgies at your tomb.

For now the Poet cannot die,
Nor leave his music as of old,
But round him ere he scarce be cold
Begins the scandal and the cry :

'Proclaim the faults he would not show :
Break lock and seal : betray the trust :
Keep nothing sacred : 'tis but just
The many-headed beast should know.'

Ah shameless ! for he did but sing
A song that pleased us from its worth ;
No public life was his on earth,
No blazon'd statesman he, nor king.

He gave the people of his best :
His worst he kept, his best he gave.
My Shakespeare's curse on clown and
knave

Who will not let his ashes rest !

Who make it seem more sweet to be
The little life of bank and brier,
The bird that pipes his lone desire
And dies unheard within his tree,

Than he that warbles long and loud
And drops at Glory's temple-gates,
For whom the carrion vulture waits
To tear his heart before the crowd !

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN
GREECE.

ILLYRIAN woodlands, echoing falls
Of water, sheets of summer glass,
The long divine Peneïan pass,
The vast Akrokeraunian walls,

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,
With such a pencil, such a pen,
You shadow forth to distant men,
I read and felt that I was there :

And trust me while I turn'd the page,
And track'd you still on classic ground,
I grew in gladness till I found
My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd
And glisten'd—here and there alone
The broad-limb'd Gods at random
thrown

By fountain-urns ;—and Naiads oar'd
A glimmering shoulder under gloom
Of cavern pillars ; on the swell
The silver lily heaved and fell ;
And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him that on the mountain lea
By dancing rivulets fed his flocks
To him who sat upon the rocks,
And fluted to the morning sea.

BREAK, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play !
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay !

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill ;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

THE POET'S SONG.

THE rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
He pass'd by the town and out of the street,

A light wind blew from the gates of the sun,
And waves of shadow went over the wheat,
And he sat him down in a lonely place,
And chanted a melody loud and sweet,
That made the wild-swan pause in her cloud,
And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the bee,
The snake slipt under a spray,
The wild hawk stood with the down on his beak,
And stared, with his foot on the prey,
And the nightingale thought, 'I have sung many songs,
But never a one so gay,
For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have died away.'

ENOCH ARDEN

AND OTHER POEMS.

ENOCH ARDEN.

LONG lines of cliff breaking have left a
chasm ;
And in the chasm are foam and yellow
sands ;
Beyond, red roofs about a narrow wharf
In cluster ; then a moulder'd church ; and
higher
A long street climbs to one tall-tower'd
mill ;
And high in heaven behind it a gray down
With Danish barrows ; and a hazelwood,
By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes
Green in a cuplike hollow of the down.

Here on this beach a hundred years ago,
Three children of three houses, Annie Lee,
The prettiest little damsel in the port,
And Philip Ray the miller's only son,
And Enoch Arden, a rough sailor's lad
Made orphan by a wintershipwreck, play'd
Among the waste and lumber of the shore,
Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fishing-
nets,
Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats up-
drawn ;
And built their castles of dissolving sand
To watch them overflow'd, or following up
And flying the white breaker, daily left
The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow cave ran in beneath the cliff :
In this the children play'd at keeping
house.

Enoch was host one day, Philip the next,
While Annie still was mistress ; but at
times

Enoch would hold possession for a week :
'This is my house and this my little wife.'
'Mine too' said Philip 'turn and turn
about :'

When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch stronger-
made

Was master : then would Philip, his blue
eyes

All flooded with the helpless wrath of
tears,

Shriek out 'I hate you, Enoch,' and at
this

The little wife would weep for company,
And pray them not to quarrel for her sake,
And say she would be little wife to both.

But when the dawn of rosy childhood
past,

And the new warmth of life's ascending
sun

Was felt by either, either fixt his heart
On that one girl ; and Enoch spoke his
love,

But Philip loved in silence ; and the girl
Seem'd kinder unto Philip than to him ;
But she loved Enoch ; tho' she knew it
not,

And would if ask'd deny it. Enoch set
A purpose evermore before his eyes,
To hoard all savings to the uttermost,
To purchase his own boat, and make a
home

For Annie : and so prosper'd that at last
A luckier or a bolder fisherman,
A carefuller in peril, did not breathe
For leagues along that breaker-beaten
coast

Than Enoch. Likewise had he served a
year

On board a merchantman, and made
himself

Full sailor ; and he thrice had pluck'd a
life

From the dread sweep of the down-stream-
ing seas :

And all men look'd upon him favourably :
And ere he touch'd his one-and-twentieth
May

He purchased his own boat, and made a
home

For Annie, neat and nestlike, halfway up
The narrow street that clamber'd toward
the mill.

Then, on a golden autumn eventide,
The younger people making holiday,
With bag and sack and basket, great and
small,

Went nutting to the hazels. Philip stay'd
(His father lying sick and needing him)
An hour behind ; but as he climb'd the hill,
Just where the prone edge of the wood
began

To feather toward the hollow, saw the
pair,

Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-hand,
His large gray eyes and weather-beaten
face

All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,
That burn'd as on an altar. Philip look'd,
And in their eyes and faces read his doom ;
Then, as their faces drew together,
groan'd,

And slipt aside, and like a wounded life
Crept down into the hollows of the wood ;
There, while the rest were loud in merry-
making,

Had his dark hour unseen, and rose and
past

Bearing a lifelong hunger in his heart.

So these were wed, and merrily rang
the bells,
And merrily ran the years, seven happy
years,
Seven happy years of health and com-
petence,
And mutual love and honourable toil ;
With children ; first a daughter. In him
woke,
With his first babe's first cry, the noble
wish
To save all earnings to the uttermost,
And give his child a better bringing-up
Than his had been, or hers ; a wish re-
new'd,
When two years after came a boy to be
The rosy idol of her solitudes,
While Enoch was abroad on wrathful seas,
Or often journeying landward ; for in truth
Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's ocean-
spoil
In ocean-smelling osier, and his face,
Rough-redden'd with a thousand winter
gales,
Not only to the market-cross were known,
But in the leafy lanes behind the down,
Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,
And peacock-yewtree of the lonely Hall,
Whose Friday fare was Enoch's minister-
ing.

Then came a change, as all things
human change.
Ten miles to northward of the narrow port
Open'd a larger haven : thither used
Enoch at times to go by land or sea ;
And once when there, and clambering on
a mast
In harbour, by mischance he slipt and fell :
A limb was broken when they lifted him ;
And while he lay recovering there, his wife
Bore him another son, a sickly one :
Another hand crept too across his trade

Taking her bread and theirs : and on him
fell,
Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing man,
Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and gloom.
He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the night,
To see his children leading evermore
Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,
And her, he loved, a beggar : then he
pray'd
' Save them from this, whatever comes to
me.'
And while he pray'd, the master of that
ship
Enoch had served in, hearing his mis-
chance,
Came, for he knew the man and valued
him,
Reporting of his vessel China-bound,
And wanting yet a boatswain. Would he
go ?
There yet were many weeks before she
sail'd,
Sail'd from this port. Would Enoch
have the place ?
And Enoch all at once assented to it,
Rejoicing at that answer to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance
appear'd
No graver than as when some little cloud
Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun,
And isles a light in the offing : yet the
wife—
When he was gone—the children—what
to do ?
Then Enoch lay long-pondering on his
plans ;
To sell the boat—and yet he loved her
well—
How many a rough sea had he weather'd
in her !
He knew her, as a horseman knows his
horse—

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And yet to sell her—then with what she
brought
Buy goods and stores—set Annie forth in
trade
With all that seamen needed or their
wives—
So might she keep the house while he
was gone.
Should he not trade himself out yonder?
go
This voyage more than once? yea twice
or thrice—
As oft as needed—last, returning rich,
Become the master of a larger craft,
With fuller profits lead an easier life,
Have all his pretty young ones educated,
And pass his days in peace among his own.

Thus Enoch in his heart determined all:
Then moving homeward came on Annie
pale,
Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-born.
Forward she started with a happy cry,
And laid the feeble infant in his arms;
Whom Enoch took, and handled all his
limbs,
Appraised his weight and fondled father-
like,
But had no heart to break his purposes
To Annie, till the morrow, when he spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden ring
had girt
Her finger, Annie fought against his will:
Yet not with brawling opposition she,
But manifold entreaties, many a tear,
Many a sad kiss by day by night renew'd
(Sure that all evil would come out of it)
Besought him, supplicating, if he cared
For her or his dear children, not to go.
He not for his own self caring but her,
Her and her children, let her plead in vain;
So grieving held his will, and bore it thro'.

For Enoch parted with his old sea-
friend,
Bought Annie goods and stores, and set
his hand
To fit their little streetward sitting-room
With shelf and corner for the goods and
stores.
So all day long till Enoch's last at home,
Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer and
axe,
Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd to
hear
Her own death-scaffold raising, shrill'd
and rang,
Till this was ended, and his careful
hand,—
The space was narrow,—having order'd all
Almost as neat and close as Nature packs
Her blossom or her seedling, paused;
and he,
Who needs would work for Annie to the
last,
Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn.

And Enoch faced this morning of fare-
well
Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's fears,
Save, as his Annie's, were a laughter to
him.
Yet Enoch as a brave God-fearing man
Bow'd himself down, and in that mystery
Where God-in-man is one with man-in-
God,
Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and babes
Whatever came to him: and then he said
'Annie, this voyage by the grace of God
Will bring fair weather yet to all of us.
Keep a clean hearth and a clear fire for me,
For I'll be back, my girl, before you
know it.'—
Then lightly rocking baby's cradle 'and
he,
This pretty, puny, weakly little one,—

Nay—for I love him all the better for it—
God bless him, he shall sit upon my knees
And I will tell him tales of foreign parts,
And make him merry, when I come
home again.

Come, Annie, come, cheer up before I go.'

Him running on thus hopefully she
heard,

And almost hoped herself; but when he
turn'd

The current of his talk to graver things
In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing

On providence and trust in Heaven, she
heard,

Heard and not heard him; as the village
girl,

Who sets her pitcher underneath the
spring,

Musing on him that used to fill it for her,
Hears and not hears, and lets it overflow.

At length she spoke 'O Enoch, you
are wise;

And yet for all your wisdom well know I
That I shall look upon your face no more.'

'Well then,' said Enoch, 'I shall look
on yours.

Annie, the ship I sail in passes here
(He named the day) get you a seaman's
glass,

Spy out my face, and laugh at all your
fears.'

But when the last of those last moments
came,

'Annie, my girl, cheer up, be comforted,
Look to the babes, and till I come again
Keep everything shipshape, for I must go.
And fear no more for me; or if you fear
Cast all your cares on God; that anchor
holds.

Is He not yonder in those uttermost
Parts of the morning? if I flee to these
Can I go from Him? and the sea is His,
The sea is His: He made it.'

Enoch rose,
Cas. his strong arms about his drooping
wife,

And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little ones;

But for the third, the sickly one, who slept
After a night of feverous wakefulness,

When Annie would have raised him
Enoch said

'Wake him not; let him sleep; how
should the child

Remember this?' and kiss'd him in his
cot.

But Annie from her baby's forehead clipt
A tiny curl, and gave it: this he kept

Thro' all his future; but now hastily
caught

His bundle, waved his hand, and went
his way.

She when the day, that Enoch
mention'd, came,

Borrow'd a glass, but all in vain: perhaps

She could not fix the glass to suit her eye;

Perhaps her eye was dim, hand tremulous;

She saw him not: and while he stood on
deck

Waving, the moment and the vessel past.

Ev'n to the last dip of the vanishing sail
She watch'd it, and departed weeping for
him;

Then, tho' she mourn'd his absence as his
grave,

Set her sad will no less to chime with his,

But throve not in her trade, not being bred
To barter, nor compensating the want

By shrewdness, neither capable of lies,

Nor asking overmuch and taking less,

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And still foreboding 'what would Enoch say?'

For more than once, in days of difficulty
And pressure, had she sold her wares for less

Than what she gave in buying what she sold :

She fail'd and sadden'd knowing it ; and thus,

Expectant of that news which never came,
Gain'd for her own a scanty sustenance,
And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly-born
and grew

Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared for it
With all a mother's care : nevertheless,
Whether her business often call'd her from it,

Or thro' the want of what it needed most,
Or means to pay the voice who best could tell

What most it needed—howsoever it was,
After a lingering,—ere she was aware,—
Like the caged bird escaping suddenly,
The little innocent soul flitted away.

In that same week when Annie buried it,

Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for her peace

(Since Enoch left he had not look'd upon her),

Smote him, as having kept aloof so long.

'Surely,' said Philip, 'I may see her now,
May be some little comfort ;' therefore went,

Past thro' the solitary room in front,
Paused for a moment at an inner door,

Then struck it thrice, and, no one opening,
Enter'd ; but Annie, seated with her grief,

Fresh from the burial of her little one,
Cared not to look on any human face,

But turn'd her own toward the wall and wept.

Then Philip standing up said falteringly
'Annie, I came to ask a favour of you.'

He spoke ; the passion in her moan'd reply

'Favour from one so sad and so forlorn
As I am !' half abash'd him ; yet unask'd,

His bashfulness and tenderness at war,
He set himself beside her, saying to her :

'I came to speak to you of what he wish'd,

Enoch, your husband : I have ever said
You chose the best among us—a strong

man :

For where he fixt his heart he set his hand
To do the thing he will'd, and bore it thro'.

And wherefore did he go this weary way,
And leave you lonely ? not to see the world—

For pleasure?—nay, but for the where-withal

To give his babes a better bringing-up
Than his had been, or yours : that was

his wish.

And if he come again, vext will he be
To find the precious morning hours were

lost.

And it would vex him even in his grave,
If he could know his babes were running

wild
Like colts about the waste. So, Annie,
now—

Have we not known each other all our lives?

I do beseech you by the love you bear
Him and his children not to say me nay—

For, if you will, when Enoch comes again
Why then he shall repay me—if you will,

Annie—for I am rich and well-to-do.
Now let me put the boy and girl to school :

This is the favour that I came to ask.'

Then Annie with her brows against the wall

Answer'd 'I cannot look you in the face ;
I seem so foolish and so broken down.

When you came in my sorrow broke me down ;

And now I think your kindness breaks me down ;

But Enoch lives ; that is borne in on me :
He will repay you : money can be repaid ;
Not kindness such as yours.'

And Philip ask'd

'Then you will let me, Annie?'

There she turn'd,

She rose, and fixt her swimming eyes upon him,

And dwelt a moment on his kindly face,
Then calling down a blessing on his head
Caught at his hand, and wrung it passionately,

And past into the little garth beyond.
So lifted up in spirit he moved away.

Then Philip put the boy and girl to school,
And bought them needful books, and
everyway,

Like one who does his duty by his own,
Made himself theirs ; and tho' for Annie's
sake,

Fearing the lazy gossip of the port,
He oft denied his heart his dearest wish,
And seldom crost her threshold, yet he sent
Gifts by the children, garden-herbs and
fruit,

The late and early roses from his wall,
Or conies from the down, and now and
then,

With some pretext of fineness in the meal
To save the offence of charitable, flour
From his tall mill that whistled on the
waste.

But Philip did not fathom Annie's
mind :

Scarce could the woman when he came
upon her,

Out of full heart and boundless gratitude
Light on a broken word to thank him with.

But Philip was her children's all-in-all ;
From distant corners of the street they ran

To greet his hearty welcome heartily ;
Lords of his house and of his mill were
they ;

Worried his passive ear with petty wrongs
Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd with
him

And call'd him Father Philip. Philip
gain'd

As Enoch lost ; for Enoch seem'd to them
Uncertain as a vision or a dream,
Faint as a figure seen in early dawn

Down at the far end of an avenue,
Going we know not where : and so ten
years,

Since Enoch left his hearth and native
land,

Fled forward, and no news of Enoch
came.

It chanced one evening Annie's children
long'd

To go with others, nutting to the wood,
And Annie would go with them ; then
they begg'd

For Father Philip (as they call'd him) too :
Him, like the working bee in blossom-
dust,

Blanch'd with his mill, they found ; and
saying to him

'Come with us Father Philip' he denied ;
But when the children pluck'd at him to go,
He laugh'd, and yielded readily to their
wish,

For was not Annie with them ? and they
went.

But after scaling half the weary down,
Just where the prone edge of the wood
began

To feather toward the hollow, all her force
Fail'd her; and sighing, 'Let me rest' she
said :

So Philip rested with her well-content ;
While all the younger ones with jubilant
cries

Broke from their elders, and tumultuously
Down thro' the whitening hazels made a
plunge

To the bottom, and dispersed, and bent
or broke

The lithe reluctant boughs to tear away
Their tawny clusters, crying to each other
And calling, here and there, about the
wood.

But Philip sitting at her side forgot
Her presence, and remember'd one dark
hour

Here in this wood, when like a wounded
life

He crept into the shadow : at last he said,
Lifting his honest forehead, 'Listen,
Annie,

How merry they are down yonder in the
wood.

Tired, Annie?' for she did not speak a
word.

'Tired?' but her face had fall'n upon her
hands ;

At which, as with a kind of anger in him,
'The ship was lost,' he said, 'the ship
was lost !

No more of that ! why should you kill
yourself

And make them orphans quite?' And
Annie said

'I thought not of it : but—I know not
why—

Their voices make me feel so solitary.'

Then Philip coming somewhat closer
spoke.

'Annie, there is a thing upon my mind,
And it has been upon my mind so long,
That tho' I know not when it first came
there,

I know that it will out at last. O Annie,
It is beyond all hope, against all chance,
That he who left you ten long years ago
Should still be living ; well then—let me
speak :

I grieve to see you poor and wanting help :
I cannot help you as I wish to do
Unless—they say that women are so
quick—

Perhaps you know what I would have
you know—

I wish you for my wife. I fain would
prove

A father to your children : I do think
They love me as a father : I am sure
That I love them as if they were mine
own ;

And I believe, if you were fast my wife,
That after all these sad uncertain years,
We might be still as happy as God grants
To any of His creatures. Think upon it :
For I am well-to-do—no kin, no care,
No burthen, save my care for you and
yours :

And we have known each other all our
lives,

And I have loved you longer than you
know.'

Then answer'd Annie ; tenderly she
spoke :

'You have been as God's good angel in
our house.

God bless you for it, God reward you for
it,

Philip, with something happier than my-
self.

Can one love twice? can you be ever loved

As Enoch was? what is it that you ask?

'I am content' he answer'd 'to be loved

A little after Enoch.' 'O' she cried,

Scared as it were, 'dear Philip, wait a while :

If Enoch comes—but Enoch will not come—

Yet wait a year, a year is not so long :

Surely I shall be wiser in a year :

O wait a little !' Philip sadly said

'Annie, as I have waited all my life

I well may wait a little.' 'Nay' she cried

'I am bound : you have my promise—in a year :

Will you not bide your year as I bide mine?'

And Philip answer'd 'I will bide my year.'

Here both were mute, till Philip glancing up

Beheld the dead flame of the fallen day

Pass from the Danish barrow overhead ;

Then fearing night and chill for Annie, rose

And sent his voice beneath him thro' the wood,

Up came the children laden with their spoil ;

Then all descended to the port, and there

At Annie's door he paused and gave his hand,

Saying gently 'Annie, when I spoke to you,

That was your hour of weakness. I was wrong,

I am always bound to you, but you are free.'

Then Annie weeping answer'd 'I am bound.'

She spoke ; and in one moment as it were,

While yet she went about her household ways,

Ev'n as she dwelt upon his latest words,

That he had loved her longer than she knew,

That autumn into autumn flash'd again,

And there he stood once more before her face,

Claiming her promise. 'Is it a year?' she ask'd.

'Yes, if the nuts' he said 'be ripe again : Come out and see.' But she—she put

him off—

So much to look to—such a change—a month—

Give her a month—she knew that she was bound—

A month—no more. Then Philip with his eyes

Full of that lifelong hunger, and his voice

Shaking a little like a drunkard's hand,

'Take your own time, Annie, take your own time.'

And Annie could have wept for pity of him ;

And yet she held him on delayingly

With many a scarce-believable excuse,

Trying his truth and his long-sufferance,

Till half-another year had slipped away.

By this the lazy gossips of the port,

Abhorrent of a calculation crost,

Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.

Some thought that Philip did but trifle with her ;

Some that she but held off to draw him on ;

And others laugh'd at her and Philip too,

As simple folk that knew not their own minds,

And one, in whom all evil fancies clung

Like serpent eggs together, laughingly

Would

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Would hint at worse in either. Her own
son
Was silent, tho' he often look'd his wish;
But evermore the daughter prest upon her
To wed the man so dear to all of them
And lift the household out of poverty;
And Philip's rosy face contracting grew
Careworn and wan; and all these things
fell on her
Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced
That Annie could not sleep, but earnestly
Pray'd for a sign 'my Enoch is he gone?'
Then compass'd round by the blind wall
of night
Brook'd not the expectant terror of her
heart,
Started from bed, and struck herself a light,
Then desperately seized the holy Book,
Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,
Suddenly put her finger on the text,
'Under the palm-tree.' That was nothing
to her:
No meaning there: she closed the Book
and slept:
When lo! her Enoch sitting on a height,
Under a palm-tree, over him the Sun:
'He is gone,' she thought, 'he is happy,
he is singing
Hosanna in the highest: yonder shines
The Sun of Righteousness, and these be
palms
Whereof the happy people strowing cried
"Hosanna in the highest!"' Here she
woke,
Resolved, sent for him and said wildly to
him
'There is no reason why we should not
wed.'
'Then for God's sake,' he answer'd, 'both
our sakes,
So you will wed me, let it be at once.'

So these were wed and merrily rang the
bells,
Merrily rang the bells and they were wed.
But never merrily beat Annie's heart.
A footstep seem'd to fall beside her path,
She knew not whence; a whisper on her
ear,
She knew not what; nor loved she to be left
Alone at home, nor ventured out alone.
What ail'd her then, that ere she enter'd,
often
Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the latch,
Fearing to enter: Philip thought he knew:
Such doubts and fears were common to
her state,
Being with child: but when her child was
born,
Then her new child was as herself renew'd,
Then the new mother came about her
heart,
Then her good Philip was her all-in-all,
And that mysterious instinct wholly died.

And where was Enoch? prosperously
sail'd
The ship 'Good Fortune,' tho' at setting
forth
The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward,
shook
And almost overwhelm'd her, yet unvest
She slipt across the summer of the world,
Then after a long tumble about the Cape
And frequent interchange of foul and fair,
She passing thro' the summer world again,
The breath of heaven came continually
And sent her sweetly by the golden isles,
Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself, and
bought
Quaint monsters for the market of those
times,
A gilded dragon, also, for the babes.

Less lucky her home-voyage : at first
indeed
Thro' many a fair sea-circle, day by day,
Scarce-rocking, her full-busted figure-head
Stared o'er the ripple feathering from her
bows :

Then follow'd calms, and then winds
variable,
Then baffling, a long course of them ; and
last
Storm, such as drove her under moonless
heavens

Till hard upon the cry of ' breakers ' came
The crash of ruin, and the loss of all
But Enoch and two others. Half the
night,

Buoy'd upon floating tackle and broken
spars,

These drifted, stranding on an isle at morn
Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No want was there of human sustenance,
Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourishing
roots ;

Nor save for pity was it hard to take
The helpless life so wild that it was tame.

There in a seaward-gazing mountain-gorge
They built, and thatch'd with leaves of
palm, a hut,

Half hut, half native cavern. So the
three,

Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,
Dwelt with eternal summer, ill content.

For one, the youngest, hardly more than
boy,

Hurt in that night of sudden ruin and
wreck,

Lay lingering out a five-years' death-in-
life.

They could not leave him. After he was
gone,

The two remaining found a fallen stem ;

And Enoch's comrade, careless of himself,
Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion, fell
Sun-stricken, and that other lived alone.
In those two deaths he read God's warn-
ing ' wait.'

The mountain wooded to the peak, the
lawns

And winding glades high up like ways to
Heaven,

The slender coco's drooping crown of
plumes,

The lightning flash of insect and of bird,
The lustre of the long convolvuluses

That coil'd around the stately stems, and
ran

Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows
And glories of the broad belt of the world,
All these he saw ; but what he fain had
seen

He could not see, the kindly human face,
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-fowl,
The league-long roller thundering on the
reef,

The moving whisper of huge trees that
branch'd

And blossom'd in the zenith, or the sweep
Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave,
As down the shore he ranged, or all day
long

Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,
A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a sail :

No sail from day to day, but every day
The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts

Among the palms and ferns and precipices ;
The blaze upon the waters to the east ;

The blaze upon his island overhead ;
The blaze upon the waters to the west ;

Then the great stars that globed them-
selves in Heaven,

The hollow-bellowing ocean, and again
The scarlet shafts of sunrise—but no sail.

<p>There often as he watch'd or seem'd to watch, So still, the golden lizard on him paused, A phantom made of many phantoms moved Before him haunting him, or he himself Moved haunting people, things and places, known Far in a darker isle beyond the line ; The babes, their babble, Annie, the small house, The climbing street, the mill, the leafy lanes, The peacock-yewtree and the lonely Hall, The horse he drove, the boat he sold, the chill November dawns and dewy-glooming downs, The gentle shower, the smell of dying leaves, And the low moan of leaden-colour'd seas.</p> <p>Once likewise, in the ringing of his ears, Tho' faintly, merrily—far and far away— He heard the pealing of his parish bells ; Then, tho' he knew not wherefore, started up Shuddering, and when the beauteous hateful isle Return'd upon him, had not his poor heart Spoken with That, which being everywhere Lets none, who speaks with Him, seem all alone, Surely the man had died of solitude.</p> <p>Thus over Enoch's early-silvering head The sunny and rainy seasons came and went Year after year. His hopes to see his own, And pace the sacred old familiar fields, Not yet had perish'd, when his lonely doom</p>	<p>Came suddenly to an end. Another ship (She wanted water) blown by baffling winds, Like the Good Fortune, from her destined course, Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where she lay : For since the mate had seen at early dawn Across a break on the mist-wreathen isle The silent water slipping from the hills, They sent a crew that landing burst away In search of stream or fount, and fill'd the shores With clamour. Downward from his mountain gorge Stept the long-hair'd long-bearded solitary, Brown, looking hardly human, strangely clad, Muttering and numbling, idiotlike it seem'd, With inarticulate rage, and making signs They knew not what : and yet he led the way To where the rivulets of sweet water ran ; And ever as he mingled with the crew, And heard them talking, his long-bounden tongue Was loosen'd, till he made them understand ; Whom, when their casks were fill'd they took aboard : And there the tale he utter'd brokenly, Scarce-credited at first but more and more, Amazed and melted all who listen'd to it : And clothes they gave him and free passage home ; But oft he work'd among the rest and shook His isolation from him. None of these Came from his country, or could answer him, If question'd, aught of what he cared to know.</p>
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And dull the voyage was with long delays,
The vessel scarce sea-worthy; but ever-
more

His fancy fled before the lazy wind
Returning, till beneath a clouded moon
He like a lover down thro' all his blood
Drew in the dewy meadowy morning-
breath

Of England, blown across her ghostly wall:
And that same morning officers and men
Levied a kindly tax upon themselves,
Pitying the lonely man, and gave him it:
Then moving up the coast they landed him,
Ev'n in that harbour whence he sail'd
before.

There Enoch spoke no word to any one,
But homeward—home—what home? had
he a home?

His home, he walk'd. Bright was that
afternoon,
Sunny but chill; till drawn thro' either
chasm,

Where either haven open'd on the deeps,
Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the world
in gray;

Cut off the length of highway on before,
And left but narrow breadth to left and
right

Of wither'd holt or tilth or pasturage.
On the nigh-naked tree the robin piped
Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping haze
The dead weight of the dead leaf bore it
down:

Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the
gloom;
Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted light
Flared on him, and he came upon the
place.

Then down the long street having slowly
stolen,
His heart foreshadowing all calamity,

His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd the
home

Where Annie lived and loved him, and
his babes

In those far-off seven happy years were
born;

But finding neither light nor murmur there
(A bill of sale gleam'd thro' the drizzle)
crept

Still downward thinking 'dead or dead to
me!'

Down to the pool and narrow wharf he
went,

Seeking a tavern which of old he knew,
A front of timber-crost antiquity,
So propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,
He thought it must have gone; but he
was gone

Who kept it; and his widow Miriam
Lane,

With daily-dwindling profits held the
house;

A haunt of brawling seamen once, but now
Still, with yet a bed for wandering men.
There Enoch rested silent many days.

But Miriam Lane was good and garru-
lous,

Nor let him be, but often breaking in,
Told him, with other annals of the port,
Not knowing—Enoch was so brown, so
bow'd,

So broken—all the story of his house.
His baby's death, her growing poverty,
How Philip put her little ones to school,
And kept them in it, his long wooing her,
Her slow consent, and marriage, and the
birth

Of Philip's child: and o'er his counten-
ance

No shadow past, nor motion: any one,
Regarding, well had deem'd he felt the tale

Less than the teller : only when she closed
' Enoch, poor man, was cast away and
lost '

He, shaking his gray head pathetically,
Repeated muttering ' cast away and lost ; '
Again in deeper inward whispers ' lost ! '

But Enoch yearn'd to see her face again ;
' If I might look on her sweet face again
And know that she is happy.' So the
thought

Haunted and harass'd him, and drove him
forth,

At evening when the dull November day
Was growing fuller twilight, to the hill.
There he sat down gazing on all below ;
There did a thousand memories roll upon
him,

Unspeakable for sadness. By and by
The ruddy square of comfortable light,
Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's house,
Allured him, as the beacon-blaze allures
The bird of passage, till he madly strikes
Against it, and beats out his weary life.

For Philip's dwelling fronted on the
street,
The latest house to landward ; but behind,
With one small gate that open'd on the
waste,
Flourish'd a little garden square and
wall'd :

And in it throve an ancient evergreen,
A yewtree, and all round it ran a walk
Of shingle, and a walk divided it :
But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk and
stole

Up by the wall, behind the yew ; and
thence
That which he better might have shunn'd,
if griefs

Like his have worse or better, Enoch
saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd
board

Sparkled and shone ; so genial was the
hearth :

And on the right hand of the hearth he
saw

Philip, the slighted suitor of old times,
Stout, rosy, with his babe across his
knees ;

And o'er her second father stooped a girl,
A later but a loftier Annie Lee,
Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her lifted
hand

Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring
To tempt the babe, who rear'd his creasy
arms,

Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they
laugh'd :

And on the left hand of the hearth he saw
The mother glancing often toward her
babe,

But turning now and then to speak with
him,

Her son, who stood beside her tall and
strong,

And saying that which pleased him, for
he smiled.

Now when the dead man come to life
beheld

His wife his wife no more, and saw the
babe

Hers, yet not his, upon the father's knee,
And all the warmth, the peace, the happi-
ness,

And his own children tall and beautiful,
And him, that other, reigning in his place,
Lord of his rights and of his children's
love,—

Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told him
all,

Because things seen are mightier than
things heard,

Stagger'd and shook, holding the branch,
and fear'd
To send abroad a shrill and terrible cry,
Which in one moment, like the blast of
doom,
Would shatter all the happiness of the
hearth.

He therefore turning softly like a thief,
Lest the harsh shingle should grate under-
foot,
And feeling all along the garden-wall,
Lest he should swoon and tumble and be
found,

Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and closed,
As lightly as a sick man's chamber-door,
Behind him, and came out upon the waste.

And there he would have knelt, but that
his knees
Were feeble, so that falling prone he dug
His fingers into the wet earth, and pray'd.

'Too hard to bear! why did they take
me thence?

O God Almighty, blessed Saviour, Thou
That did'st uphold me on my lonely isle,
Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness
A little longer! aid me, give me strength
Not to tell her, never to let her know.

Help me not to break in upon her peace.
My children too! must I not speak to
these?

They know me not. I should betray
myself.

Never: No father's kiss for me—the girl
So like her mother, and the boy, my son.'

There speech and thought and nature
fail'd a little,
And he lay tranced; but when he rose
and paced
Back toward his solitary home again,

All down the long and narrow street he
went

Beating it in upon his weary brain,
As tho' it were the burthen of a song,
'Not to tell her, never to let her know.'

He was not all unhappy. His resolve
Uphore him, and firm faith, and evermore
Prayer from a living source within the
will,
And beating up thro' all the bitter world,
Like fountains of sweet water in the sea,
Kept him a living soul. 'This miller's
wife'

He said to Miriam 'that you spoke about,
Has she no fear that her first husband
lives?'

'Ay, ay, poor soul' said Miriam, 'fear
enow!

If you could tell her you had seen him dead,
Why, that would be her comfort;' and he
thought

'As the Lord has call'd me she shall
know,

I wait 'tis time,' and Enoch set himself,
Scorning an alms, to work whereby to live.
Almost to all things could he turn his hand.
Cooper he was and carpenter, and wrought
To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or
help'd

At lading and unlading the tall barks,
That brought the stunted commerce of
those days;

Thus earn'd a scanty living for himself:
Yet since he did but labour for himself,
Work without hope, there was not life in it
Whereby the man could live; and as the
year

Roll'd itself round again to meet the day
When Enoch return'd, a languor came
Upon him, and the sickness, gradually
Weakening the man, till he could do no
more,

But kept the house, his chair, and last his bed.

And Enoch bore his weakness cheerfully. For sure no gladlier does the stranded wreck

See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting squall
The boat that bears the hope of life approach

To save the life despair'd of, than he saw
Death dawning on him, and the close of all.

For thro' that dawning gleam'd a kinder hope

On Enoch thinking 'after I am gone,
Then may she learn I lov'd her to the last.'
He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and said
'Woman, I have a secret—only swear,
Before I tell you—swear upon the book
Not to reveal it, till you see me dead.'

'Dead,' clamour'd the good woman, 'hear him talk !

I warrant, man, that we shall bring you round.'

'Swear' added Enoch sternly 'on the book.'

And on the book, half-frighted, Miriam swore.

Then Enoch rolling his gray eyes upon her,
'Did you know Enoch Arden of this town ?'

'Know him?' she said 'I knew him far away.

Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the street ;

Held his head high, and cared for no man, he.'

Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her ;
'His head is low, and no man cares for him.

I think I have not three days more to live ;
I am the man.' At which the woman gave
A half-incredulous, half-hysterical cry.

'You Arden, you ! nay,—sure he was a foot

Higher than you be.' Enoch said again
'My God has bow'd me down to what I am ;

My grief and solitude have broken me ;
Nevertheless, know you that I am he
Who married—but that name has twice
been changed—

I married her who married Philip Ray.
Sit, listen.' Then he told her of his voyage,

His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,
His gazing in on Annie, his resolve,
And how he kept it. As the woman heard,

Fast flow'd the current of her easy tears,
While in her heart she yearn'd incessantly
To rush abroad all round the little haven,
Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes ;
But awed and promise-bounden she forbore,

Saying only ' See your bairns before you go !

Eh, ! she fetch 'em, Arden,' and arose
Eager to bring them down, for Enoch hung
A moment on her words, but then replied :

'Woman, disturb me not now at the last,
But let me hold my purpose till I die.
Sit down again ; mark me and understand,
While I have power to speak. I charge you now,

When you shall see her, tell her that I died
Blessing her, praying for her, loving her ;
Save for the bar between us, loving her
As when she laid her head beside my own.
And tell my daughter Annie, whom I saw
So like her mother, 'that my latest breath
Was spent in blessing her and praying for her.

And tell my son that I died blessing him.
And say to Philip that I blest him too ;
He never meant us any thing but good.
But if my children care to see me dead,

Who hardly knew me living, let them
come,

I am their father ; but she must not come,
For my dead face would vex her after-life.
And now there is but one of all my blood
Who will embrace me in the world-to-be :
This hair is his : she cut it off and gave it,
And I have borne it with me all these
years,

And thought to bear it with me to my
grave ;

But now my mind is changed, for I shall
see him,

My babe in bliss : wherefore when I am
gone,

Take, give her this, for it may comfort
her :

It will moreover be a token to her,
That I am he.'

He ceased ; and Miriam Lane
Made such a voluble answer promising all,
That once again he roll'd his eyes upon
her

Repeating all he wish'd, and once again
She promised.

Then the third night after this,
While Enoch slumber'd motionless and
pale,

And Miriam watch'd and dozed at
intervals,

There came so loud a calling of the sea,
That all the houses in the haven rang.

He woke, he rose, he spread his arms
abroad

Crying with a loud voice 'A sail ! a sail !
I am saved ;' and so fell back and spoke
no more.

So past the strong heroic soul away.
And when they buried him the little port
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.

THE BROOK.

HERE, by this brook, we parted ; I to the
East

And he for Italy—too late—too late :
One whom the strong sons of the world
despise ;

For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and
share,

And mellow metres more than cent for
cent ;

Nor could he understand how money
breeds,

Thought it a dead thing ; yet himself
could make

The thing that is not as the thing that
is.

O had he lived ! In our schoolbooks we
say,

Of those that held their heads above the
crowd,

They flourish'd then or then ; but life in
him

Could scarce be said to flourish, only
touch'd

On such a time as goes before the leaf,
When all the wood stands in a mist of
green,

And nothing perfect : yet the brook he
loved,

For which, in branding summers of
Bengal,

Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neilgherry
air

I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,
Prattling the primrose fancies of the
boy,

To me that loved him ; for 'O brook,' he
said,

'O babbling brook,' says Edmund in his
rhyme,

'Wherefore come you?' and the brook, why
not ? replies,

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

'Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite
worn out,
Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley
bridge,

It has more ivy; there the river; and there
Stands Philip's farm where brook and
river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

'But Philip chatter'd more than brook
or bird;

Old Philip; all about the fields you caught
His weary daylong chirping, like the dry
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in summer
grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

'O darling Katie Willows, his one
child!

A maiden of our century, yet most meek;
A daughter of our meadows, yet not
coarse;

Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the
shell

Divides threefold to show the fruit within.

'Sweet Katie, once I did her a good
turn,

Her and her far-off cousin and betrothed,
James Willows, of one name and heart
with her.

For here I came, twenty years back—the
week

Before I parted with poor Edmund; crest
By that old bridge which, half in ruins
then,

Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
Beyond it, where the waters marry—crost,
Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate. The
gate,

Half-parted from a weak and scolding
hinge,

Stuck; and he clamour'd from a case-
ment, "Run"

To Katie somewhere in the walks below,
"Run, Katie!" Katie never ran: she
moved

To meet me, winding under woodbine
bowers,

A little flutter'd, with her eyelids down,
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a boon:

'What was it? less of sentiment than
sense

Had Katie; not illiterate; nor of those
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive
tears,

And nursed by mealy-mouth'd philan-
thropies,

Divorce the Feeling from her mate the
Deed.

'She told me. She and James had
quarrell'd. Why?

What cause of quarrel? None, she said,
no cause;

James had no cause: but when I prest the
cause,

I learnt that James had flickering jea-
lousies

Which anger'd her. Who anger'd James?
I said.

But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once from
mine,

And sketching with her slender pointed
foot

Some figure like a wizard pentagram

On garden gravel, let my query pass

Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I ask'd
If James were coming. "Coming every

day,"

She answer'd, "ever longing to explain,

But evermore her father came across

With some long-winded tale, and broke
him short;

And James departed vex'd with him and
her."

How could I help her? "Would I—was
it wrong?"

(Claspt hands and that petitionary grace
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she
spoke)

"O would I take her father for one hour,
For one half-hour, and let him talk to
me!"

And even while she spoke, I saw where
James

Made toward us, like a wader in the surf,
Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-
sweet.

'O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake!
For in I went, and call'd old Philip out
To show the farm: full willingly he rose:
He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling
lanes

Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he went.
He praised his land, his horses, his ma-
chines;

He praised his ploughs, his cows, his
hogs, his dogs;

He praised his hens, his geese, his guinea-
hens;

His pigeons, who in session on their roofs
Approved him, bowing at their own de-
serts:

Then from the plaintive mother's teat he
took

Her blind and shuddering puppies, nam-
ing each,

And naming those, his friends, for whom
they were:

Then crost the common into Darnley
chase

To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse and
fern

Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.

Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,
He pointed out a pasturing colt, and said:

"That was the four-year-old I sold the
Squire."

And there he told a long long-winded tale
Of how the Squire had seen the colt at
grass,

And how it was the thing his daughter
wish'd,

And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
To learn the price, and what the price he
ask'd,

And how the bailiff swore that he was mad,

vader in the surf,
deep in meadow-

'd for your sake !
old Philip out
illingly he rose :
sweet-smelling

ling as he went.
horses, his ma-

his cows, his
ese, his guinea-

on their roofs
their own de-

other's teat he

uppies, nam-

ds, for whom

into Darnley

In copse and

ur and tail.

oted beech,

olt, and said :

I sold the

winded tale

the colt at

is daughter

o the farm

he price he

e was mad,

But he stood firm ; and so the matter
hung ;

He gave them line : and five days after
that

He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,
Who then and there had offer'd something
more,

But he stood firm ; and so the matter
hung ;

He knew the man ; the colt would fetch
its price ;

He gave them line : and how by chance
at last

(It might be May or April, he forgot,
The last of April or the first of May)

He found the bailiff riding by the farm,
And, talking from the point, he drew him
in,

And there he mellow'd all his heart with
ale,

Until they closed a bargain, hand in hand.

'Then, while I breathed in sight of
haven, he,

Poor fellow, could he help it ? recom-
menced,

And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,
Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tallyho,
Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the
Jilt,

Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the rest,
Till, not to die a listener, I arose,

And with me Philip, talking still ; and so
We turn'd our foreheads from the falling
sun,

And following our own shadows thrice as
long

As when they follow'd us from Philip's
door,

Arrived, and found the sun of sweet
content

Re risen in Katie's eyes, and all things
well.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers ;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows ;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses ;
I linger by my shingly bars ;
I loiter round my cresses ;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go ; and these
are gone,

All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund,
sleeps,

Not by the well-known stream and rustic
spire,

But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
Of Brunelleschi ; sleeps in peace : and
he,

Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of
words

Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb :

I scraped the lichen from it : Katie walks

By the long wash of Australasian seas

Far off, and holds her head to other stars,

And breathes in converse seasons. All
are gone.'

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a style
In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind
Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er the
brook

A tonsured head in middle age forlorn,
Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a
low breath

Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
The fragile bindweed-bells and briony
rings ;

And he look'd up. There stood a maiden
Waiting to pass. In much amaze he
stared

On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the
shell

Divides threefold to show the fruit with-
in :

Then, wondering, ask'd her 'Are you from
the farm ?'

'Yes' answer'd she. 'Pray stay a little ;
pardon me ;

What do they call you ?' 'Katie.' 'That
were strange.

What surname ?' 'Willows.' 'No !'
'That is my name.'

'Indeed !' and here he look'd so self-
perplexed,

That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd,
till he

Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
Who feels a glimmering strangeness in his
dream.

Then looking at her ; 'Too happy, fresh
and fair,

Too fresh and fair in our sad world's best
bloom,

To be the ghost of one who bore your
name

About these meadows, twenty years ago.'

'Have you not heard ?' said Katie,
'we came back.

We bought the farm we tenanted before.
Am I so like her ? so they said on board.

Sir, if you knew her in her English days,
My mother, as it seems you did, the days

That most she loves to talk of, come with
me.

My brother James is in the harvest field :
But she—you will be welcome—O, come
in !'

AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

DUST are our frames ; and, gilded dust,
our pride

Looks only for a moment whole and
sound ;

Like that long-buried body of the king,
Found lying with his urns and ornaments,

Which at a touch of light, an air of heaven,
Slit into ashes, and was found no more.

Here is a story which in rougher shape
Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I saw

Sunning himself in a waste field alone—
Old, and a mine of memories—who had

served,
Long since, a bygone Rector of the place,

And been himself a part of what he told.

SIR AYLMER AYLMER, that almighty
man,

The county God—in whose capacious hall,
Hung with a hundred shields, the family

tree
Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate

king—
Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd the

spire,
Stood from his walls and wing'd his entry-
gates

And swang besides on many a windy
sign—

Whose eyes from under a pyramidal head
Saw from his windows nothing save his

own—
What lovelier of his own had he than her,

His only child, his Edith, whom he loved
As heiress and not heir regretfully ?

But 'he that marries her marries her name'
This fiat somewhat soothed himself and

wife,
His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,

93.
s ; and, gilded dust,

moment whole and

body of the king,
urns and ornaments,
ht, an air of heaven,
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fully ?

es her name'
himself and

Baths,

Inspid as the Queen upon a card ;
Herall of thought and bearing hardly more
Than his own shadow in a sickly sun.

A land of hops and poppy-mingled corn,
Little about it stirring save a brook !
A sleepy land, where under the same
wheel

The same old rut would deepen year by
year ;

Where almost all the village had one
name ;

Where Aylmer follow'd Aylmer at the
Hall

And Averill Averill at the Rectory
Thrice over ; so that Rectory and Hall,
Bound in an inmemorial intimacy,
Were open to each other ; tho' to dream
That Love could bind them closer well
had made

The hoar hair of the Baronet bristle up
With horror, worse than had he heard his
priest

Preach an inverted scripture, sons of men
Daughters of God ; so sleepy was the land.

And might not Averill, had he will'd it
so,

Somewhere beneath his own low range of
roofs,

Have also set his many-shielded tree ?
There was an Aylmer-Averill marriage
once,

When the red rose was redder than itself,
And York's white rose as red as Lancas-
ter's,

With wounded peace which each had
prick'd to death.

'Not proven' Averill said, or laughingly
'Some other race of Averills'—prov'n or
no,

What cared he? what, if other or the
same ?

He lean'd not on his fathers but himself.
But Leolin, his brother, living oft
With Averill, and a year or two before
Call'd to the bar, but ever call'd away
By one low voice to one dear neighbour-
hood,

Would often, in his walks with Edith,
claim

A distant kinship to the gracious blood
That shook the heart of Edith hearing
him.

Sanguine he was : a but less vivid hue
Than of that islet in the chestnut-bloom
Flamed in his cheek ; and eager eyes,
that still

Took joyful note of all things joyful,
beam'd,

Beneath a manlike mass of rolling gold,
Their best and brightest, when they dwelt
on hers,

Edith, whose pensive beauty, perfect else,
But subject to the season or the mood,
Shone like a mystic star between the less
And greater glory varying to and fro,
We know not wherefore ; bounteously
made,

And yet so finely, that a troublous touch
Thinn'd, or would seem to thin her in a
day,

A joyous to glate, as toward the light.
And these had been together from the
first.

Leolin's first nurse was, five years after,
liers :

So much the boy foreran ; but when his
date

Doubled her own, for want of playmates,
he

(Since Averill was a decad and a half
His elder, and their parents underground)
Had tost his ball and flown his kite, and
roll'd

His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her dipt
 Against the rush of the air in the prone
 swing,
 Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain, ar-
 ranged
 Her garden, sow'd her name and kept it
 green
 In living letters, told her fairy-tales,
 Show'd her the fairy footings on the grass,
 The little dells of cowslip, fairy palms,
 The petty maretail forest, fairy pines,
 Or from the tiny pitted target blew
 What look'd a slight of fairy arrows aim'd
 All at one mark, all hitting: make-be-
 lieves
 For Edith and himself: or else he forged,
 But that was later, boyish histories
 Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon,
 wreck,
 Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and true
 love
 Crown'd after trial; sketches rude and
 faint,
 But where a passion yet unborn perhaps
 Lay hidden as the music of the moon
 Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale.
 And thus together, save for college-time,
 Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair
 As ever painter painted, poet sang,
 Or Heav'n in lavish bounty moulded, grew.
 And more and more, the maiden woman-
 grown,
 He wasted hours with Averill; there,
 when first
 The tented winter-field was broken up
 Into that phalanx of the summer spears
 That soon should wear the garland; there
 again
 When burr and bine were gather'd;
 lastly there
 At Christmas; ever welcome at the Hall,
 On whose dull sameness his full tide of
 youth

Broke with a phosphorescence charming
 even
 My lady; and the Baronet yet had laid
 No bar between them: dull and self-
 involved,
 Tall and erect, but bending from his
 height
 With half-allowing smiles for all the
 world,
 And mighty courteous in the main—his
 pride
 Lay deeper than to wear it as his ring—
 He, like an Aylmer in his Aylmerism,
 Would care no more for Leolin's walking
 with her
 Than for his old Newfoundland's, when
 they ran
 To loose him at the stables, for he rose
 Twofooted at the limit of his chain,
 Roaring to make a third: and how should
 Love,
 Whom the cross-lightnings of four chance-
 met eyes
 Flash into fiery life from nothing, follow
 Such dear familiarities of dawn?
 Seldom, but when he does, Master of
 all.
 So these young hearts not knowing that
 they loved,
 Not she at least, nor conscious of a
 bar
 Between them, nor by plight or broken
 ring
 Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,
 Wander'd at will, and oft accompanied
 By Averill: his, a brother's love, that
 hung
 With wings of brooding shelter o'er her
 peace,
 Might have been other, save for Leolin's—
 Who knows? but so they wander'd, hour
 by hour

Gather'd the blossom that rebloom'd, and
drank
The magic cup that fill'd itself anew.

A whisper half reveal'd her to herself.
For out beyond her lodges, where the
brook

Vocal, with here and there a silence, ran
By sallowy rims, arose the labourers'
homes,

A frequent haunt of Edith, on low knolls
That dimpling died into each other, huts
At random scatter'd, each a nest in bloom.

Her art, her hand, her counsel all had
wrought

About them : here was one that, summer-
blanch'd,

Was parcel-bearded with the traveller's-
joy

In Autumn, parcel ivy-clad ; and here
The warm-blue breathings of a hidden
hearth

Broke from a bower of vine and honey-
suckle :

One look'd all rosetree, and another
wore

A close-set robe of jasmine sown with
stars :

This had a rosy sea of gillyflowers
About it ; this, a milky-way on earth,
Like visions in the Northern dreamer's
heavens,

A lily-avenue climbing to the doors ;
One, almost to the martin-haunted caves
A summer burial deep in hollyhocks ;
Each, its own charm ; and Edith's every-
where ;

And Edith ever visitant with him,
He but less loved than Edith, of her poor :
For she—so lowly-lovely and so loving,
Queenly responsive when the loyal hand
Rose from the clay it work'd in as she
past,

Not sowing hedgerow texts and passing
by,

Nor dealing goodly counsel from a height
That makes the lowest hate it, but a voice
Of comfort and an open hand of help,

A splendid presence flattering the poor
roofs

Revered as theirs, but kindlier than them-
selves

To ailing wife or wailing infancy
Or old bedridden palsy,—was adored ;
He, loved for her and for himself. A
grasp

Having the warmth and muscle of the
heart,

A childly way with children, and a laugh
Ringing like proven golden coinage true,

Were no false passport to that easy realm,
Where once with Leolin at her side the
girl,

Nursing a child, and turning to the
warmth

The tender pink five beaded baby-soles,
Heard the good mother softly whisper
'Bless,

God bless 'em : marriages are made in
Heaven.'

A flash of semi-jealousy clear'd it to
her.

My lady's Indian kinsman unannounced
With half a score of swarthy faces came.
His own, tho' keen and bold and soldierly,
Sear'd by the close ecliptic, was not fair ;
Fairer his talk, a tongue that ruled the
hour,

Tho' seeming boastful : so when first he
dash'd

Into the chronicle of a deedful day,
Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile
Of patron 'Good ! my lady's kinsman !
good !'

My lady with her fingers interlock'd,

And rotatory thumbs on silken knees,
Call'd all her vital spirits into each ear
To listen : unawares they flitted off,
Busying themselves about the flowerage
That stood from out a stiff brocade in
which,

The meteor of a splendid season, she,
Once with this kinsman, ah so long ago,
Stept thro' the stately minuet of those
days :

But Edith's eager fancy hurried with him
Snatch'd thro' the perilous passes of his
life :

Till Leolin ever watchful of her eye,
Hated him with a momentary hate.
Wife-hunting, as the rumour ran, was
he :

I know not, for he spoke not, only
shower'd

His oriental gifts on everyone
And most on Edith : like a storm he
came,

And shook the house, and like a storm
he went.

Among the gifts he left her (possibly
He flow'd and ebb'd uncertain, to return
When others had been tested) there was
one,

A dagger, in rich sheath with jewels on it
Sprinkled about in gold that branch'd
itself

Fine as ice-ferns on January panes
Made by a breath. I know not whence
at first,

Nor of what race, the work ; but as he
told

The story, storming a hill-fort of thieves
He got it ; for their captain after fight,
His comrades having fought their last
below,

Was climbing up the valley ; at whom he
shot :

Down from the beetling crag to which he
clung

Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet,
This dagger with him, which when now
admired

By Edith whom his pleasure was to please,
At once the costly Sahib yielded to her.

And Leolin, coming after he was gone,
Tost over all her presents petulantly :
And when she show'd the wealthy
scabbard, saying

'Look what a lovely piece of workman-
ship !'

Slight was his answer 'Well—I care not
for it :'

Then playing with the blade he prick'd
his hand,

'A gracious gift to give a lady, this !'

'But would it be more gracious' ask'd
the girl

'Were I to give this gift of his to one
That is no lady?' 'Gracious? No' said
he.

'Me?—but I cared not for it. O pardon
me,

I seem to be ungraciousness itself.'

'Take it' she added sweetly, 'tho' his
gift ;

For I am more ungracious ev'n than you,
I care not for it either ;' and he said

'Why then I love it :' but Sir Aylmer
past,

And neither loved nor liked the thing he
heard.

The next day came a neighbour.
Blues and reds

They talk'd of : blues were sure of it, he
thought :

Then of the latest fox—where started—
kill'd

<p>In such a bottom : ' Peter had the brush, My Peter, first : ' and did Sir Aylmer know That great pock-pitten fellow had been caught ? Then made his pleasure echo, hand to hand, And rolling as it were the substance of it Between his palms a moment up and down— ' The birds were warm, the birds were warm upon him ; We have him now : ' and had Sir Aylmer heard— Nay, but he must—the land was ringing of it— This blacksmith border-marriage—one they knew— Raw from the nursery—who could trust a child ? That cursed France with her egalities ! And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially With nearing chair and lower'd accent) think— For people talk'd—that it was wholly wise To let that handsome fellow Averill walk So freely with his daughter ? people talk'd— The boy might get a notion into him ; The girl might be entangled ere she knew. Sir Aylmer Aylmers slowly stiffening spoke : ' The girl and boy, Sir, know their differences !' ' Good,' said his friend, ' but watch !' and he, ' Enough, More than enough, Sir ! I can guard my own.' They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer watch'd. Pale, for on her the thunders of the house Had fallen first, was Edith that same night ;</p>	<p>Pale as the Jephtha's daughter, a rough piece Of early rigid colour, under which Withdrawing by the counter door to that Which Leolin open'd, she cast back upon him A piteous glance, and vanish'd. He, as one Caught in a burst of unexpected storm, And pelted with outrageous epithets, Turning beheld the Powers of the House On either side the hearth, indignant ; her, Cooling her false cheek with a featherfan, Him, glaring, by his own stale devil spurr'd, And, like a beast hard-ridden, breathing hard. ' Ungenerous, dishonourable, base, Presumptuous ! trusted as he was with her, The sole succeder to their wealth, their lands, The last remaining pillar of their house, The one transmitter of their ancient name, Their child.' ' Our child ! ' ' Our heiress ! ' ' Ours ! ' for still, Like echoes from beyond a hollow, came Her sicklier iteration. Last he said, ' Boy, mark me ! for your fortunes are to make. I swear you shall not make them out of mine. Now inasmuch as you have practised on her, Perplexed her, made her half forget herself, Swerve from her duty to herself and us— Things in an Aylmer deem'd impossible, Far as we track ourselves—I say that this— Else I withdraw favour and countenance From you and yours for ever—shall you do. Sir, when you see her—but you shall not see her—</p>
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No, you shall write, and not to her, but me :	Close, crashing with long echoes thro' the land,
And you shall say that having spoken with me,	Went Leolin ; then, his passions all in flood
And after look'd into yourself, you find	And masters of his motion, furiously
That you meant nothing—as indeed you know	Down thro' the bright lawns to his brother's ran,
That you meant nothing. Such a match as this !	And foam'd away his heart at Averill's ear :
Impossible, prodigions !' These were words,	Whom Averill solaced as he might, amazed :
As meted by his measure of himself,	The man was his, had been his father's, friend :
Arguing boundless forbearance : after which,	He must have seen, himself had seen it long ;
And Leolin's horror-stricken answer, ' I So foul a traitor to myself and her,	He must have known, himself had known : besides,
Never oh never,' for about as long As the wind-hover hangs in balance, paused	He never yet had set his daughter forth Here in the woman-markets of the west,
Sir Aylmer reddening from the storm within,	Where our Caucasians let themselves be sold.
Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and crying	Some one, he thought, had slander'd Leolin to him.
' Boy, should I find you by my doors again,	' Brother, for I have loved you more as son
My men shall lash you from them like a dog ;	Than brother, let me tell you : I myself—
Hence !' with a sudden execration drove	What is their pretty saying ? jilted, is it ?
The footstool from before him, and arose ;	Jilted I was : I say it for your peace.
So, stammering 'scoundrel' out of teeth that ground	Pain'd, and, as bearing in myself the shame
As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin still	The woman should have borne, humiliated,
Retreated half-aghast, the fierce old man	I lived for years a stunted sunless life ;
Follow'd, and under his own lintel stood	Till after our good parents past away
Storming with lifted hands, a hoary face	Watching your growth, I seem'd again to grow.
Meet for the reverence of the hearth, but now,	Leolin, I almost sin in envying you :
Beneath a pale and unimpassion'd moon,	The very whitest lamb in all my fold
Vext with unworthy madness, and deform'd.	Loves you : I know her : the worst thought she has
Slowly and conscious of the rageful eye	Is whiter even than her pretty hand :
That watch'd him, till he heard the ponderous door	She must prove true : for, brother, where two fight

The strongest wins, and truth and love
are strength,
And you are happy : let her parents be.'

But Leolin cried out the more upon
them—

Insolent, brainless, heartless ! heiress,
wealth,

Their wealth, their heiress ! wealth
enough was theirs

For twenty matches. Were he lord of
this,

Why twenty boys and girls should marry
on it,

And forty blest ones bless him, and him-
self

Be wealthy still, ay wealthier. He be-
lieved

This filthy marriage-hindering Mammon
made

The harlot of the cities : nature crost
Was mother of the foul adulteries

That saturate soul with body. Name,
too ! name,

Their ancient name ! they *might* be
proud ; its worth

Was being Edith's. Ah how pale she
had look'd

Darling, to-night ! they must have rated
her

Beyond all tolerance. These old pheasant-
lords,

These partridge-breeders of a thousand
years,

Who had mildew'd in their thousands,
doing nothing

Since Egbert—why, the greater their
disgrace !

Fall back upon a name ! rest, rot in that !
Not *keep* it noble, make it nobler ? fools,

With such a vantage-ground for nobleness !
He had known a man, a quintessence of
man,

The life of all—who madly loved—and he,
Thwarted by one of these old father-fools,
Had rioted his life out, and made an end.
He would not do it ! her sweet face and
faith

Held him from that : but he had powers, he
knew it :

Back would he to his studies, make a name,
Name, fortune too : the world should ring
of him

To shame these mouldy Aylmers in their
graves :

Chancellor, or what is greatest would he
be—

'O brother, I am grieved to learn your
grief—

Give me my fling, and let me say my say.'

At which, like one that sees his own
excess,

And easily forgives it as his own,
He laugh'd ; and then was mute ; but
presently

Wept like a storm : and honest Averill
seeing

How low his brother's mood had fallen,
fetch'd

His richest beeswing from a binn reserved
For banquets, praised the waning red, and
told

The vintage—when *this* Aylmer came of
age—

Then drank and past it ; till at length the
two,

Tho' Leolin flamed and fell again, agreed
That much allowance must be made for
men.

After an angry dream this kindlier glow
Faded with morning, but his purpose held.

Yet once by night again the lovers met,
A perilous meeting under the tall pines

That darken'd all the northward of her
Hall.

Him, to her meek and modest bosom prest
In agony, she promised that no force,
Persuasion, no, nor death could alter her :
He, passionately hopefuller, would go,
Labour for his own Edith, and return
In such a sunlight of prosperity
He should not be rejected. 'Write to
me !

They loved me, and because I love their
child

They hate me : there is war between us,
dear,

Which breaks all bonds but ours ; we
must remain

Sacred to one another.' So they talk'd,
Poor children, for their comfort : the wind
blew ;

The rain of heaven, and their own bitter
tears,

Tears, and the careless rain of heaven, mixt
Upon their faces, as they kiss'd each other
In darkness, and above them roar'd the
pine.

So Leolin went ; and as we task our-
selves

To learn a language known but smatter-
ingly

In phrases here and there at random, toil'd
Mastering the lawless science of our law,
That codeless myriad of precedent,
That wilderness of single instances,
Thro' which a few, by wit or fortune led,
May beat a pathway out to wealth and
fame.

The jests, that flash'd about the pleader's
room,

Lightning of the hour, the pun, the
scurilous tale,—

Old scandals buried now seven decads deep
In other scandals that have lived and died,

And left the living scandal that shall die—
Were dead to him already ; bent as he was
To make disproof of scorn, and strong in
hopes,

And prodigal of all brain-labour he,
Charter of sleep, and wine, and exercise,
Except when for a breathing-while at eve,
Some niggard fraction of an hour, he ran
Beside the river-bank : and then indeed
Harder the times were, and the hands of
power

Were bloodier, and the according hearts
of men

Seem'd harder too ; but the soft river-
breeze,

Which fann'd the gardens of that rival rose
Yet fragrant in a heart remembering
His former talks with Edith, on him
breathed

Far purer in his rushings to and fro,
After his books, to flush his blood with air,
Then to his books again. My lady's
cousin,

Half-sickening of his pension'd afternoon,
Drove in upon the student once or twice,
Ran a Malayan muck against the times,
Had golden hopes for France and all
mankind,

Answer'd all queries touching those at
home

With a heaved shoulder and a saucy smile,
And fain had haled him out into the
world,

And air'd him there : his nearer friend
would say

'Screw not the chord too sharply lest it
snap.'

Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger forth
From where his worldless heart had kept
it warm,

Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.

And wrinkled benchers often talk'd of him
Approvingly, and prophesied his rise :

For heart, I think, help'd head : her letters
too,

Tho' far between, and coming fitfully
Like broken music, written as she found
Or made occasion, being strictly watch'd,
Charm'd him thro' every labyrinth till he
saw

Anend, a hope, a lightbreaking upon him.

But they that cast her spirit into flesh,
Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued them-
selves

To sell her, those good parents, for her
good.

Whatever eldest-born of rank or wealth
Might lie within their compass, him they
lured

Into their net made pleasant by the baits
Of gold and beauty, wooing him to woo.
So month by month the noise about their
doors,

And distant blaze of those dull banquets,
made

The nightly wirer of their innocent hare
Falter before he took it. All in vain.

Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return'd
Leolin's rejected rivals from their suit

So often, that the folly taking wings
Slipt o'er those lazy limits down the wind

With ruinour, and became in other fields
A mockery to the yeomen over ale,

And laughter to their lords : but those at
home,

As hunters round a hunted creature draw
The cordon close and closer toward the

death,

Narrow'd her goings out and comings in ;
Forbad her first the house of Averill,

Then closed her access to the wealthier
farms,

Last from her own home-circle of the poor
They barr'd her : yet she bore it : yet her

cheek

Kept colour : wondrous ! but, O mystery !
What amulet drew her down to that old
oak,

So old, that twenty years before, a part
Falling had let appear the brand of John—
Once grovelike, each huge arm a tree, but
now

The broken base of a black tower, a cave
Of touchwood, with a single flourishing
spray.

There the manorial lord too curiously
Raking in that millennial touchwood-dust
Found for himself a bitter treasure-trove ;
Burst his own wyvern on the seal, and read
Writhing a letter from his child, for which
Came at the moment Leolin's emissary,
A crippled lad, and coming turn'd to fly,
But scared with threats of jail and halter
gave

To him that fluster'd his poor parish wits
The letter which he brought, and swore
besides

To play their go-between as heretofore
Nor let them know themselves betray'd ;
and then,

Soul-stricken at their kindness to him,
went

Hating his own lean heart and miserable.

Thenceforward oft from out a despot
dream

The father panting woke, and oft, as dawn
Aroused the black republic on his elms,
Sweeping the frothfly from the fescue
brush'd

Thro' the dim meadow toward his
treasure-trove,

Seized it, took home, and to my lady,—
who made

A downward crescent of her minion mouth,
Listless in all despondence, —read ; and
tore,

As if the living passion symbol'd there

Were living nerves to feel the rent ; and
 burnt,
 Now chafing at his own great self defied,
 Now striking on huge stumbling-blocks of
 scorn
 In babyisms, and dear diminutives
 Scatter'd all over the vocabulary
 Of such a love as like a chidden child,
 After much wailing, hush'd itself at last
 Hopeless of answer : then tho' Averill
 wrote
 And bad him with good heart sustain
 himself—
 All would be well—the lover heeded not,
 But passionately restless came and went,
 And rustling once at night about the place,
 There by a keeper shot at, slightly hurt,
 Raging return'd : nor was it well for her
 Kept to the garden now, and grove of
 pines,
 Watch'd even there ; and one was set to
 watch
 The watcher, and Sir Aylmer watch'd
 them all,
 Yet bitterer from his readings : once
 indeed,
 Warm'd with his wines, or taking pride
 in her,
 She look'd so sweet, he kiss'd her tenderly
 Not knowing what possess'd him : that
 one kiss
 Was Leolin's one strong rival upon earth ;
 Seconded, for my lady follow'd suit,
 Seem'd hope's returning rose : and then
 ensued
 A Martin's summer of his faded love,
 Or ordeal by kindness ; after this
 He seldom crost his child without a sneer ;
 The mother flow'd in shallower acrimo-
 nies :
 Never one kindly smile, one kindly word :
 So that the gentle creature shut from all
 Her charitable use, and face to face

With twenty months of silence, slowly lost
 Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on life,
 Last, some low fever ranging round to spy
 The weakness of a people or a house,
 Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer, or
 men,
 Or almost all that is, hurting the hurt—
 Save Christ as we believe him—found the
 girl
 And flung her down upon a couch of fire,
 Where careless of the household faces near,
 And crying upon the name of Leolin,
 She, and with her the race of Aylmer,
 past.
 Star to star vibrates light : may soul to
 soul
 Strike thro' a finer element of her own ?
 So,—from afar,—touch as at once ? or
 why
 That night, that moment, when she named
 his name,
 Did the keen shriek ' Yes love, yes, Edith,
 yes,'
 Shriill, till the comrade of his chambers
 woke,
 And came upon him half-arisen from sleep,
 With a weird bright eye, sweating and
 trembling,
 His hair as it were crackling into flames,
 His body half flung forward in pursuit,
 And his long arms stretch'd as to grasp a
 flyer :
 Nor knew he wherefore he had made the
 cry ;
 And being much befool'd and idioted
 By the rough amity of the other, sank
 As into sleep again. The second day,
 My lady's Indian kinsman rushing in,
 A breaker of the bitter news from home,
 Found a dead man, a letter edged with
 death
 Beside him, and the dagger which himself

Gave Edith, reddened with no bandit's
blood :
'From Edith' was engraven on the blade.

Then Averill went and gazed upon his
death.
And when he came again, his flock be-
lieved—
Beholding how the years which are not
Time's
Had blasted him—that many thousand
days
Were clipt by horror from his term of life.
Yet the sad mother, for the second death
Scarce touch'd her thro' that nearness of
the first,
And being used to find her pastor texts,
Sent to the harrow'd brother, praying him
To speak before the people of her child,
And fix the Sabbath. Darkly that day rose:
Autumn's mock sunshine of the faded
woods
Was all the life of it; for hard on these,
A breathless burthen of low-folded heavens
Stifled and chill'd at once; but every roof
Sent out a listener: many too had known
Edith among the hamlets round, and since
The parents' harshness and the hapless
loves
And double death were widely murmur'd,
left
Their own gray tower, or plain-faced
tabernacle,
To hear him; all in mourning these, and
those
With blots of it about them, ribbon, glove
Or kerchief; while the church,—one
night, except
For greenish glimmerings thro' the lan-
cets,—made
Still paler the pale head of him, who
tower'd
Above them, with his hopes in either grave.

Long o'er his bent brows linger'd
Averill,
His face magnetic to the hand from which
Livid he pluck'd it forth, and labour'd thro'
His brief prayer-prelude, gave the verse
'Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate !'
But lapsed into so long a pause again
As half amazed half frightened all his flock :
Then from his height and loneliness of
grief
Bore down in flood, and dash'd his angry
heart
Against the desolations of the world.

Never since our bad earth became one
sea,
Which rolling o'er the palaces of the proud,
And all but those who knew the living
God—
Eight that were left to make a purer
world—
When since had flood, fire, earthquake,
thunder, wrought
Such waste and havock as the idolatries,
Which from the low light of mortality
Shot up their shadows to the Heaven of
Heavens,
And worshipt their own darkness as the
Highest ?
'Gash thyself, priest, and honour thy brute
Baäl,
And to thy worst self sacrifice thyself,
For with thy worst self hast thou clothed
thy God.
Then came a Lord in no wise like to Baäl.
The babe shall lead the lion. Surely now
The wilderness shall blossom as the rose.
Crown thyself, worm, and worship thine
own lusts !—
No coarse and blockish God of acreage
Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel to—
Thy God is far diffused in noble groves

And princely halls, and farms, and flowing
 lawns,
 And heaps of living gold that daily grow,
 And title-scrolls and gorgeous heraldries.
 In such a shape dost thou behold thy God.
 Thou wilt not gash thy flesh for *him*; for
 thine
 Fares richly, in fine linen, not a hair
 Ruffled upon the scarfskin, even while
 The deathless ruler of thy dying house
 Is wounded to the death that cannot die;
 And tho' thou numberest with the fol-
 lowers
 Of One who cried, "Leave all and follow
 me."
 Thee therefore with His light about thy
 feet,
 Thee with His message ringing in thine
 ears,
 Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord
 from Heaven,
 Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,
 Wonderful, Prince of peace, the Mighty
 God,
 Count the more base idolater of the two;
 Crueller: as not passing thro' the fire
 Bodies, but souls—thy children's—thro'
 the smoke.
 The blight of low desires—darkening
 thine own
 To thine own likeness; or if one of these,
 Thy better born unhappily from thee,
 Should, as by miracle, grow straight and
 fair—
 Friends, I was bid to speak of such a one
 By those who most have cause to sorrow
 for her—
 Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,
 Fairer than Ruth among the fields of corn,
 Fair as the Angel that said "Hail!" she
 seem'd,
 Who entering fill'd the house with sudden
 light.

For so mine own was brighten'd: where
 indeed
 The roof so lowly but that beam of Heaven
 Dawn'd sometime thro' the doorway?
 whose the babe
 Too ragged to be fondled on her lap,
 Warm'd at her bosom? The poor child of
 shame
 The common care whom no one cared for,
 leapt
 To greet her, wasting his forgotten heart,
 As with the mother he had never known,
 In gambols; for her fresh and innocent
 eyes
 Had such a star of morning in their blue,
 That all neglected places of the field
 Broke into nature's music when they saw
 her.
 Low was her voice, but won mysterious
 way
 Thro' the seal'd ear to which a louder one
 Was all but silence—free of alms her
 hand—
 The hand that rob'd your cottage-walls
 with flowers
 Has often toil'd to clothe your little ones;
 How often placed upon the sick man's
 brow
 Cool'd it, or laid his feverous pillow
 smooth!
 Had you one sorrow and she shared it not?
 One burthen and she would not lighten it?
 One spiritual doubt she did not soothe?
 Or when some heat of difference sparkled
 out,
 How sweetly would she glide between
 your wraths,
 And steal you from each other! for she
 walk'd
 Wearing the light yoke of that Lord of love,
 Who still'd the rolling wave of Galilee!
 And one—of him I was not bid to speak—
 Was always with her, whom you also knew.

Him too you loved, for he was worthy love.
And these had been together from the first ;
They might have been together till the last.
Friends, this frail bark of ours, when
sorely tried,
May wreck itself without the pilot's guilt,
Without the captain's knowledge : hope
with me.
Whose shame is that, if he went hence
with shame ?
Nor mine the fault, if losing both of these
I cry to vacant chairs and widow'd walls,
" My house is left unto me desolate."

While thus he spoke, his hearers wept ;
but some,
Sons of the glebe, with other frowns than
those
That knit themselves for summer shadow,
scowl'd
At their great lord. He, when it seem'd
he saw
No pale sheet-lightnings from afar, but
fork'd
Of the near storm, and aiming at his head,
Sat anger-charm'd from sorrow, soldier-
like,
Erect : but when the preacher's cadence
flow'd
Softening thro' all the gentle attributes
Of his lost child, the wife, who watch'd
his face,
Paled at a sudden twitch of his iron mouth ;
And ' O pray God that he hold up ' she
thought
' Or surely I shall shame myself and him.'

' Nor yours the blame—for who beside
your hearths
Can take her place—if echoing me you cry
" Our house is left unto us desolate?"
But thou, O thou that killest, had'st thou
known,

O thou that stonest, had'st thou under-
stood
The things belonging to thy peace and
ours !
Is there no prophet but the voice that calls
Doom upon kings, or in the waste " Re-
pent ?"
Is not our own child on the narrow way,
Who down to those that saunter in the
broad
Cries " Come up hither," as a prophetous ?
Is there no stoning save with flint and
rock ?

Yes, as the dead we weep for testify—
No desolation but by sword and fire ?
Yes, as your moanings witness, and myself
Am lonelier, darker, earthlier for my loss.
Give me your prayers, for he is past your
prayers,
Not past the living fount of pity in Heaven.
But I that thought myself long-suffering,
meek,
Exceeding " poor in spirit"—how the
words
Have twisted back upon themselves, and
mean
Vileness, we are grown so proud—I wish'd
my voice
A rushing tempest of the wrath of God
To blow these sacrifices thro' the world—
Sent like the twelve-divided concubine
To inflame the tribes : but there—out
yonder—earth
Lightens from her own central Hell—O
there

The red fruit of an old idolatry—
The heads of chiefs and princes fall so fast,
They cling together in the ghastly sack—
The land all shambles—naked marriages
Flash from the bridge, and ever-murder'd
France,
By shores that darken with the gathering
wolf,

Runs in a river of blood to the sick sea.
Is this a time to madden madness then?
Was this a time for these to flaunt their
pride?
May Pharaoh's darkness, folds as dense
as those
Which hid the Holiest from the people's
eyes
Ere the great death, shroud this great sin
from all!
Doubtless our narrow world must canvass
it:
O rather pray for those and pity them,
Who, thro' their own desire accomplish'd,
bring
Their own gray hairs with sorrow to the
grave—
Who broke the bond which they desired
to break,
Which else had link'd their race with
times to come—
Who wove coarse webs to snare her purity,
Grossly contriving their dear daughter's
good—
Poor souls, and knew not what they did,
but sat
Ignorant, devising their own daughter's
death!
May not that earthly chastisement suffice?
Have not our love and reverence left them
bare?
Will not another take their heritage?
Will there be children's laughter in their
hall
For ever and for ever, or one stone
Left on another, or is it a light thing
That I, their guest, their host, their
ancient friend,
I made by these the last of all my race,
Must cry to these the last of theirs, as
cried
Christ ere His agony to those that swore
Not by the temple but the gold, and made
Their own traditions God, and slew the
Lord,
And left their memories a world's curse—
“Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate?”
Ended he had not, but she brook'd no
more:
Long since her heart had beat remorse-
lessly,
Her cramp'd-up sorrow pain'd her, and a
sense
Of meanness in her unresisting life.
Then their eyes vex't her; for on entering
He had cast the curtains of their seat
aside—
Black velvet of the costliest—she herself
Had seen to that: fain had she closed
them now,
Yet dared not stir to do it, only near'd
Her husband inch by inch, but when she
laid,
Wifelike, her hand in one of his, he veil'd
His face with the other, and at once, as falls
A creeper when the prop is broken, fell
The woman shrieking at his feet, and
swoon'd.
Then her own people bore along the nave
Her pendent hands, and narrow meagre
face
Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty
years:
And her the Lord of all the landscape
round
Ev'n to its last horizon, and of all
Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd out
Tall and erect, but in the middle aisle
Reel'd, as a footsore ox in crowded ways
Stumbling across the market to his death,
Unpitied; for he groped as blind, and
seem'd
Always about to fall, grasping the pews
And oaken finials till he touch'd the door;

Yet to the lychgate, where his chariot
stood,
Strode from the porch, tall and erect
again.

But nevermore did either pass the gate
Save under pall with bearers. In one
month,
Thro' weary and yet ever wearier hours,
The childless mother went to seek her
child ;
And when he felt the silence of his house
About him, and the change and not the
change,
And those fixt eyes of painted ancestors
Staring for ever from their gilded walls
On him their last descendant, his own head
Began to droop, to fall ; the man became
Imbecile ; his one word was ' desolate ;'
Dead for two years before his death was
he ;
But when the second Christmas came,
escaped
His keepers, and the silence which he felt,
To find a deeper in the narrow gloom
By wife and child ; nor wanted at his end
The dark retinue reverencing death
At golden thresholds ; nor from tender
hearts,
And those who sorrow'd o'er a vanish'd
race,
Pity, the violet on the tyrant's grave.
Then the great Hall was wholly broken
down,
And the broad woodland parcell'd into
farms ;
And where the two contrived their
daughter's good,
Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has made
his run,
The hedgehog underneath the plantain
bores,
The rabbit fondles his own harmless face,

The slow-worm creeps, and the thin
weasel there
Follows the mouse, and all is open field.

SEA DREAMS.

CITY clerk, but gently born and bred ;
His wife, an unknown artist's orphan
child—
One babe was theirs, a Margaret, three
years old :
They, thinking that her clear germander
eye
Droopt in the giant-factored city-gloom,
Came, with a month's leave given them,
to the sea :
For which his gains were dock'd, however
small :
Small were his gains, and hard his work ;
besides,
Their slender household fortunes (for the
man
Had risk'd his little) like the little thrift,
Trembled in perilous places o'er a deep :
And oft, when sitting all alone, his face
Would darken, as he cursed his credulous-
ness,
And that one unctuous mouth which lured
him, rogue,
To buy strange shares in some Peruvian
mine.
Now seaward-bound for health they gain'd
a coast,
All sand and cliff and deep-inrunning cave,
At close of day ; slept, woke, and went
the next,
The Sabbath, pious variers from the
church,
To chapel ; where a heated pulpiter,
Not preaching simple Christ to simple men,
Announced the coming doom, and ful-
minated
Against the scarlet woman and her creed



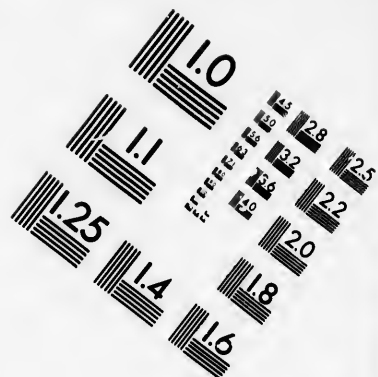
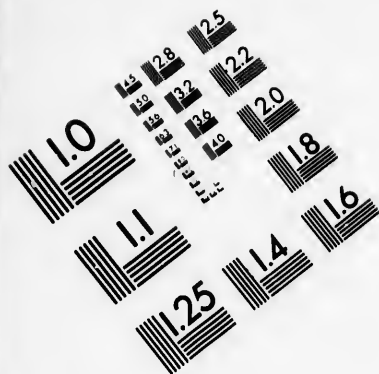
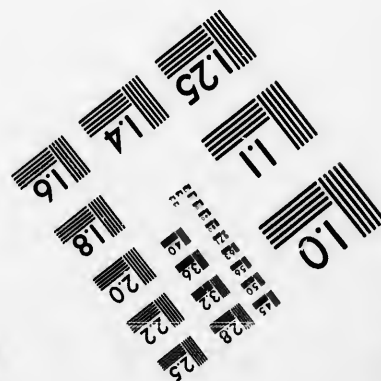
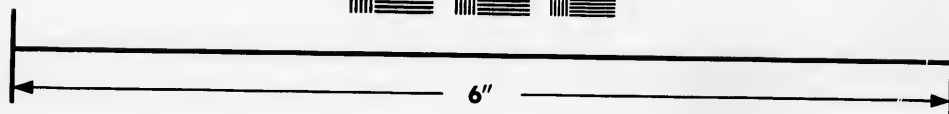
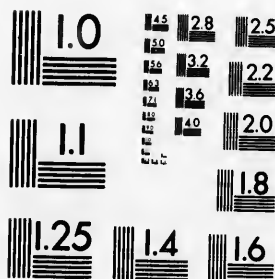


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For sideways up he swung his arms, and
 shriek'd
 'Thus, thus with violence,' ev'n as if he
 held
 The Apocalyptic millstone, and himself
 Were that great Angel; 'Thus with violence
 Shall Babylon be cast into the sea;
 Then comes the close.' The gentle-
 hearted wife
 Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world;
 He at his own: but when the wo'ly storm
 Had ended, forth they came and paced
 the shore,
 Ran in and out the long sea-framing caves,
 Drank the large air, and saw, but scarce
 believed
 (The sootflake of so many a summer still
 Clung to their fancies) that they saw, the sea.
 So now on sand they walk'd, and now on
 cliff,
 Lingering about the thymy promontories,
 Till all the sails were darken'd in the west,
 And rosed in the east: then homeward and
 to bed:
 Where she, who kept a tender Christian
 hope,
 Haunting a holy text, and still to that
 Returning, as the bird returns, at night,
 'Let not the sun go down upon your
 wrath,'
 Said, 'Love, forgive him:' but he did not
 speak;
 And silenced by that silence lay the wife,
 Remembering her dear Lord who died for
 all,
 And musing on the little lives of men,
 And how they mar this little by their feuds.

But while the two were sleeping, a full
 tide
 Rose with ground-swell, which, on the
 foremost rocks

Touching, upjett'd in spirits of wild sea-
 smoke,
 And scaled in sheets of wasteful foam, and
 fell
 In vast sea-cataracts—ever and anon
 Dead claps of thunder from within the
 cliffs
 Heard thro' the living roar. At this the
 babe,
 Their Margaret cradled near them, wail'd
 and woke
 The mother, and the father suddenly cried,
 'A wreck, a wreck!' then turn'd, and
 groaning said,
 'Forgive! How many will say, "for-
 give," and find
 A sort of absolution in the sound
 To hate a little longer! No; the sin
 That neither God nor man can well for-
 give,
 Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once.
 Is it so true that second thoughts are best?
 Not first, and third, which are a ripper first?
 Too ripe, too late! they come too late
 for use.
 Ah love, there surely lives in man and
 beast
 Something divine to warn them of their
 foes:
 And such a sense, when first I fronted him,
 Said, "Trust him not;" but after, when I
 came
 To know him more, I lost it, knew him
 less;
 Fought with what seem'd my own un-
 charity;
 Sat at his table; drank his costly wines;
 Made more and more allowance for his
 talk;
 Went further, fool! and trusted him with
 all,
 All! my poor scrapings from a dozen years

Of dust and deskwork : there is no such
mine,
None; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing gold,
Not making. Ruin'd ! ruin'd ! the sea
roars
Ruin : a fearful night !

'Not fearful ; fair,'
Said the good wife, 'if every star in
heaven
Can make it fair : you do but hear the tide.
Had you ill dreams ?'

'O yes,' he said, 'I dream'd
Of such a tide swelling toward the land,
And I from out the boundless enter deep
Swept with it to the shore, and enter'd one
Of those dark caves that run beneath the
cliffs.

I thought the motion of the boundless deep
Bore thro' the cave, and I was heaved
upon it

In darkness : then I saw one lovely star
Larger and larger. "What a world," I
thought,

"To live in !" but in moving on I found
Only the landward exit of the cave,
Bright with the sun upon the stream
beyond :

And near the light a giant woman sat,
All over earthy, like a piece of earth,
A pickaxe in her hand : then out I slip'd
Into a land all sun and blossom, trees
Ashy as heaven, and every bird that sings :
And here the night-light flickering in my
eyes
Awoke me.'

'That was then your dream,' she said,
'Not sad, but sweet.'

'So sweet, I lay,' said he,
'And mused upon it, drifting up the
stream

In fancy, till I slept again, and pieced
The broken vision ; for I dream'd that still
The motion of the great deep bore me on,
And that the woman walk'd upon the
brink :

I wonder'd at her strength, and ask'd her
of it :

"It came," she said, "by working in the
mines :"

O then to ask her of my shores, I thought ;
And ask'd ; but not a word ; she shook
her head.

And then the motion of the current ceased,
And there was rolling thunder ; and we
reach'd

A mountain, like a wall of burs and
thorns ;

But she with her strong feet up the steep
hill

Trod out a path : I follow'd ; and at top
She pointed seaward : there a fleet of
glass,

That seem'd a fleet of jewels under me,
Sailing along before a gloomy cloud
That not one moment ceased to thunder,
past

In sunshine : right across its track there
lay,

Down in the water, a long reef of gold,
Or what seem'd gold : and I was glad at
first

To think that in our often-ransack'd world
Still so much gold was left ; and then I
fear'd

Lest the gay navy there should splinter
on it,

And fearing waved my arm to warn them
off ;

An idle signal, for the brittle fleet
(I thought I could have died to save it)
near'd,

Touch'd, clink'd, and clash'd, and
vanish'd, and I woke,

I heard the clash so clearly. Now I see
My dream was Life ; the woman honest
Work ;

And my poor venture but a fleet of glass
Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold.'

'Nay,' said the kindly wife to comfort
him,

'You raised your arm, you tumbled down
and broke

The glass with little Margaret's medicine
in it ;

And, breaking that, you made and broke
your dream:

A trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks.'

'No trifle,' groan'd the husband ;
'yesterday

I met him suddenly in the street, and ask'd
That which I ask'd the woman in my
dream.

Like her, he shook his head. "Show me
the books !"

He dodged me with a long and loose ac-
count.

"The books, the books !" but he, he could
not wait,

Bound on a matter he of life and death :
When the great Books (see Daniel seven
and ten)

Were open'd, I should find he meant me
well ;

And then began to bloat himself, and ooze
All over with the fat affectionate smile

That makes the widow lean. "My dearest
friend,

Have faith, have faith ! We live by faith,"
said he ;

"And all things work together for the good
Of those"—it makes me sick to quote him
—last

Gript my hand hard, and with God-bless-
you went.

I stood like one that had received a blow :
I found a hard friend in his loose accounts,
A loose one in the hard grip of his hand,
A curse in his God-bless-you : then my
eyes

Pursued him down the street, and far away,
Among the honest shoulders of the crowd,
Read rascal in the motions of his back,
And scoundrel in the supple-sliding knee.'

'Was he so bound, poor soul ?' said
the good wife ;

'So are we all : but do not call him, love,
Before you prove him, rogue, and proved,
forgive.

His gain is loss ; for he that wrongs his
friend

Wrongs himself more, and ever bears
about

A silent court of justice in his breast,
Himself the judge and jury, and him-
self

The prisoner at the bar, ever condemn'd :
And that drags d'—'s life : then comes
what com—

Hereafter : and he meant, he said he
meant,

Perhaps he meant, or partly meant, you
well.'

"With all his conscience and one eye
askew"—

Love, let me quote these lines, that you
may learn

A man is likewise counsel for himself,
Too often, in that silent court of yours—

"With all his conscience and one eye
askew,

So false, he partly took himself for true ;
Whose pious talk, when most his heart
was dry,

Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round his
eye ;

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Who, never naming God except for gain,
So never took that useful name in vain,
Made Him his catspaw and the Cross his
tool,

And Christ the bait to trap his dupe and
fool ;

Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace he
forged,

And snake-like slined his victim ere he
gorged ;

And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the rest
Arising, did his holy oily best,
Dropping the too rough H in Hell and
Heaven,

To spread the Word by which himself
had thriven."

How like you this old satire ?'

'Nay,' she said,

'I loathe it : he had never kindly heart,
Nor ever cared to better his own kind,
Who first wrote satire, with no pity in it.
But will you hear *my* dream, for I had one
That altogether went to music ? Still
It awed me.'

Then she told it, having dream'd
Of that same coast.

'— But round the North, a light,
A belt, it seem'd, of luminous vapour, lay,
And ever in it a low maulical note
Swell'd up and died ; and, as it swell'd, a
ridge

Of breaker issued from the belt, and still
Grew with the growing note, and when
the note

Had reach'd a thunderous fullness, on
those cliffs

Broke, mixt with awful light (the same as
that

Living within the belt) whereby she saw
That all those lines of cliffs were cliffs
no more,

But huge cathedral fronts of every age,
Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could see,
One after one : and then the great ridge
drew,

Lessening to the lessening music, back,
And past into the belt and swell'd again
Slowly to music : ever when it broke
The statues, king or saint, or founder fell ;
Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin
left

Came men and women in dark clusters
round,

Some crying, "Set them up ! they shall
not fall !"

And others "Let them lie, for they have
fall'n."

And still they strove and wrangled : and
she grieved

In her strange dream, she knew not why,
to find

Their wildest wailings never out of tune
With that sweet note ; and ever as their
shrieks

Ran highest up the gamut, that great wave
Returning, while none mark'd it, on the
crowd

Broke, mixt with awful light, and show'd
their eyes

Glaring, and passionate looks, and swept
away

The men of flesh and blood, and men of
stone,

To the waste deeps together.

'Then I fixt

My wistful eyes on two fair images,
Both crown'd with stars and high among
the stars,—

The Virgin Mother standing with her
child

High up on one of those dark minster-
fronts—

Till she began to totter, and the child

Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry
Which mixt with little Margaret's, and I
woke,

And my dream awed me :—well—but
what are dreams?

Yours came but from the breaking of a
glass,

And mine but from the crying of a child.

'Child? No!' said he, 'but this tide's
roar, and his,

Our Boanerges with his threats of doom,
And loud-lung'd Antibabylonianisms
(Altho' I grant but little music there)

Went both to make your dream : but if
there were

A music harmonizing our wild cries,
Sphere-music such as that you dream'd
about,

Why, that would make our passions far
too like

The discords dear to the musician. No—
One shriek of hate would jar all the hymns
of heaven :

True Devils with no ear, they howl in
tune

With nothing but the Devil !'

“True” indeed !

One of our town, but later by an hour
Here than ourselves, spoke with me on
the shore ;

While you were running down the sands,
and made

The dimpled flounce of the sea-furbelow
flap,

Good man, to please the child. She
brought strange news.

Why were you silent when I spoke to-
night?

I had set my heart on your forgiving him
Before you knew. We *must* forgive the
dead.'

'Dead ! who is dead ?'

'The man your eye pursued.
A little after you had parted with him,
He suddenly dropt dead of heart-disease.'

'Dead? he? of heart-disease? what heart
had he
To die of? dead !'

'Ah, dearest, if there be
A devil in man, there is an angel too,
And if he did that wrong you charge him
with,

His angel broke his heart. But your
rough voice

(You spoke so loud) has roused the child
again.

Sleep, little birdie, sleep ! will she not sleep
Without her "little birdie?" well then,
sleep,

And I will sing you "birdie."

Saying this,
The woman half turn'd round from him
she loved,
Left him one hand, and reaching thro'
the night

Her other, found (for it was close beside)
And half embraced the basket cradle-head
With one soft arm, which, like the pliant
bough

That moving moves the nest and nestling,
sway'd

The cradle, while she sang this babysong.

What does little birdie say
In her nest at peep of day?
Let me fly, says little birdie,
Mother, let me fly away.
Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger.
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies away.

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Poor Julian
bells

What does little baby say;
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
Let me rise and fly away.
Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger.
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby too shall fly away.

'She sleeps: let us too, let all evil,
sleep.
He also sleeps—another sleep than ours.
He can do no more wrong: forgive him,
dear,
And I shall sleep the sounder!'

Then the man,
'His deeds yet live, the worst is yet to
come.
Yet let your sleep for this one night be
sound:
I do forgive him!'

'Thanks, my love,' she said,
'Your own will be the sweeter,' and they
slept.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

[This poem is founded upon a story in Boccaccio.

A young lover, Julian, whose cousin and foster-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavours to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel of it. He speaks of having been haunted in delirium by visions and the sound of bells, sometimes tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.]

HE flies the event: he leaves the event
to me:
Poor Julian—how he rush'd away; the
bells,

Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear and
heart—
But cast a parting glance at me, you saw,
As who should say 'Continue.' Well, he
had
One golden hour—of triumph shall I say?
Solace at least—before he left his home.

Would you had seen him in that hour
of his!
He moved thro' all of it majestically—
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—but
now—

Whether they *were* his lady's marriage-
bells,
Or prophets of them in his fantasy,
I never ask'd: but Lionel and the girl
Were wedded, and our Julian came again
Back to his mother's house among the
pines.
But these, their gloom, the mountains and
the Bay,
The whole land weigh'd him down as
Ætna does
The Giant of Mythology: he would go,
Would leave the land for ever, and had
gone

Surely, but for a whisper, 'Go not yet,'
Some warning, and divinely as it seem'd
By that which follow'd—but of this I deem
As of the visions that he told—the event
Glanced back upon them in his after life,
And partly made them—tho' he knew it
not.

And thus he stay'd and would not look
at her—
No not for months: but, when the eleventh
moon
After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,
Heard yet once more the tolling bell, and
said,

Would you could toil me out of life, but
found—

All softly as his mother broke it to him—
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,
For that low knell tolling his lady dead—
Dead—and had lain three days without a
pulse :

All that look'd on her had pronounced
her dead.

And so they bore her (for in Julian's land
They never nail a dumb head up in elm),
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of
heaven,

And laid her in the vault of her own kin.

What did he then? not die : he is here
and hale—

Not plunge headforemost from the moun-
tain there,

And leave the name of Lover's Leap : not
he :

He knew the meaning of the whisper
now,

Thought that he knew it. 'This, I
stay'd for this ;

O love, I have not seen you for so long.

Now, now, will I go down into the grave,
I will be all alone with all I love,

And kiss her on the lips. She is his no
more :

The dead returns to me, and I go down
To kiss the dead.'

The fancy stirr'd him so

He rose and went, and entering the dim
vault,

And, making there a sudden light, beheld
All round about him that which all will
be.

The light was but a flash, and went again.

Then at the far end of the vault he saw

His lady with the moonlight on her face;

Her breast as in a shadow-prison, bars

Of black and bands of silver, which the
moon

Struck from an open grating overhead
High in the wall, and all the rest of her
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the
vault.

'It was my wish,' he said, 'to pass, to
sleep,

To rest, to be with her—till the great day
Peal'd on us with that music which rights
all,

And raised us hand in hand.' And kneel-
ing there

Down in the dreadful dust that once was
man,

Dust, as he said, that once was loving
hearts,

Hearts that had beat with such a love as
mine—

Not such as mine, no, nor for such as
her—

He softly put his arm about her neck
And kiss'd her more than once, till help-
less death

And silence made him bold—nay, but I
wrong him,

He revered his dear lady even in death;
But, placing his true hand upon her heart,

'O, you warm heart,' he moan'd, 'not
even death

Can chill you all at once : ' then starting,
thought

His dreams had come again. 'Do I
wake or sleep ?

Or am I made immortal, or my love
Mortal once more?' It beat—the heart
—it beat :

Faint—but it beat : at which his own began
To pulse with such a vehemence that it
drown'd

The feeblér motion underneath his hand.
But when at last his doubts were satisfied,

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He raised her softly from the sepulchre,
And, wrapping her all over with the
cloak

He came in, and now striding fast, and now
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
Holding his golden burthen in his arms,
So bore her thro' the solitary land
Back to the mother's house where she was
born.

There the good mother's kindly minis-
tering,
With half a night's appliances, recall'd
Her fluttering life : she rais'd an eye that
ask'd

'Where?' till the things familiar to her
youth
Had made a silent answer : then she spoke
'Here ! and how came I here ?' and
learning it

(They told her somewhat rashly as I think)
At once began to wander and to wail,
'Ay, but you know that you must give
me back :

Send ! bid him come ;' but Lionel was
away—

Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none knew
where.

'He casts me out,' she wept, 'and goes'
—a wail

That seem'd something, yet was nothing,
born

Not from believing mind, but shatter'd
nerve,

Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof
At some precipitance in her burial.

Then, when her own true spirit had re-
turn'd,

'O yes, and you,' she said, 'and none but
you.'

For you have given me life and love again,
And none but you yourself shall tell him
of it,

And you shall give me back when he
returns.

'Stay then a little,' answer'd Julian, 'here,
And keep yourself, none knowing, to
yourself ;

And I will do your will. I may not stay,
No, not an hour ; but send me notice of
him

When he returns, and then will I return,
And I will make a solemn offering of you
To him you love.' And faintly she
replied,

'And I will do *your* will, and none shall
know.'

Not know ? with such a secret to be
known.

But all their house was old and loved
them both,

And all the house had known the loves
of both ;

Had died almost to serve them any way,
And all the land was waste and solitary :

And then he rode away ; but after this,
An hour or two, Camilla's travail came

Upon her, and that day a boy was born,
Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,
And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,
There fever seized upon him : myself was
then

Travelling that land, and meant to rest
an hour ;

And sitting down to such a base repast,
It makes me angry yet to speak of it—

I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd
The moulder'd stairs (for everything was
vile)

And in a loft, with none to wait on him,
Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,
Raving of dead men's dust and beating
hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,
A flat malarian world of reed and rush !
But there from fever and my care of him
Sprang up a friendship that may help us
yet.

For while we roam'd along the dreary
coast,

And waited for her message, piece by piece
I learnt the drearier story of his life ;
And, tho' he loved and honour'd Lionel,
Found that the sudden wail his lady made
Dwelt in his fancy : did he know her
worth,

Her beauty even ? should he not be taught,
Ev'n by the price that others set upon it,
The value of that jewel he had to guard ?

Suddenly came her notice and we past,
I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the
soul :

That makes the sequel pure ; tho' some
of us

Beginning at the sequel know no more.
Not such am I : and yet I say, the bird
That will not hear my call, however
sweet,

But if my neighbour whistle answers
him—

What matter ? there are others in the
wood.

Yet when I saw her (and I thought him
crazed,

Tho' not with such a craziness as needs
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of
hers—

Oh ! such dark eyes ! and not her eyes
alone,

But all from these to where she touch'd
on earth,

For such a craziness as Julian's look'd
No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came
To greet us, her young hero in her arms !
' Kiss him,' she said. ' You gave me life
again.

He, but for you, had never seen it once.
His other father you ! Kiss him, and
then
Forgive him, if his name be Julian too.'

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart !
his own
Sent such a flame into his face, I knew
Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,
And sent at once to Lionel, praying him
By that great love they both had borne
the dead,

To come and revel for one hour with him
Before he left the land for evermore ;
And then to friends—they were not many
—who lived

Scatteringly about that lonely land of his,
And bade them to a banquet of farewells.

And Julian made a solemn feast : I
never

Sat at a costlier ; for all round his hall
From column on to column, as in a wood,
Not such as here—an equatorial one,
Great garlands swung and blossom'd ;
and beneath,

Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,
Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven
knows when,

Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten sun,
And kept it thro' a hundred years of
gloom,

Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups
Where nymph and god ran ever round in
gold—

Others of glass as costly—some with gems
Moveable and resettable at will,

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And trebling all the rest in value—Ah
heavens!

Why need I tell you all?—suffice to say
That whatsoever such a house as his,
And his was old, has in it rare or fair
Was brought before the guest : and they,
the guests,

Wonder'd at some strange light in Julian's
eyes

(I told you that he had his golden hour),
And such a feast, ill-suited as it seem'd
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his,
And that resolved self-exile from a land
He never would revisit, such a feast
So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n
than rich,

But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the hall
Two great funeral curtains, looping
down,

Parted a little ere they met the floor,
About a picture of his lady, taken
Some years before, and falling hid the
frame.

And just above the parting was a lamp :
So the sweet figure folded round with
night
Seem'd stepping out of darkness with a
smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate
and drank,

And might—the wines being of such
nobleness—

Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes,
And something weird and wild about it
all :

What was it? for our lover seldom spoke,
Scarce touch'd the meats ; but ever and
anon

A priceless goblet with a priceless wine
Arising, show'd he drank beyond his use ;

And when the feast was near an end, he
said :

‘There is a custom in the Orient,
friends—

I read of it in Persia—when a man
Will honour those who feast with him, he
brings

And shows them whatsoever he accounts
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.
This custom ’—

Pausing here a moment, all
The guests broke in upon him with meet-
ing hands
And cries about the banquet—‘ Beautiful !
Who could desire more beauty at a feast?’

The lover answer'd, ‘There is more
than one
Here sitting who desires it. Laud me
not

Before my time, but hear me to the close.
This custom steps yet further when the
guest

Is loved and honour'd to the uttermost.
For after he hath shown him gems or gold,
He brings and sets before him in rich
guise

That which is thrice as beautiful as these,
The beauty that is dearest to his heart—
“O my heart's lord, would I could show
you,” he says,

“Ev'n my heart too.” And I propose
to-night

To show you what is dearest to my heart,
And my heart too.

‘But solve me first a doubt.
I knew a man, nor many years ago ;
He had a faithful servant, one who loved
His master more than all on earth beside.

He falling sick, and seeming close on
death,

His master would not wait until he died,
But bade his menials bear him from the
door,

And leave him in the public way to die.
I knew another, not so long ago,

Who found the dying servant, took him
home,

And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved
his life.

I ask you now, should this first master
claim

His service, whom does it belong to? him
Who thrust him out, or him who saved
his life?

This question, so flung down before
the guests,

And balanced either way by each, at
length

When some were doubtful how the law
would hold,

Was handed over by consent of all
To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of
phrase.

And he beginning languidly—his loss
Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as he
went,

Glanced at the point of law, to pass it by,
Affirming that as long as either lived,
By all the laws of love and gratefulness,
The service of the one so saved was due
All to the saver—adding, with a smile,
The first for many weeks—a semi-smile
As at a strong conclusion—'body and soul
And life and limbs, all his to work his
will.'

Then Julian made a secret sign to me
To bring Camilla down before them all.

And crossing her own picture as she came,
And looking as much lovelier as herself
Is lovelier than all others—on her head
A diamond circlet, and from under this
A veil, that seem'd no more than gilded air,
Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gauze
With seeds of gold—so, with that grace

of hers,
Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,
That flings a mist behind it in the sun—
And bearing high in arms the mighty
babe,

The younger Julian, who himself was
crown'd

With roses, none so rosy as himself—
And over all her babe and her the jewels
Of many generations of his house
Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked
them out

As for a solemn sacrifice of love—
So she came in :—I am long in telling it,
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,
Sad, sweet, and strange together—floated
in—

While all the guests in mute amazement
rose—

And slowly pacing to the middle hall,
Before the board, there paused and stood,
her breast

Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her feet,
Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.

But him she carried, him nor lights nor
feast

Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men; who
cared

Only to use his own, and staring wide
And hungering for the gilt and jewell'd
world

About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,
When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.

'My guests,' said Julian: 'you are
honour'd now

Ev'n to the
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me.'

Then wavin
Led his dea
And I, by
Fire, and d
Thrice in a
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Another, if
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Said, shudd
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Replied, in l
The spectre

Terrible pity
Prove, as I

dumb

But Julian
'She is but

That faithfu
about,

Obedient to h
Which will

night
So bound to

loss—

Ev'n to the uttermost : in her behold
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,
Of all things upon earth the dearest to
me.'

Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.
And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again
Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,
And heard him muttering, 'So like, so
like ;

She never had a sister. I knew none.
Some cousin of his and hers—O God, so
like !'

And then he suddenly ask'd her if she
were,

She shook, and cast her eyes down, and
was dumb,

And then some other question'd if she
came

From foreign lands, and still she did not
speak.

Another, if the boy were hers : but she
To all their queries answer'd not a word,
Which made the amazement more, till
one of them

Said, shuddering, 'Her spectre !' But
his friend

Replied, in half a whisper, 'Not at least
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.
Terrible pity, if one so beautiful

Prove, as I almost dread to find her,
dumb !'

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd all :
'She is but dumb, because in her you see
That faithful servant whom we spoke
about,

Obedient to her second master now ;
Which will not last. I have here to-
night a guest

So bound to me by common love and
loss—

What ! shall I bind him more ? in his
behalf,

Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him
That which of all things is the dearest to me,
Not only showing ? and he himself pro-
nounced

That my rich gift is wholly mine to give.

'Now all be dumb, and promise all of
you

Not to break in on what I say by word
Or whisper, while I show you all my heart,'

And then began the story of his love
As here to-day, but not so wordily—

The passionate moment would not suffer
that—

Past thro' his visions to the burial ; thence
Down to this last strange hour in his own
hall ;

And then rose up, and with him all his
guests

Once more as by enchantment ; all but he,
Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell again,
And sat as if in chains—to whom he said :

'Take my free gift, my cousin, for your
wife ;

And were it only for the giver's sake,
And tho' she seem so like the one you
lost,

Yet cast her not away so suddenly,
Lest there be none left here to bring her
back :

I leave this land for ever.' Here he
ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one hand,
And bearing on one arm the noble babe,
He slowly brought them both to Lionel.
And there the widower husband and dead
wife

Rush'd each at each with a cry, that rather
seem'd

For some new death than for a life
renew'd ;
Whereat the very babe began to wail ;
At once they turn'd, and caught and
brought him in
To their charm'd circle, and, half-killing
him
With kisses, round him closed and claspt
again.
But Lionel, when at last he freed himself
From wife and child, and lifted up a face
All over glowing with the sun of life,
And love, and boundless thanks—the
sight of this
So frighted our good friend, that turning
to me
And saying, 'It is over : let us go'—
There were our horses ready at the doors—
We bade them no farewell, but mounting
these
He past for ever from his native land ;
And I with him, my Julian, back to mine.

LUCRETIVS.

LUCILIA, wedded to Lucretius, found
Her master cold ; for when the morning
flush
Of passion and the first embrace had died
Between them, tho' he lov'd her none the
less,
Yet often when the woman heard his foot
Return from pacings in the field, and ran
To greet him with a kiss, the master took
Small notice, or austere, for—his mind
Half buried in some weightier argument,
Or fancy-borne perhaps upon the rise
And long roll of the Hexameter—he past
To turn and ponder those three hundred
scrolls
Left by the Teacher whom he held divine.
She brook'd it not ; but wrathful, petulant,

Dreaming some rival, sought and found
a witch
Who brew'd the philtre which had power,
they said,
To lead an errant passion home again.
And this, at times, she mingle'd with his
drink,
And this destroy'd him ; for the wicked
broth
Confused the chemic labour of the blood,
And tickling the brute brain within the
man's
Made havock among those tender cells,
and check'd
His power to shape : he loathed himself ;
and once
After a tempest woke upon a morn
That mock'd him with returning calm,
and cried :

'Storm in the night ! for thrice I heard
the rain
Rushing ; and once the flash of a
thunderbolt—
Methought I never saw so fierce a fork—
Struck out the streaming mountain-side,
and show'd

A riotous confluence of watercourses
Blanching and billowing in a hollow of it,
Where all but yester-eve was dusty-dry.

'Storm, and what dreams, ye holy
Gods, what dreams !
For thrice I waken'd after dreams. Per-
chance
We do but recollect the dreams that come
Just ere the waking : terrible ! for it seem'd
A void was made in Nature ; all her bonds
Crack'd ; and I saw the flaring atom-
streams
And torrents of her myriad universe,
Ruining along the illimitable inane,
Fly on to clash together again, and make

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Now over a
Pointed its
shan
At all that
The fire tha
Shot out of
wok
'Is this
thing
Because I
dove

Another and another frame of things
For ever : that was mine, my dream, I
knew it—

Of and belonging to me, as the dog
With inward yelp and restless forefoot
plies

His function of the woodland : but the
next !

I thought that all the blood by Sylla shed
Came driving rainlike down again on
earth,

And where it dash'd the reddening mea-
dow, sprang

No dragon warriors from Cadmean teeth,
For these I thought my dream would show
to me,

But girls, Hetaïrai, curious in their art,
Hired animalisms, vile as those that made
The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies
worse

Than aught they fable of the quiet Gods.
And hands they mixt, and yell'd and round
me drove

In narrowing circles till I yell'd again
Half-suffocated, and sprang up, and saw—
Was it the first beam of my latest day ?

'Then, then, from utter gloom stood
out the breasts,
The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly a
sword

Now over and now under, now direct,
Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down
shamed

At all that beauty ; and as I stared, a fire,
The fire that left a roofless Ilion,
Shot out of them, and scorch'd me that I
woke.

'Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus,
thine,
Because I would not one of thine own
doves,

Not ev'n a rose, were offer'd to thee ?
thine,

Forgetful how my rich procemion makes
Thy glory fly along the Italian field,
In lays that will outlast thy Deity ?

'Deity ? nay, thy worshippers. My
tongue

Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of
these

Angers thee most, or angers thee at all ?
Nay, if thou be'st of those who, far aloof
From envy, hate and pity, and spite and
scorn,

Live the great life which all our greatest
fain

Would follow, center'd in eternal calm.

'Nay, if thou canst, O Goddess, like
ourselves

Touch, and be touch'd, then would I cry
to thee

To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender arms
Round him, and keep him from the lust
of blood

That makes a steaming slaughter-house of
Rome.

'Ay, but I meant not thee ; I meant
not her,

Whom all the pines of Ida shook to see
Slide from that quiet heaven of hers, and
tempt

The Trojan, while his neat-herds were
abroad ;

Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter
wept

Her Deity false in human-amorous tears ;
Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter
Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,
Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called
Calliope to grace his golden verse—
Ay, and this Kypri also—did I take

That popular name of thine to shadow
forth

The all-generating powers and genial heat
Of Nature, when she strikes thro' the
thick blood

Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs
are glad

Nosing the mother's udder, and the bird
Makes his heart voice amid the blaze of
flowers :

Which things appear the work of mighty
Gods.

'The Gods ! and if I go *my* work is left
Unfinish'd—if I go. The Gods, who
haunt

The lucid interspace of world and world,
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a
wind,

Nor ever falls the least white star of snow,
Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,
Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to
mar

Their sacred everlasting calm ! and such,
Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm,
Not such, nor all unlike it, man may
gain

Letting his own life go. The Gods, the
Gods !

If all be atoms, how then should the
Gods

Being atomic not be dissoluble,
Not follow the great law ? My master
held

That Gods there are, for all men so
believe.

I prest my footsteps into his, and meant
Surely to lead my Memmius in a train
Of flowery clauses onward to the proof
That Gods there are, and deathless.
Meant ? I meant ?

I have forgotten what I meant : my mind
Stumbles, and all my faculties are lamed.

'Look where another of our Gods, the
Sun,

Apollo, Delius, or of older use
All-seeing Hyperion—what you will—
Has mounted yonder ; since he never
sware,

Except his wrath were wreak'd on
wretched man,

That he would only shine among the dead
Hereafter ; tales ! for never yet on earth
Could dead flesh creep, or bits of roast-
ing ox

Moan round the spit—nor knows he what
he sees ;

King of the East altho' he seem, and girt
With song and flame and fragrance,
slowly lifts

His golden feet on those empurpled stairs
That climb into the windy halls of
heaven :

And here he glances on an eye new-born,
And gets for greeting but a wail of pain ;
And here he stays upon a freezing orb
That fain would gaze upon him to the
last ;

And here upon a yellow eyelid fall'n
And closed by those who mourn a friend
in vain,

Not thankful that his troubles are no
more.

And me, altho' his fire is on my face
Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can tell
Whether I mean this day to end myself,
Or lend an ear to Plato where he says,
That men like soldiers may not quit the
post

Allotted by the Gods : but he that holds
The Gods are careless, wherefore need he
care

Greatly for them, nor rather plunge at
once,

Being troubled, wholly out of sight, and
sink

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Past earthquake—ay, and gout and stone,
that break

Body toward death, and palsy, death-in-
life,

And wretched age—and worst disease of
all,

These prodigies of myriad nakednesses,
And twisted shapes of lust, unspeakable,
Abominable, strangers at my hearth

Not welcome, harpies miring every dish,
The phantom husks of something foully
done,

And fleeting thro' the boundless universe,
And blasting the long quiet of my breast
With animal heat and dire insanity?

'How should the mind, except it loved
them, clasp

These idols to herself? or do they fly
Now thinner, and now thicker, like the
flakes

In a fall of snow, and so press in, perforce
Of multitude, as 'crowds that in an hour
Of civic tumult jam the doors, and bear
The keepers down, and throng, their rags
and they

The basest, far into that council-hall
Where sit the best and stateliest of the
land?

'Can I not fling this horror off me
again,

Seeing with how great ease Nature can
smile,

Balmier and nobler from her bath of
storm,

At random ravage? and how easily
The mountain there has cast his cloudy
slough,

Now towering o'er him in serenest air,
A mountain o'er a mountain,—ay, and
within

All hollow as the hopes and fears of men?

'But who was he, that in the garden
snared

Picus and Faunus, rustic Gods? a tale
To laugh at—more to laugh at in myself—

For look! what is it? there? yon arbutus
Totters; a noiseless riot underneath

Strikes through the wood, sets all the tops
quivering—

The mountain quickens into Nymph and
Faun;

And here an Oread—how the sun delights
To glance and shift about her slippery
sides,

And rosy knees and supple roundedness,
And budded bosom-peaks—who this way
runs

Before the rest—A satyr, a satyr, see,
Follows; but him I proved impossible;

Twy-natured is no nature: yet he draws
Nearer and nearer, and I scan him now

Beastlier than any phantom of his kind
That ever butted his rough brother-brute

For lust or lusty blood or provender:
I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him; and she

Loathes him as well; such a precipitate
heel,

Fledged as it were with Mercury's ankle-
wing,

Whirls her to me: but will she fling herself,
Shameless upon me? Catch her, goat-
foot: nay,

Hide, hide them, million-myrtled wilder-
ness,

And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide! do
I wish—

What?—that the bush were leafless? or to
whelm

All of them in one massacre? O ye Gods,
I know you careless, yet, behold, to you

From childly wont and ancient use I call—
I thought I lived securely as yourselves—

No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-
spite,

No madness of ambition, avarice, none :
No larger feast than under plane or pine
With neighbours laid along the grass, to
take

Only such cups as left us friendly-warm,
Affirming each his own philosophy—
Nothing to mar the sober majesties
Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life,
But now it seems some unseen monster lays
His vast and filthy hands upon my will,
Wrenching it backward into his; and
spoils

My bliss in being; and it was not great;
For save when shutting reasons up in
rhythm,

Or Heliconian honey in living words,
To make a truth less harsh, I often grew
Tired of so much within our little life,
Or of so little in our little life—
Poor little life that toddles half an hour
Crown'd with a flower or two, and there
an end—

And since the nobler pleasure seems to
fade,

Why should I, beastlike as I find myself,
Not manlike end myself?—our privilege—
What beast has heart to do it? And what
man,

What Roman would bedragg'd in triumph
thus?

Not I; not he, who bears one name with
her

Whose death-blow struck the dateless
doom of kings,

When, brooking not the Tarquin in her
veins,

She made her blood in sight of Collatine
And all his peers, flushing the guiltless air,
Spout from the maiden fountain in her
heart.

And from it sprang the Commonwealth,
which breaks

As I am breaking now!

‘And therefore now
Let her, that is the womb and tomb of all,
Great Nature, take, and forcing far apart
Those blind beginnings that have made
me man,

Dash them anew together at her will
Thro’ all her cycles—into man once more,
Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent flower :
But till this cosmic order everywhere
Shatter’d into one earthquake in one day
Cracks all to pieces,—and that hour
perhaps

Is not so far when momentary man
Shall seem no more a something to himself,
But he, his hopes and hates, his homes
and fanes,

And even his bones long laid within the
grave,

The very sides of the grave itself shall
pass,

Vanishing, atom and void, atom and void,
Into the unseen for ever,—till that hour,
My golden work in which I told a truth
That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel,
And numbs the Fury’s ringlet-snake, and
plucks

The mortal soul from out immortal hell,
Shall stand : ay, surely : then it fails at
last

And perishes as I must; for O Thou,
Passionless bride, divine Tranquillity,
Yearn’d after by the wisest of the wise,
Who fail to find thee, being as thou art
Without one pleasure and without one
pain,

Howbeit I know thou surely must be
mine

Or soon or late, yet out of season, thus
I woo thee roughly, for thou carest not
How roughly men may woo thee so they
win—

Thus—thus : the soul flies out and dies in
the air,’

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<p>With that he drove the knife into his side: She heard him raging, heard him fall; ran in, Beat breast, tore hair, cried out upon herself As having fail'd in duty to him, shriek'd</p>	<p>That she but meant to win him back, fell on him, Clasp'd, kiss'd him, wail'd: he answer'd, 'Care not thou! Thy duty? What is duty? Fare thee well!</p>
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THE PRINCESS; A MEDLEY.

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PROLOGUE.

SIR Walter Vivian all a summer's day
 Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun
 Up to the people: thither flock'd at
 noon
 His tenants, wife and child, and thither
 half
 The neighbouring borough with their
 Institute
 Of which he was the patron. I was there
 From college, visiting the son,—the son
 A Walter too,—with others of our set,
 Five others: we were seven at Vivian-
 place.

And me that morning Walter show'd
 the house,
 Greek, set with busts: from vases in the
 hall
 Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier than
 their names,
 Grew side by side; and on the pavement
 lay
 Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the
 park,
 Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of
 Time;
 And on the tables every clime and age

Jumbled together; celts and calumets,
 Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava,
 fans
 Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,
 Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,
 The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-
 clubs
 From the isles of palm: and higher on
 the walls,
 Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and
 deer,
 His own forefathers' arms and armour
 hung.

And 'this' he said 'was Hugh's at
 Agincourt;
 And that was old Sir Ralph's at Ascalon:
 A good knight he! we keep a chronicle
 With all about him'—which he brought,
 and I
 Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt with
 knights,
 Half-legend, half-historic, counts and
 kings
 Who laid about them at their wills and
 died;
 And mixt with these, a lady, one that
 arm'd

Her own fair head, and sallying thro' the
gate,
Had beat her foes with slaughter from her
walls.

'O miracle of women,' said the book,
'O noble heart who, being strait-besieged
By this wild king to force her to his wish,
Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a soldier's
death,

But now when all was lost or seem'd as
lost—

Her stature more than mortal in the burst
Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on fire—
Brake with a blast of trumpets from the
gate,

And, falling on them like a thunderbolt,
She trampled some beneath her horses'
heels,

And some were whelm'd with missiles of
the wall,

And some were push'd with lances from
the rock,

And part were drown'd within the whirling
brook :

O miracle of noble womanhood !'

So sang the gallant glorious chronicle ;
And, I all rapt in this, 'Come out,' he
said,

'To the Abbey : there is Aunt Elizabeth
And sister Lilia with the rest.' We went
(I kept the book and had my finger in it)
Down thro' the park : strange was the
sight to me ;

For all the sloping pasture murmur'd,
sown

With happy faces and with holiday.

There moved the multitude, a thousand
heads ;

The patient leaders of their Institute
Taught them with facts. One rear'd a
font of stone

And drew, from butts of water on the
slope,

The fountain of the moment, playing now
A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,
Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded ball
Danced like a wisp : and somewhat lower
down

A man with knobs and wires and vials
fired

A cannon : Echo answer'd in her sleep
From hollow fields : and here were tele-
scopes

For azure views ; and there a group of
girls

In circle waited, whom the electric shock
Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter :
round the lake

A little clock-work steamer paddling plied
And shook the lilies : perch'd about the
knolls

A dozen angry models jettied steam :

A petty railway ran : a fire-balloon

Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves

And dropt a fairy parachute and past :

And there thro' twenty posts of telegraph

They flash'd a saucy message to and fro

Between the mimic stations ; so that sport

Went hand in hand with Science ; other-
where

Pure sport : a herd of boys with clamour
bowl'd

And stump'd the wicket ; babies roll'd
about

Like tumbled fruit in grass ; and men and
maids

Arranged a country dance, and flew thro'
light

And shadow, while the twangling violin
Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and over-
head

The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime
Made noise with bees and breeze from
end to end.

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Strange was the sight and smacking of
the time ;
And long we gazed, but satiated at length
Came to the ruins. High-arch'd and ivy-
claspt,
Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire,
Thro' one wide chasm of time and frost
they gave
The park, the crowd, the house ; but all
within
The sword was trim as any garden lawn :
And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,
And Lilia with the rest, and lady friends
From neighbour seats : and there was
Ralph himself,
A broken statue propt against the wall,
As gay as any. Lilia, wild with sport,
Half child half woman as she was, had
wound
A scarf of orange round the stony helm,
And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,
That made the old warrior from his ivied
nook
Glow like a sunbeam : near his tomb a
feast
Shone, silver-set ; about it lay the guests,
And there we join'd them : then the
maiden Aunt
Took this fair day for text, and from it
preach'd
An universal culture for the crowd,
And all things great ; but we, unworthier,
told
Of college : he had climb'd across the
spikes,
And he had squeezed himself betwixt the
bars,
And he had breath'd the Proctor's dogs ;
and one
Discuss'd his tutor, rough to common men,
But honeying at the whisper of a lord ;
And one the Master, as a rogue in grain
Veneer'd with sanctimonious theory.

But while they talk'd, above their heads
I saw
The feudal warrior lady-clad ; which
brought
My book to mind : and opening this I
read
Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that rang
With tilt and tourney ; then the tale of
her
That drove her foes with slaughter from
her walls,
And much I praised her nobleness, and
'Where,'
Ask'd Walter, patting Lilia's head (she lay
Beside him) 'lives there such a woman
now ?'
Quick answer'd Lilia 'There are thou-
sands now
Such women, but convention beats them
down :
It is but bringing up ; no more than that :
You men have done it : how I hate you
all !
Ah, were I something great ! I wish I
were
Some mighty poetess, I would shame you
then,
That love to keep us children ! O I wish
That I were some great princess, I would
build
Far off from men a college like a man's,
And I would teach them all that men are
taught ;
We are twice as quick !' And here she
shook aside
The hand that play'd the patron with her
curls.
And one said smiling ' Pretty were the
sight
If our old halls could change their sex,
and flaunt

With prudes for proctors, dowagers for
deans,
And sweet girl-graduates in their golden
hair.

I think they should not wear our rusty
gowns,

But move as rich as Emperor-moths, or
Ralph

Who shines so in the corner; yet I fear,
If there were many Lillas in the brood,
However deep you might embower the
nest,

Some boy would spy it.'

At this upon the sword

She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot :

'That's your light way; but I would make
it death

For any male thing but to peep at us.'

Petulant she spoke, and at herself she
laugh'd ;

A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,
And sweet as English air could make her,
she :

But Walter hail'd a score of names upon
her,

And 'petty Ogress,' and 'ungrateful
Puss,'

And swore he long'd at college, only
long'd,

All else was well, for she-society.

They boated and they cricketed; they
talk'd

At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics ;

They lost their weeks; they vexed the souls
of deans ;

They rode; they betted; made a hundred
friends,

And caught the blossom of the flying terms,
But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-place,

The little hearth-flower Lillia. Thus he
spoke,

Part banter, part affection.

'True,' she said,
'We doubt not that. O yes, you miss'd
us much.

I'll stake my ruby ring upon it you did.'

She held it out; and as a parrot turns
Up thro' gilt wires a crafty loving eye,
And takes a lady's finger with all care,
And bites it for true heart and not for
harm,

So he with Lillia's. Daintily she shriek'd
And wrung it. 'Doubt my word again !'
he said.

'Come, listen ! here is proof that you were
miss'd :

We seven stay'd at Christmas up to read ;
And there we took one tutor as to read :
The hard-grain'd Muses of the cube and
square

Were out of season : never man, I think,
So moulder'd in a sinecure as he :

For while our cloisters echo'd frosty feet,
And our long walks were stript as bare as
brooms,

We did but talk you over, pledge you all
In wassail; often, like as many girls—

Sick for the hollies and the yews of home—
As many little trifling Lillas—play'd
Charades and riddles as at Christmas here,
And *what's my thought* and *when* and
where and *how*,

And often told a tale from mouth to mouth
As here at Christmas.'

She remember'd that :
A pleasant game, she thought : she liked
it more

Than magic music, forfeits, all the rest.
But these—what kind of tales did men
tell men,

She wonder'd, by themselves?

A half-disdain
Perch'd on the pouted blossom of her lips :
And Walter nodded at me; 'He began,

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I answer'd

Seven and

drea

Heroic see

The rest would follow, each in turn ; and
so
We forged a sevenfold story. Kind ?
what kind ?
Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas solecisms,
Seven-headed monsters only made to
kill

Time by the fire in winter.'

'Kill him now,
The tyrant ! kill him in the summer too,'
Said Lilia ; 'Why not now ?' the maiden
Aunt.

'Why not a summer's as a winter's tale ?
A tale for summer as befits the time,
And something it should be to suit the
place

Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,
Grave, solemn !'

Walter warp'd his mouth at this
To something so mock-solemn, that I
laugh'd

And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling
mirth

An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,
Hid in the ruins ; till the maiden Aunt
(A little sense of wrong had touch'd her
face

With colour) turn'd to me with 'As you
will ;

Heroic if you will, or what you will,
Or be yourself your hero if you will.'

'Take Lilia, then, for heroine' clam-
our'd he,

'And make her some great Princess, six
feet high,

Grand, epic, homicidal ; and be you
The Prince to win her !'

'Then follow me, the Prince,'
I answer'd, 'each be hero in his turn !
Seven and yet one, like shadows in a
dream.—

Heroic seems our Princess as required—

But something made to suit with Time and
place,

A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,
A talk of college and of ladies' rights,
A feudal knight in silken masquerade,
And, yonder, shrieks and strange experi-
ments

For which the good Sir Ralph had burnt
them all—

This *were* a medley ! we should have him
back

Who told the 'Winter's tale' to do it for
us.

No matter : we will say whatever comes.
And let the ladies sing us, if they will,
From time to time, some ballad or a song
To give us breathing-space.'

So I began,
And the rest follow'd : and the women
sang

Between the rougher voices of the men,
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind :
And here I give the story and the songs.

I.

A PRINCE I was, blue-eyed, and fair in
face,

Of temper amorous, as the first of May,
With lengths of yellow ringlets, like a girl,
For on my cradle shone the Northern star.

There lived an ancient legend in our
house.

Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grandsire
burnt

Because he cast no shadow, had foretold,
Dying, that none of all our blood should
know

The shadow from the substance, and that
one

Should come to fight with shadows and
to fall.

For so, my mother said, the story ran.
And, truly, waking dreams were, more or
less,

An old and strange affection of the house,
Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven
knows what :

On a sudden in the midst of men and
day,

And while I walk'd and talk'd as hereto-
fore,

I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts,
And feel myself the shadow of a dream.

Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-
head cane,

And paw'd his beard, and mutter'd 'cata-
lepsy.'

My mother pitying made a thousand
prayers ;

My mother was as mild as any saint,
Half-canonized by all that look'd on her,

So gracious was her tact and tenderness :
But my good father thought a king a king ;

He cared not for the affection of the house ;
He held his sceptre like a pedant's wand

To lash offence, and with long arms and
hands

Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders from
the mass

For judgment.

Now it chanced that I had been,
While life was yet in bud and blade,
betroth'd

To one, a neighbouring Princess : she to
me

Was proxy-wedded with a bootless calf
At eight years old ; and still from time
to time

Came murmurs of her beauty from the
South,

And of her brethren, youths of puissance ;
And still I wore her picture by my heart,
And one dark tress ; and all around them
both

Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees
about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I
should wed,
My father sent ambassadors with furs
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her : these
brought back

A present, a great labour of the loom ;
And therewithal an answer vague as wind :
Besides, they saw the king ; he took the
gifts ;

He said there was a compact ; that was
true :

But then she had a will ; was he to
blame ?

And maiden fancies ; loved to live alone
Among her women ; certain, would not
wed.

That morning in the presence room I
stood
With Cyril and with Florian, my two
friends :

The first, a gentleman of broken means
(His father's fault) but given to starts and
bursts

Of revel ; and the last, my other heart,
And almost my half-self, for still we moved
Together, twinn'd as horse's ear and eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my
father's face
Grow long and troubled like a rising
moon,

Inflamed with wrath : he started on his
feet,

Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down,
and rent

The wonder of the loom thro' warp and
woof

From skirt to skirt ; and at the last he
sware

That he would send a hundred thousand
men,
And bring her in a whirlwind : then he
chew'd
The thrice-turn'd cud of wrath, and
cook'd his spleen,
Communing with his captains of the war.

At last I spoke. 'My father, let me go.
It cannot be but some gross error lies
In this report, this answer of a king,
Whom all men rate as kind and hospitable :

Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,
Whate'er my grief to find her less than
fame,
May rue the bargain made.' And Florian
said :

'I have a sister at the foreign court,
Who moves about the Princess ; she, you
know,
Who wedded with a nobleman from
thence :

He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,
The lady of three castles in that land :
Thro' her this matter might be sifted
clean.'

And Cyril whisper'd : 'Take me with
you too.'

Then laughing 'what, if these weird
seizures come
Upon you in those lands, and no one near
To point you out the shadow from the
truth !

Take me : I'll serve you better in a strait ;
I grate on rusty hinges here : ' but 'No !'
Roar'd the rough king, 'you shall not ;
we ourself

Will crush her pretty maiden fancies dead
In iron gauntlets : break the council up.'

But when the council broke, I rose and
past

Thro' the wild woods that hung about the
town ;
Found a still place, and pluck'd her like-
ness out ;

Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it lying
bathed

In the green gleam of dewy-tassell'd trees :
What were those fancies ? wherefore
break her troth ?

Proud look'd the lips : but while I medi-
tated

A wind arose and rush'd upon the South,
And shook the songs, the whispers, and
the shrieks

Of the wild woods together ; and a Voice
Went with it, ' Follow, follow, thou shalt
win.'

Then, ere the silver sickle of that month
Became her golden shield, I stole from
court

With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived,
Cat-footed thro' the town and half in
dread

To hear my father's clamour at our backs
With Ho ! from some bay-window shake
the night ;

But all was quiet : from the bastion'd
walls

Like threaded spiders, one by one, we
dropt,

And flying reach'd the frontier : then we
crost

To a livelier land ; and so by tilth and
grange,

And vines, and blowing bosks of wilder-
ness,

We gain'd the mother-city thick with
towers,

And in the imperial palace found the king.

His name was Gama ; crack'd and small
his voice,

THE PRINCESS; A MEDLEY.

But bland the smile that like a writhing
 wind
 On glassy water drove his cheek in lines ;
 A little dry old man, without a star,
 Not like a king : three days he feasted us,
 And on the fourth I spake of why we
 came,
 And my betroth'd. ' You do us, Prince,'
 he said,
 Airing a snowy hand and signet gem,
 ' All honour. We remember love our-
 selves
 In our sweet youth : there did a compact
 pass
 Long summers back, a kind of cere-
 mony -
 I think the year in which our olives fail'd.
 I would you had her, Prince, with all my
 heart,
 With my full heart : but there were
 widows here,
 Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady
 Blanche ;
 They fed her theories, in and out of place
 Maintaining that with equal husbandry
 The woman were an equal to the man.
 They harp'd on this ; with this our ban-
 quets rang ;
 Our dances broke and buzz'd in knots of
 talk ;
 Nothing but this ; my very ears were hot
 To hear them : knowledge, so my daugh-
 ter held,
 Was all in all : they had but been, she
 thought,
 As children ; they must lose the child,
 assume
 The woman : then, Sir, awful odes she
 wrote,
 Too awful, for what they treated of,
 But all she said does is awful ; odes
 About this losing of the child ; and rhymes
 And dismal lyrics, prophesying change

Beyond all reason : these the women
 sang ;
 And they that know such things—I sought
 but peace ;
 No critic I—would call them master
 pieces :
 They master'd me. At last she begg'd a
 boon,
 A certain summer-palace which I have
 Hard by your father's frontier : I said no,
 Yet being an easy man, gave it : and
 there,
 All wild to found an University
 For maidens, on the spur she fled ; and
 more
 We know not,—only this : they see no
 men,
 Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the twins
 Her brethren, tho' they love her, look
 upon her
 As on a kind of paragon ; and I
 (Pardon me saying it) were much loth to
 breed
 Dispute betwixt myself and mine : but
 since
 (And I confess with right) you think me
 bound
 In some sort, I can give you letters to
 her ;
 And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your
 chance
 Almost at naked nothing.
 I thus the king ;
 And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to
 slur
 With garrulous ease and oily courtesies
 Our formal compact, yet, not less (all
 frets
 But chafing me on fire to find my bride)
 Went forth again with both my friends.
 We rode
 Many a long league back to the North.
 At last

From hills, that look'd across a land of
hope,

We dropt with evening on a rustic town
Set in a gleaming river's crescent-curve,
Close at the boundary of the liberties ;
There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd mine
host

To council, plied him with his richest
wines,
And show'd the late-writ letters of the king.

He with a long low sibilation, stared
As blank as death in marble ; then ex-
claim'd

Averting it was clear against all rules
For any man to go : but as his brain
Began to mellow, 'If the king,' he said,
'Had given us letters, was he bound to
speak ?

The king would bear him out ;' and at
the last—

The summer of the vine in all his veins—
'No doubt that we might make it worth
his while.

She once had past that way ; he heard
her speak ;

She scared him ; life ! he never saw the
like ;

She look'd as grand as doomsday and as
grave :

And he, he revered his liege-lady
there ;

He always made a point to post with
mares ;

His daughter and his housemaid were the
boys :

The land, he understood, for miles about
Was til'd by women ; all the swine were
sows,

And all the dogs'—

But while he jested thus,
A thought flash'd thro' me which I clothed
in act,

Remembering how we three presented
Maid

Or Nymph, or Goddess, at high tide of
feast,

In masque or pageant at my father's
court.

We sent mine host to purchase female
gear ;

He brought it, and himself, a sight to
shake

The midriff of despair with laughter, help
To lace us up, till, each, in maiden plumes

We rustled : him we gave a costly bribe
To guerdon silence, mounted our good
steeds,

And boldly ventured on the liberties.

We follow'd up the river as we rode,
And rode till midnight when the college
lights

Began to glitter firefly-like in copse
And linden alley : then we past an arch,

Whereon a woman-statue rose with wings
From four wing'd horses dark against the
stars ;

And some inscription ran along the front,
But deep in shadow : further on we gain'd
A little street half garden and half house ;

But scarce could hear each other speak
for noise

Of clocks and chimes, like silver hammers
falling

On silver anvils, and the splash and stir
Of fountains spouted up and showering
down

In meshes of the jasmine and the rose :
And all about us peal'd the nightingale,

Rapt in her song, and careless of the snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a sign,
By two sphere lamps blazon'd like Heaven
and Earth

With constellation and with continent,

Above an entry: riding in, we call'd;
 A plump-arm'd Ostleress and a stable
 wench
 Came running at the call, and help'd us
 down.
 Then stept a buxom hostess forth, and
 sail'd,
 Full-blown, before us into rooms which
 gave
 Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost
 In laurel: her we ask'd of that and this,
 And who were tutors. 'Lady Blanche'
 she said,
 'And Lady Psyche.' 'Which was
 prettiest,
 Best-natured?' 'Lady Psyche.' 'Hers
 are we,'
 One voice, we cried; and I sat down and
 wrote,
 In such a hand as when a field of corn
 Bows all its ears before the roaring
 East;
 'Three ladies of the Northern empire
 pray
 Your Highness would enroll them with
 your own,
 As Lady Psyche's pupils.'

This I seal'd:

The seal was Cupid bent above a scroll,
 And o'er his head Uranian Venus hung,
 And raised the blinding bandage from his
 eyes:
 I gave the letter to be sent with dawn;
 And then to bed, where half in doze I
 seem'd
 To float about a glimmering night, and
 watch
 A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight,
 swell
 On some dark shore just seen that it was
 rich.

II.

As thro' the land at eve we went,
 And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
 We fell out, my wife and I,
 O we fell out I know not why,
 And kiss'd again with tears.
 And blessings on the falling out
 That all the more endears,
 When we fall out with those we love
 And kiss again with tears!
 For when we came where lies the child
 We lost in other years,
 There above the little grave,
 O there above the little grave,
 We kiss'd again with tears.

At break of day the College Portress
 came:
 She brought us Academic silks, in hue
 The lilac, with a silken hood to each,
 And zon'd with gold; and now when
 these were on,
 And we as rich as moths from dusk cocoons,
 She, curtsying her obeisance, let us know
 The Princess Ida waited: out we paced,
 I first, and following thro' the porch that
 sang
 All round with laurel, issued in a court
 Compact of lucid marbles, boss'd with
 lengths
 Of classic frieze, with ample awnings gay
 Betwixt the pillars, and with great urns of
 flowers.
 The Muses and the Graces, group'd in
 threes,
 Enring'd a billowing fountain in the midst;
 And here and there on lattice edges lay
 Or book or lute; but hastily we past,
 And up a flight of stairs into the hall.

There at a board by tome and paper sat,
 With two tame leopards couch'd beside
 her throne
 All beauty compass'd in a female form,
 The Princess; liker to the inhabitant
 Of some clear planet close upon the Sun,

Than our man's earth; such eyes were in
 her head,
 And so much grace and power, breathing
 down
 From over her arch'd brows, with every
 turn
 Lived thro' her to the tips of her long
 hands,
 And to her feet. She rose her height,
 and said :

 'We give you welcome: not without
 redound
 Of use and glory to yourselves ye come,
 The first-fruits of the stranger: aftertime,
 And that full voice which circles round
 the grave,
 Will rank you nobly, mingled up with me.
 What! are the ladies of your land so tall?'
 'We of the court' said Cyril. 'From
 the court'
 She answer'd, 'then ye know the Prince?'
 and he:
 'The climax of his age! as tho' there were
 One rose in all the world, your Highness
 that,
 He worships your ideal:' she replied:
 'We scarcely thought in our own hall to
 hear
 This barren verbiage, current among men,
 Light coin, the tinsel clink of compliment.
 Your flight from out your bookless wilds
 would seem
 As arguing love of knowledge and of
 power;
 Your language proves you still the child.
 Indeed,
 We dream not of him: when we set our
 hand
 To this great work, we purposed with
 ourselves
 Never to wed. You likewise will do well,
 Ladies, in entering here, to cast and fling

The tricks, which make us toys of men,
 that s',
 Some future time, if so indeed you will,
 You may with those self-styled our lords
 ally
 Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale
 with scale.'

 At those high words, we conscious of
 ourselves,
 Perused the matting; then an officer
 Rose up, and read the statutes, such as
 these:
 Not for three years to correspond with
 home;
 Not for three years to cross the liberties;
 Not for three years to speak with any
 men;
 And many more, which hastily subscribed,
 We enter'd on the boards: and 'Now,'
 she cried,
 'Ye are green wood, see ye warp not.
 Look, our hall!
 Our statues!—not of those that men
 desire,
 Sleek Odalises, or oracles of mode,
 Nor stunted squaws of West or East; but
 she
 That taught the Sabine how to rule, and
 she
 The foundress of the Babylonian wall,
 The Carian Artemisia strong in war,
 The Rhodope, that built the pyramid,
 Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene
 That fought Aurelian, and the Roman
 brows
 Of Agrippina. Dwell with these, and lose
 Convention, since to look on noble forms
 Makes noble thro' the sensuous organism
 That which is higher. O lift your natures
 up:
 Embrace our aims: work out your free-
 dom. Girls,

Knowledge is now no more a fountain
seal'd :

Drink deep, until the habits of the slave,
The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite
And slander, die. Better not be at all
Than not benoble. Leave us : you may go :
To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue
The fresh arrivals of the week before ;
For they press in from all the provinces,
And fill the hive.'

She spoke, and bowing waved
Dismissal : back again we crost the court
To Lady Psyche's : as we enter'd in,
There sat along the forms, like morning
doves

That sun their milky bosoms on the thatch,
A patient range of pupils ; she herself
Erect behind a desk of satin-wood,
A quick brunette, well-moulded, falcon-
eyed,

And on the hither side, or so she look'd,
Of twenty summers. At her left, a child,
In shining draperies, headed like a star,
Her maiden babe, a double April old,
Aglaia slept. We sat : the Lady
glanced :

Then Florian, but no livelier than the
dame

That whisper'd 'Asses' ears,' among the
sedge,

'My sister.' 'Comely, too, by all that's
fair,'

Said Cyril. 'O hush, hush!' and she
began.

'This world was once a fluid haze of
light,

Till toward the centre set the starry
tides,

And eddied into suns, that wheeling cast
The planets : then the monster, then the
man ;

Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in skins,

Raw from the prime, and crushing down
his mate ;

As yet we find in barbarous isles, and here
Among the lowest.'

Thereupon she took
A bird's-eye-view of all the ungracious past ;
Glanced at the legendary Amazon

As emblematic of a nobler age ;
Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke of
those

That lay at wine with Lar and Lucumo ;
Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Roman
lines

Of empire, and the woman's state in each,
How far from just ; till warming with her
theme

She fulminated out her scorn of laws Salique
And little-footed China, touch'd on Maho-
met

With much contempt, and came to
chivalry :

When some respect, however slight, was
paid

To woman, superstition all awry :
However then commenced the dawn : a
beam

Had slanted forward, fallen in a land
Of promise ; fruit would follow. Deep,
indeed,

Their debt of thanks to her who first had
dared

To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,
Disyoke their necks from custom, and assert
None lordlier than themselves but that
which made

Woman and man. She had founded ;
they must build.

Here might they learn whatever men were
taught :

Let them not fear : some said their heads
were less ;

Some men's were small ; not they the
least of men ;

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For often fineness compensated size :
 Besides the brain was like the hand, and
 grew
 With using ; thence the man's, if more
 was more ;

He took advantage of his strength to be
 First in the field : some ages had been lost ;
 But woman ripen'd earlier, and her life
 Was longer ; and albeit their glorious
 names

Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since in
 truth

The highest is the measure of the man,
 And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay,
 Nor those horn-handed breakers of the
 glebe,

But Homer, Plato, Verulam ; even so
 With woman : and in arts of government
 Elizabeth and others ; arts of war
 The peasant Joan and others ; arts of
 grace

Sappho and others vied with any man :
 And, last not least, she who had left her
 place,

And bow'd her state to them, that they
 might grow

To use and power on this Oasis, lapt
 In the arms of leisure, sacred from the
 blight

Of ancient influence and scorn.

At last
 She rose upon a wind of prophecy
 Dilating on the future ; ' everywhere
 Two heads in council, two beside the
 hearth,

Two in the tangled business of the world,
 Two in the liberal offices of life,

Two plummets dropt for one to sound the
 abyss

Of science, and the secrets of the mind :
 Musician, painter, sculptor, critic, more ;
 And everywhere the broad and bounteous
 Earth

Should bear a double growth of those rare
 souls,

Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood of
 the world.'

She ended here, and beckon'd us : the
 rest

Parted ; and, glowing full-faced welcome,
 she

Began to address us, and was moving on
 In gratulation, till as when a boat

Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flaps, all her
 voice

Faltering and fluttering in her throat, she
 cried

'My brother !' 'Well, my sister.' 'O,'
 she said,

'What do you here ? and in this dress ?
 and these ?

Why who are these ? a wolf within the
 fold !

A pack of wolves ! the Lord be gracious
 to me !

A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all !'

'No plot, no plot,' he answer'd.
 'Wretched boy,

How saw you not the inscription on the
 gate,

LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF
 DEATH ?'

'And if I had,' he answer'd, 'who could
 think

The softer Adams of your Academe,
 O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were such
 As chanted on the blanching bones of
 men'

'But you will find it otherwise' she said.

'You jest : ill jesting with edge-tools !
 my vow

Binds me to speak, and O that iron will,
 That axelike edge unturnable, our Head,
 The Princess.' 'Well then, Psyche, take
 my life,

And nail me like a weasel on a grange
For warning : bury me beside the gate,
And cut this epitaph above my bones ;
*Here lies a brother by a sister slain,
All for the common good of womankind.*
'Let me die too,' said Cyril, 'having seen
And heard the Lady Psyche.'

I struck in :
'Albeit so mask'd, Madam, I love the
truth ;

Receive it ; and in me behold the Prince
Your countryman, affianced years ago
To the Lady Ida : here, for here she was,
And thus (what other way was left) I
came.'

'O Sir, O Prince, I have no country ;
none ;

If any, this ; but none. Whate'er I was
Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.
Affianced, Sir ? love-whispers may not
breathe

Within this vestal limit, and how should I,
Who am not mine, say, live : the thunder-
bolt

Hangs silent ; but prepare : I speak ; it
falls.'

'Yet pause,' I said : 'for that inscription
there,

I think no more of deadly lurks therein,
Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,
To scare the fowl from fruit : if more there
be,

If more and acted on, what follows ? war ;
Your own work marr'd : for this your
Academe,

Whichever side be Victor, in the halloo
Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass
With all fair theories only made to gild
A stormless summer.' 'Let the Princess
judge

Of that' she said : 'farewell, Sir—and to
you.

I shudder at the sequel, but I go.'

'Are you that Lady Psyche,' I rejoind,
'The fifth in line from that old Florian,
Yet hangs his portrait in my father's hall
(The gaunt old Baron with his beetle brow
Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)
As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he
fell,

And all else fled : we point to it, and we
say,

The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold,
But branches current yet in kindred veins.'

'Are you that Psyche,' Florian added ;
'she

With whom I sang about the morning
hills,

Flung ball, slew kite, and raced the purple
fly,

And snared the squirrel of the glen ? are
you

That Psyche, wont to bind my throbbing
brow,

To smoothe my pillow, mix the foaming
draught

Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read
My sickness down to happy dreams ? are
you

That brother-sister Psyche, both in one ?
You were that Psyche, but what are you
now ?

'You are that Psyche,' Cyril said, 'for
whom

I would be that for ever which I seem,
Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,
And glean your scatter'd sapience.'

Then once more,

'Are you that Lady Psyche,' I began,
'That on her bridal morn before she past
From all her old companions, when the
king

Kiss'd her pale cheek, declared that
ancient ties

Would still be dear beyond the southern
hills ;

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That were there any of our people there
In want or peril, there was one to hear
And help them : look ! for such are these
and I.'

'Are you that Psyche,' Florian ask'd,
'to whom,

In gentler days, your arrow-wounded fawn
Came flying while you sat beside the well ?
The creature laid his muzzle on your lap,
And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it, and
the blood

Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you
wept.

That was fawn's blood, not brother's, yet
you wept.

O by the bright head of my little niece,
You were that Psyche, and what are you
now ?'

'You are that Psyche,' Cyril said again,
'The mother of the sweetest little maid,
That ever crow'd for kisses.'

'Out upon it !'

She answer'd, 'peace ! and why should I
not play

The Spartan Mother with emotion, be

The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind ?

Him you call great : he for the common
weal,

The fading politics of mortal Rome,

As I might slay this child, if good need
were,

Slew both his sons : and I, shall I, on
whom

The secular emancipation turns

Of half this world, be swerved from right
to save

A prince, a brother ? a little will I yield.

Best so, perchance, for us, and well for
you.

O hard, when love and duty clash ! I fear

My conscience will not count me fleck-
less ; yet—

Hear my conditions : promise (otherwise

You perish) as you came, to slip away
To-day, to-morrow, soon : it shall be said,
These women were too barbarous, would
not learn ;
They fled, who might have shamed us :
promise, all.'

What could we else, we promised
each ; and she,
Like some wild creature newly-caged,
commenced

A to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused
By Florian ; holding out her lily arms
Took both his hands, and smiling faintly
said :

'I knew you at the first : tho' you have
grown

You scarce have alter'd : I am sad and
glad

To see you, Florian. I give thee to death
My brother ! it was duty spoke, not I.
My needful seeming harshness, pardon it.
Our mother, is she well ?'

With that she kiss'd

His forehead, then, a moment after, clung
About him, and betwixt them blossom'd
up

From out a common vein of memory
Sweet household talk, and phrases of the
hearth,

And far allusion, till the gracious dews
Began to glisten and to fall : and while
They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came a
voice,

'I brought a message here from Lady
Blanche.'

Back started she, and turning round we
saw

The Lady Blanche's daughter where she
stood,

Melissa, with her hand upon the lock,
A rosy blonde, and in a college gown,
That clad her like an April daffodilly

(Her mother's colour) with her lips apart,
And all her thoughts as fair within her
eyes,
As bottom agates seen to wave and float
In crystal currents of clear morning seas.

So stood that same fair creature at the
door.

Then Lady Psyche, 'Ah—Melissa—you!
You heard us?' and Melissa, 'O pardon
me

I heard, I could not help it, did not wish:
But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me not,
Nor think I bear that heart within my
breast,

To give three gallant gentlemen to death.'
'I trust you,' said the other, 'for we two
Were always friends, none closer, elm
and vine:

But yet your mother's jealous tempera-
ment—
Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse,
or prove

The Danaïd of a leaky vase, for fear
This whole foundation ruin, and I lose
My honour, these their lives. 'Ah, fear
me not'

Replied Melissa; 'no—I would not tell,
No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness,
No, not to answer, Madam, all those
hard things

That Sheba came to ask of Solomon.'
'Be it so' the other, 'that we still may
lead

The new light up, and culminate in peace,
For Solomon may come to Sheba yet.'
Said Cyril, 'Madam, he the wisest man
Feasted the woman wisest then, in halls
Of Lebanonian cedar: nor should you
(Tho' madam *you* should answer, *we*
would ask)

Less welcome find among us, if you came
Among us, debtors for our lives to you,

Myself for something more.' He said
not what,

But 'Thanks,' she answer'd 'Go: we
have been too long

Together; keep your hoods about the
face;

They do so that affect abstraction here.
Speak little; mix not with the rest; and
hold

Your promise: all, I trust, may yet be
well.'

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the
child,

And held her round the knees against his
waist,

And blew the swoll'n cheek of a trumpeter,
While Psyche watch'd them, smiling, and
the child

Push'd her flat hand against his face and
laugh'd;

And thus our conference closed.

And then we stroll'd
For half the day thro' stately theatres
Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we sat,
we heard

The grave Professor. On the lecture slate
The circle rounded under female hands
With flawless demonstration: follow'd
then

A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,
With scraps of thundrous Epic lilted out
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies
And quoted odes, and jewels five-words-
long

That on the stretch'd forefinger of all Time
Sparkle for ever: then we dipt in all
That treats of whatsoever is, the state,
The total chronicles of man, the mind,
The morals, something of the frame, the
rock,

The star, the bird, the fish, the shell, the
flower,

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Well,

Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,
 And whatsoever can be taught and known;
 Till like three horses that have broken
 fence,
 And glutted all night long breast-deep in
 corn,
 We issued gorged with knowledge, and I
 spoke :
 'Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as we.'
 'They hunt old trails' said Cyril 'very
 well ;
 But when did woman ever yet invent ?'
 'Ungracious !' answer'd Florian ; 'have
 you learnt
 No more from Psyche's lecture, you that
 talk'd
 The trash that made me sick, and almost
 sad ?'
 'O trash' he said, 'but with a kernel in it.
 Should I not call her wise, who made me
 wise ?
 And learnt ? I learnt more from her in a
 flash,
 Than if my brainpan were an empty hull,
 And every Muse tumbled a science in.
 A thousand hearts lie fallow in these halls,
 And round these halls a thousand baby
 loves
 Fly twanging headless arrows at the
 hearts,
 Whence follows many a vacant pang ;
 but O
 With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger boy,
 The Head of all the golden-shafted firm,
 The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche too ;
 He cleft me thro' the stomacher ; and now
 What think you of it, Florian ? do I chase
 The substance or the shadow ? will it hold ?
 I have no sorcerer's malison on me,
 No ghostly hauntings like his Highness. I
 Flatter myself that always everywhere
 I know the substance when I see it.
 Well,

Are castles shadows ? Three of them ?
 Is she
 The sweet proprietress a shadow ? If not,
 Shall those three castles patch my tatter'd
 coat ?
 For dear are those three castles to my
 wants,
 And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,
 And two dear things are one of double
 worth,
 And much I might have said, but that
 my zone
 Unmann'd me : then the Doctors ! O to
 hear
 The Doctors ! O to watch the thirsty
 plants
 Imbibing ! once or twice I thought to
 roar,
 To break my chain, to shake my mane :
 but thou,
 Modulate me, Soul of mincing mimicry !
 Make liquid treble of that bassoon, my
 throat ;
 Abase those eyes that ever loved to meet
 Star-sisters answering under crescent
 brows ;
 Abate the stride, which speaks of man,
 and loose
 A flying charm of blushes o'er this cheek,
 Where they like swallows coming out of
 time
 Will wonder why they came : but hark
 the bell
 For dinner, let us go !'
 And in we stream'd
 Among the columns, pacing staid and still
 By twos and threes, till all from end to
 end
 With beauties every shade of brown and
 fair
 In colours gayer than the morning mist,
 The long hall glitter'd like a bed of
 flowers.

How might a man not wander from his
wits
Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I kept
mine own
Intent on her, who rapt in glorious
dreams,
The second-sight of some Astræan age,
Sat compass'd with professors : they, the
while,
Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and fro :
A clamour thicken'd, mixt with inmost
terms
Of art and science : Lady Blanche alone
Of faded form and haughtiest lineaments,
With all her autumn tresses falsely brown,
Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-cat
In act to spring.

At last a solemn grace
Concluded, and we sought the gardens :
there
One walk'd reciting by herself, and one
In this hand held a volume as to read,
And smoothed a petted peacock down
with that :
Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,
Or under arches of the marble bridge
Hung, shadow'd from the heat : some hid
and sought
In the orange thickets : others tost a ball
Above the fountain-jets, and back again
With laughter : others lay about the
lawns,
Of the older sort, and murmur'd that
their May
Was passing : what was learning unto
them ?
They wish'd to marry ; they could rule a
house ;
Men hated learned women : but we three
Sat muffled like the Fates ; and often
came
Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts
Of gentle satire, kin to charity,

That harm'd not : then day droopt ; the
chapel bells
Call'd us : we left the walks ; we mixt
with those
Six hundred maidens clad in purest white,
Before two streams of light from wall to
wall,
While the great organ almost burst his
pipes,
Groaning for power, and rolling thro' the
court
A long melodious thunder to the sound
Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies,
The work of Ida, to call down from
Heaven
A blessing on her labours for the world.

III.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea !
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me ;
While my little one, while my pretty one,
sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon ;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon ;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon :
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one,
sleep.

MORN in the white wake of the morning
star
Came furrowing all the orient into gold.
We rose, and each by other drest with
care
Descended to the courts that lay three parts
In shadow, but the Muses' heads were
touch'd
Above the darkness from their native East.

There while we stood beside the fount,
and watch'd
Or seem'd to watch the dancing bubble,
approach'd
Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of
sleep,
Or grief, and glowing round her dewy eyes
The circled Iris of a night of tears;
'And fly,' she cried, 'O fly, while yet
you may!
My mother knows:' and when I ask'd
her 'how,'
'My fault' she wept 'my fault! and yet
not mine;
Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon
me.
My mother, 'tis her wont from night to
night
To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.
She says the Princess should have been
the Head,
Herself and Lady Psyche the two arms;
And so it was agreed when first they
came;
But Lady Psyche was the right hand now,
And she the left, or not, or seldom used;
Hers more than half the students, all the
love.
And so last night she fell to canvass you:
Her countrywomen! she did not envy her.
'Who ever saw such wild barbarians?
Girls?—more like men!' and at these
words the snake,
My secret, seem'd to stir within my
breast;
And oh, Sirs, could I help it, but my
check
Began to burn and burn, and her lynx eye
To fix and make me hotter, till she
laugh'd:
'O marvellously modest maiden, you!
Men! girls, like men! why, if they had
been men
You need not set your thoughts in rubric
thus
For wholesale comment." Pardon, I am
shamed
That I must needs repeat for my excuse
What looks so little graceful: "men"
(for still
My mother went revolving on the word)
"And so they are,—very like men in-
deed—
And with that woman closeted for hours!"
Then came these dreadful words out one
by one,
"Why—these—*are*—men:" I shudder'd:
"and you know it."
"O ask me nothing," I said: "And she
knows too,
And she conceals it." So my mother
clutch'd
The truth at once, but with no word from
me;
And now thus early risen she goes to
inform
The Princess: Lady Psyche will be
crush'd;
But you may yet be saved, and therefore
fly:
But heal me with your pardon ere you go.'
'What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a
blush?'
Said Cyril: 'Pale one, blush again:
than wear
Those lilies, better blush our lives away.
Yet let us breathe for one hour more in
Heaven'
He added, 'lest some classic Angel speak
In scorn of us, "They mounted, Gany-
medes,
To tumble, Vulcans, on the second morn."
But I will melt this marble into wax
To yield us father furlough:' and he
went.

<p>Melissa shook her doubtful curls, and thought He scarce would prosper. 'Tell us,' Florian ask'd, 'How grew this feud betwixt the right and left.' 'O long ago,' she said, 'betwixt these two Division smoulders hidden; 'tis my mother, Too jealous, often fretful as the wind Pent in a crevice: much I bear with her: I never knew my father, but she says (God help her) she was wedded to a fool; And still she rail'd against the state of things. She had the care of Lady Ida's youth, And from the Queen's decease she brought her up. But when your sister came she won the heart Of Ida: they were still together, grew (For so they said themselves) inosculated; Consonant chords that shiver to one note; One mind in all things: yet my mother still Affirms your Psyche thieved her theories, And angled with them for her pupil's love: She calls her plagiarist; I know not what: But I must go: I dare not tarry,' and light, As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled.</p> <p>Then murmur'd Florian gazing after her, 'An open-hearted maiden, true and pure. If I could love, why this were she: how pretty Her blushing was, and how she blush'd again, As if to close with Cyril's random wish:</p>	<p>Not like your Princess cramm'd with erring pride, Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags in tow.'</p> <p>'The crane,' I said, 'may chatter of the crane, The dove may murmur of the dove, but I An eagle clang an eagle to the sky here. My princess, O my princess! true she errs, But in her own grand way: being herself Three times more noble than three score of men, She sees herself in every woman else, And so she wears her error like a crown To blind the truth and me: for her, and her, Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix The nectar; but—ah she—whene'er she moves The Samian Herè rises and she speaks A Memnon smitten with the morning Sun.'</p> <p>So saying from the court we paced, and gain'd The terrace ranged along the Northern front, And leaning there on rose balusters, high Above the empurpled champaign, drank the gale That blown about the foliage underneath, And sated with the innumerable rose, Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither came Cyril, and yawning 'O hard task,' he cried; 'No fighting shadows here! I forced a way Thro' solid opposition crabb'd and gnarl'd. Better to clear prime forests, heave and thump</p>
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<p>A league of street in summer solstice down, Than hammer at this reverend gentle- woman. I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd; found her there At point to move, and settled in her eyes The green malignant light of coming storm. Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well- oil'd, As man's could be; yet maiden-meek I pray'd Concealment: she demanded who we were, And why we came? I fabled nothing fair, But, your example pilot, told her all. Up went the hush'd amaze of hand and eye. But when I dwelt upon your old affianc- e, She answer'd sharply that I talk'd astray. I urged the fierce inscription on the gate, And our three lives. True — we had lined ourselves With open eyes, and we must take the chance. But such extremes, I told her, well might harm The woman's cause. "Not more than now," she said, "So puddled as it is with favouritism." I tried the mother's heart. Shame might befall Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew: Her answer was "Leave me to deal with that." I spoke of war to come and many deaths, And she replied, her duty was to speak, And duty duty, clear of consequences. I grew discouraged, Sir; but since I knew No rock so hard but that a little wave May beat admission in a thousand years,</p>	<p>I recommenced; "Decide not ere you pause. I find you here but in the second place, Some say the third — the authentic found- ress you. I offer boldly: we will seat you highest: Wink at our advent: help my prince to gain His rightful bride, and here I promise you Some palace in our land, where you shall reign The head and heart of all our fair she- world, And your great name flow on with broad- ening time For ever." Well, she balanced this a little, And told me she would answer us to-day, Meantime be mute: thus much, nor more I gained. He ceasing, came a message from the Head. "That afternoon the Princess rode to take The dip of certain strata to the North. Would we go with her? we should find the land Worth seeing; and the river made a fall Out yonder:" then she pointed on to where A double hill ran up his furrowy forks Beyond the thick-leaved platans of the vale. Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro' all Its range of duties to the appointed hour. Then summon'd to the porch we went. She stood Among her maidens, higher by the head, Her back against a pillar, her foot on one Of those tame leopards. Kittenlike he roll'd</p>
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And paw'd about her sandal. I drew
near;

I gazed. On a sudden my strange seizure
came

Upon me, the weird vision of our house :
The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show,
Her gay-furr'd cats a painted fantasy,
Her college and her maidens, empty
masks,

And I myself the shadow of a dream,
For all things were and were not. Yet I
felt

My heart beat thick with passion and with
awe ;

Then from my breast the involuntary sigh
brake, as she smote me with the light of
eyes

That lent my knee desire to kneel, and
shook

My pulses, till to horse we got, and so
Went forth in long retinue following up
The river as it narrow'd to the hills.

I rode beside her and to me she said :
'O friend, we trust that you esteem'd us
not

Too harsh to your companion yesternorn ;
Unwillingly we spake.' 'No—not to
her,'

I answer'd, 'but to one of whom we spake
Your Highness might have seem'd the
thing you say.'

'Again?' she cried, 'are you ambassa-
dresses

From him to me? we give you, being
strange,

A license : speak, and let the topic die.'

I stammer'd that I knew him—could
have wish'd—

'Our king expects—was there no precon-
tract?

There is no truer-hearted—ah, you seem

All he prefigured, and he could not see
The bird of passage flying south but
long'd

To follow : surely, if your Highness keep
Your purport, you will shock him ev'n to
death,

Or baser courses, children of despair.'

'Poor boy,' she said, 'can he not read
—no books?

Quoit, tennis, ball—no games? nor deals
in that

Which men delight in, martial exercise?

To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,

Methinks he seems no better than a
girl ;

As girls were once, as we ourself have
been :

We had our dreams ; perhaps he mixt
with them :

We touch on our dead self, nor shun to
do it,

Being other—since we learnt our meaning
here,

To lift the woman's fall'n divinity

Upon an even pedestal with man.'

She paused, and added with a
haughtier smile

'And as to precontracts, we move, my
friend,

At no man's beck, but know ourself and
thee,

O Vashti, noble Vashti ! Summon'd out
She kept her state, and left the drunken
king

To brawl at Shushan underneath the
palms.'

'Alas your Highness breathes full
East,' I said,

'On that which leans to you. I know
the Prince,

I prize h
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You grant

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But children

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They with th
light

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Children—th

our h
Kill us with p

O—children-

I prize his truth : and then how vast a
work
To assail this gray præminence of man !
You grant me license ; might I use it ?
think ;
Ere half be done perchance your life may
fail ;
Then comes the feeblèr heiress of your
plan,
And takes and ruins all ; and thus your
pains
May only make that footprint upon sand
Which old-recurring waves of prejudice
Resmooth to nothing : might I dread that
you,
With only Fame for spouse and your great
deeds
For issue, yet may live in vain, and miss,
Meanwhile, what every woman counts her
due,
Love, children, happiness ?'
And she exclaim'd,
'Peace, you young savage of the Northern
wild !
What ! tho' your Prince's love were like
a God's,
Have we not made ourself the sacrifice ?
You are bold indeed : we are not talk'd
to thus :
Yet will we say for children, would they
grew
Like field-flowers everywhere ! we like
them well :
But children die ; and let me tell you, girl,
Howe'er you babble, great deeds cannot
die ;
They with the sun and moon renew their
light
For ever, blessing those that look on them.
Children—that men may pluck them from
our hearts,
Kill us with pity, break us with ourselves—
O—children—there is nothing upon earth

More miserable than she that has a son
And sees him err : nor would we work
for fame ;
Tho' she perhaps might reap the applause
of Great,
Who learns the one ROUS TO whence after-
hands
May move the world, tho' she herself effect
But little : wherefore up and act, nor shrink
For fear our solid aim be dissipated
By frail successors. Would, indeed, we
had been,
In lieu of many mortal flies, a race
Of giants living, each, a thousand years,
That we might see our own work out, and
watch
The sandy footprint harden into stone.'

I answer'd nothing, doubtful in myself
If that strange Poet-princess with her grand
Imaginations might at all be won.
And she broke out interpreting my
thoughts :

'No doubt we seem a kind of monster
to you ;
We are used to that : for women, up till
this
Cramè³,³ under worse than South-sea-isle
taboo,
Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fail so far
In high desire, they know not, cannot
guess
How much their welfare is a passion to us.
If we could give them surer, quicker
proof—
Oh if our end were less achievable
By slow approaches, than by single act
Of immolation, any phase of death,
We were as prompt to spring against the
pikes,
Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it,
To compass our dear sisters' liberties.'

<p>She bow'd as if to veil a noble tear ; And up we came to where the river sloped To plunge in cataract, shattering on black blocks A breadth of thunder. O'er it shook the woods, And danced the colour, and, below, stuck out The bones of some vast bulk that lived and roar'd Before man was. She gazed awhile and said, 'As these rude bones to us, are we to her That will be.' 'Dare we dream of that,' I ask'd, 'Which wrought us, as the workman and his work, 'That practice betters?' 'How,' she cried, 'you love The metaphysics ! read and earn our prize, A golden brooch : beneath an emerald plane Sits Diotima, teaching him that died Of hemlock ; our device ; wrought to the life ; She rapt upon her subject, he on her : For there are schools for all.' 'And yet' I said 'Methinks I have not found among them all One anatomic,' 'Nay, we thought of that,' She answer'd, 'but it pleased us not : in truth We shudder but to dream our maids should ape Those monstrous males that carve the living hound, And cram him with the fragments of the grave, Or in the dark dissolving human heart, And holy secrets of this microcosm, Dabbling a shameless hand with shame- ful jest,</p>	<p>Encarnalize their spirits : yet we know Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter hangs : Howbeit ourself, foreseeing casualty, Nor willing men should come among us, learnt, For many weary moons before we came, This craft of healing. Were you sick, ourself Would tend upon you. To your question now, Which touches on the workman and his work. Let there be light and there was light : 'tis so : For was, and is, and will be, are but is ; And all creation is one act at once, The birth of light : but we that are not all, As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that, And live, perforce, from thought to thought, and make One act a phantom of succession : thus Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow, Time ; But in the shadow will we work, and mould The woman to the fuller day.' She spake With kindled eyes : we rode a league beyond, And, o'er a bridge of pinewood crossing, came On flowery levels underneath the crag, Full of all beauty. 'O how sweet' I said (For I was half-oblivious of my mask) 'To linger here with one that loved us.' 'Yea,' She answer'd, 'or with fair philosophies That lift the fancy ; for indeed these fields Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian lawns, Where paced the Demigods of old, and saw</p>
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Amygdaloid
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The splendor
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And the w
Blow, bugle, blow
Blow, bugle ; a
dying.

The soft white vapour streak the crowned
towers
Built to the Sun : ' then, turning to her
maids,
' Pitch our pavilion here upon the sward ;
Lay out the viands.' At the word, they
raised
A tent of satin, elaborately wrought
With fair Corinna's triumph ; here she
stood,
Engirt with many a florid maiden-cheek,
The woman-conqueror ; woman conquer'd
there
The bearded Victor of ten-thousand
hymns,
And all the men mourn'd at his side ; but we
Set forth to climb ; then, climbing, Cyril
kept
With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I
With mine affianced. Many a little hand
Glanced like a touch of sunshine on the
rocks,
Many a light foot shone like a jewel set
In the dark crag : and then we turn'd,
we wound
About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,
Hammering and clinking, chattering stony
names
Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap
and tuff,
Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the Sun
Grew broader towards his death and fell,
and all
The rosy heights came out above the
lawns.

IV.

THE splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story :
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going !
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river :
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

' THERE sinks the nebulous star we call
the Sun,
If that hypothesis of theirs be sound '
Said Ida ; ' let us down and rest ; ' and we
Down from the lean and wrinkled precipices,
By every coppice-feather'd chasm and
cleft,
Dropt thro' the ambrosial gloom to where
below
No bigger than a glow-worm shone the tent
Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she lean'd
on me,
Descending ; once or twice she lent her
hand,
And blissful palpitations in the blood,
Stirring a sudden transport rose and fell.

But when we planted level feet, and dipt
Beneath the satin dome and enter'd in,
There leaning deep in broider'd down we
sank
Our elbows : on a tripod in the midst
A fragrant flame rose, and before us glow'd
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and
gold.

Then she, ' Let some one sing to us :
lightlier move
The minutes fledged with music : ' and a
maid,

<p>Of those beside her, smote her harp, and sang.</p> <p>‘Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean, Tears from the depth of some divine despair Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes, In looking on the happy Autumn-fields, And thinking of the days that are no more.</p> <p>‘Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail, That brings our friends up from the under-world, Sad as the last which reddens over one That sinks with all we love below the verge; So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.</p> <p>‘Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns The earliest pipe of half-awaken’d birds To dying ears, when unto dying eyes The casement slowly grows a glimmering square; So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.</p> <p>‘Dear as remember’d kisses after death, And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign’d On lips that are for others; deep as love, Deep as first love, and wild with all regret; O Death in Life, the days that are no more.’</p> <p>She ended with such passion that the tear, She sang of, shook and fell, an erring pearl Lost in her bosom: but with some disdain</p>	<p>Answer’d the Princess, ‘If indeed there haunt About the moulder’d lodges of the Past So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men, Well needs it we should cram our ears with wool And so pace by: but thine are fancies hatch’d In silken-folded idleness; nor is it Wiser to weep a true occasion lost, But trim our sails, and let old bygones be, While down the streams that float us each and all To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs of ice, Throne after throne, and molten on the waste Becomes a cloud: for all things serve their time Toward that great year of equal might and rights, Nor would I fight with iron laws, in the end Found golden: let the past be past; let be Their cancell’d Babels: tho’ the rough kex break The starr’d mosaic, and the beard-blown goat Hang on the shaft, and the wild figtree split Their monstrous idols, care not while we hear A trumpet in the distance pealing news Of better, and Hope, a poisoning eagle, burns Above the unrisen morrow:’ then to me; ‘Know you no song of your own land,’ she said, ‘Not such as moans about the retrospect, But deals with the other distance and the hues Of promise; not a death’s-head at the wine.’</p>
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Say to her, I
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made.

Then I remember'd one myself had
made,
What time I watch'd the swallow winging
south
From mine own land, part made long
since, and part
Now while I sang, and maidenlike as far
As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

'O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying
South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded
caves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

'O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest
each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the
South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

'O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow,
and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million
loves,

'O were I thou that she might take me
in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

'Why lingereth she to clothe her heart
with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are
green?

'O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is
flown :
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is
made.

'O tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the
South.

'O Swallow, flying from the golden
woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and
make her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.'

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at each,
Like the Ithacensian suitors in old time,
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd with
alien lips,
And knew not what they meant ; for still
my voice
Rang false : but smiling 'Not for thee,'
she said,

'O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan
Shall burst her veil : marsh-divers, rather,
maid,
Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-
crake
Grate her harsh kindred in the grass : and
this

A mere love-poem ! O for such, my friend,
We hold them slight : they mind us of
the time
When we made bricks in Egypt. Knaves
are men,

That lute and flute fantastic tenderness,
And dress the victim to the offering up.
And paint the gates of Hell with Paradise,
And play the slave to gain the tyranny.
Poor soul ! I had a maid of honour once ;
She wept her true eyes blind for such a
one,

A rogue of canzonets and serenades.
I loved her. Peace be with her. She is
dead.

So they blaspheme the muse ! But great
is song

Used to great ends : ourself have often
tried
Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have
dash'd
The passion of the prophetess ; for song
Is duer unto freedom, force and growth
Of spirit than to junketing and love.
Love is it ? Would this same mock-love,
and this
Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter
bats,
Till all men grew to rate us at our worth,
Not vassals to be beat, nor pretty babes
To be dandled, no, but living wills, and
sphered
Whole in ourselves and owed to none.
Enough !
But now to leaven play with profit, you,
Know you no song, the true growth of
your soil,
That gives the manners of your country-
women ?'

She spoke and turn'd her sumptuous
head with eyes
Of shining expectation fixt on mine.
Then while I dragg'd my brains for such
a song,
Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd glass
had wrought,
Or master'd by the sense of sport, began
To troll a careless, careless tavern-catch
Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences
Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded at
him,
I frowning ; Psyche flush'd and wann'd
and shook ;
The lilylike Melissa droop'd her brows ;
'Forbear,' the Princess cried ; 'Forbear,
Sir' I ;
And heated thro' and thro' with wrath
and love,
I smote him on the breast ; he started up ;

There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd ;
Melissa clamour'd 'Flee the death ;' 'To
horse'
Said Ida ; 'home ! to horse !' and fled, as
flies
A troop of snowy doves athwart the dusk,
When some one batters at the dove-cote-
doors,
Disorderly the women. Alone I stood
With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at heart,
In the pavilion : there like parting hopes
I heard them passing from me : hoof by
hoof,
And every hoof a knell to my desires,
Clang'd on the bridge ; and then another
shriek,
'The Head, the Head, the Princess, O
the Head !'
For blind with rage she miss'd the plank,
and roll'd
In the river. Out I sprang from glow to
gloom :
There whirl'd her white robe like a
blossom'd branch
Rapt to the horrible fall : a glance I gave,
No more ; but woman-vested as I was
Plunged ; and the flood drew ; yet I
caught her ; then
Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left
The weight of all the hopes of half the
world,
Strove to buffet to land in vain. A tree
Was half-disrooted from his place and
stoop'd
To drench his dark locks in the gurgling
wave
Mid-channel. Right on this we drove
and caught,
And grasping down the boughs I gain'd
the shore.

There stood her maidens glimmeringly
group'd

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Of lightest
Than female
gloom

In the hollow bank. One reaching
forward drew
My burthen from mine arms; they cried
'she lives :'
They bore her back into the tent : but I,
So much a kind of shame within me
wrought,
Not yet endured to meet her opening eyes,
Nor found my friends; but push'd alone
on foot
(For since her horse was lost I left her
mine)
Across the woods, and less from Indian
craft
Than beelike instinct hiveward, found at
length
The garden portals. Two great statues,
Art
And Science, Caryatids, lifted up
A weight of emblem, and betwixt were
valves
Of open-work in which the hunter rued
His rash intrusion, manlike, but his brows
Had sprouted, and the branches thereupon
Spread out at top, and grimly spiked the
gates.

A little space was left between the horns,
Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top with
pain,
Dropt on the sward, and up the linden
walks,
And, tost on thoughts that changed from
hue to hue,
Now poring on the glowworm, now the
star,
I paced the terrace, till the Bear had
wheel'd
Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns.

A step
Of lightest echo, then a loftier form
Than female, moving thro' the uncertain
gloom,

Disturb'd me with the doubt 'if this were
she,'
But it was Florian. 'Hist O Hist,' he
said,
'They seek us : out so late is out of rules.
Moreover "seize the strangers" is the cry.
How came you here?' I told him : 'I'
said he,
'Last of the train, a moral leper, I,
To whom none spake, half-sick at heart,
return'd.
Arriving all confused among the rest
With hooded brows I crept into the hall,
And, couch'd behind a Judith, underneath
The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw.
Girl after girl was call'd to trial : each
Disclaim'd all knowledge of us : last of all,
Melissa : trust me, Sir, I pitied her.
She, question'd if she knew us men, at first
Was silent ; closer prest, denied it not :
And then, demanded if her mother knew,
Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied :
From whence the Royal mind, familiar
with her,
Easily gather'd either guilt. She sent
For Psyche, but she was not there; she call'd
For Psyche's child to cast it from the
doors ;
She sent for Blanche to accuse her face to
face ;
And I slipt out : but whither will you now ?
And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are
fled :
What, if together? that were not so well.
Would rather we had never come ! I dread
His wildness, and the chances of the dark.'

'And yet,' I said, 'you wrong him more
than I
That struck him : this is proper to the
clown,
Tho' smock'd, or furr'd and purpled, still
the clown,

To harm the thing that trusts him, and to
shame
That which he says he loves : for Cyril,
howe'er
He deal in frolic, as to-night—the song
Might have been worse and sinn'd in
grosser lips

Beyond all pardon—as it is, I hold
These flashes on the surface are not he.
He has a solid base of temperament :
But as the waterlily starts and slides
Upon the level in little puffs of wind,
Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is he.'

Scarce had I ceased when from a
tamarisk near
Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying,
'Names :'

He, standing still, was clutch'd ; but I
began
To thrid the musky-circled mazes, wind
And double in and out the boles, and race
By all the fountains : fleet I was of foot :
Before me shower'd the rose in flakes ;
behind

I heard the puff'd pursuer ; at mine ear
Bubbled the nightingale and heeded not,
And secret laughter tickled all my soul.
At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine,
That claspt the feet of a Mnemosyne,
And falling on my face was caught and
known.

They haled us to the Princess where
she sat
High in the hall : above her droop'd a lamp,
And made the single jewel on her brow
Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-head,
Prophet of storm : a handmaid on each side
Bow'd toward her, combing out her long
black hair
Damp from the river ; and close behind
her stood

Eight daughters of the plough, stronger
than men,
Huge women blowz'd with health, and
wind, and rain,
And labour. Each was like a Druid rock ;
Or like a spire of land that stands apart
Cleft from the main, and wail'd about
with mews.

Then, as we came, the crowd dividing
clove
An advent to the throne : and therebeside,
Half-naked as if caught at once from bed
And tumbled on the purple footcloth, lay
The lily-shining child ; and on the left,
Bow'd on her palms and folded up from
wrong,
Her round white shoulder shaken with
her sobs,
Melissa knelt ; but Lady Blanche erect
Stood up and spake, an affluent orator.

'It was not thus, O Princess, in old
days :
You prized my counsel, lived upon my
lips :
I led you then to all the Castalies ;
I fed you with the milk of every Muse ;
I loved you like this kneeler, and you me
Your second mother : those were gracious
times.
Then came your new friend : you began
to change—
I saw it and grieved—to slacken and to
cool ;

Till taken with her seeming openness
You turn'd your warmer currents all to
her,
To me you froze : this was my meed for
all.

Yet I bore up in part from ancient love,
And partly that I hoped to win you back,
And partly conscious of my own deserts,

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And partly that you were my civil head, And chiefly you were born for something great, In which I might your fellow-worker be, When time should serve; and thus a noble scheme Grew up from seed we two long since had sown; In us true growth, in her a Jonah's gourd, Up in one night and due to sudden sun: We took this palace; but even from the first You stood in your own light and darken'd mine. What student came but that you planed her path To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise, A foreigner, and I your countrywoman, I your old friend and tried, she new in all? But still her lists were swell'd and mine were lean; Yet I bore up in hope she would be known: Then came these wolves: <i>they</i> knew her: <i>they</i> endured, Long-closeted with her the yesternorn, To tell her what they were, and she to hear: And me none told: not less to an eye like mine, A lidless watcher of the public weal, Last night, their mask was patent, and my foot Was to you: but I thought again: I fear'd To meet a cold "We thank you, we shall hear of it From Lady Psyche:" you had gone to her, She told, perforce; and winning easy grace, No doubt, for slight delay, remain'd among us In our young nursery still unknown, the stem	Less grain than touchwood, while my honest heat Were all miscounted as malignant haste To push my rival out of place and power. But public use required she should be known; And since my path was ta'en for public use, I broke the letter of it to keep the sense. I spoke not then at first, but watch'd them well, Saw that they kept apart, no mischief done; And yet this day (tho' you should hate me for it) I came to tell you; found that you had gone, Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise: now, I thought, That surely she will speak; if not, then I: Did she? These monsters blazon'd what they were, According to the coarseness of their kind, For thus I hear; and known at last (my work) And full of cowardice and guilty shame, I grant in her some sense of shame, she flies; And I remain on whom to wreak your rage, I, that have lent my life to build up yours, I that have wasted here health, wealth, and time, And talents, I—you know it—I will not boast: Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan, Divorced from my experience, will be chaff For every gust of chance, and men will say We did not know the real light, but chased The wisp that flickers where no foot can tread.'
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She ceased : the Princess answer'd
coldly, ' Good :
Your oath is broken : we dismiss you : go.
For this lost lamb (she pointed to the
child)
Our mind is changed : we take it to our-
self.'

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulture
throat,
And shot from crooked lips a haggard
smile.

'The plan was mine. I built the nest'
she said

'To hatch the cuckoo. Rise !' and
stoop'd to updrag

Melissa : she, half on her mother propt,
Half-drooping from her, turn'd her face,
and cast

A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer,
Which melted Florian's fancy as she hung,
A Niobëan daughter, one arm out,
Appealing to the bolts of Heaven ; and
while

We gazed upon her came a little stir
About the doors, and on a sudden rush'd
Among us, out of breath, as one pursued,
A woman-post in flying raiment. Fear
Stared in her eyes, and chalk'd her face,
and wing'd

Her transit to the throne, whereby she fell
Delivering seal'd dispatches which the
Head

Took half-amazed, and in her lion's mood
Tore open, silent we with blind surmise
Regarding, while she read, till over brow
And cheek and bosom brake the wrathful
bloom

As of some fire against a stormy cloud,
When the wild peasant rights himself, the
rick

Flames, and his anger reddens in the
heavens ;

For anger most it seem'd, while now her
breast,

Beaten with some great passion at her
heart,

Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard
In the dead hush the papers that she held
Rustle : at once the lost lamb at her feet
Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam ;
The plaintive cry jarr'd on her ire ; she
crush'd

The scrolls together, made a sudden turn
As if to speak, but, utterance failing her,
She whirl'd them on to me, as who should
say

'Read,' and I read—two letters—one her
sire's.

'Fair daughter, when we sent the
Prince your way

We knew not your ungracious laws, which
learnt,

We, conscious of what temper you are
built,

Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but
fell

Into his father's hands, who has this night,
You lying close upon his territory,
Slipt round and in the dark invested you,
And here he keeps me hostage for his
son.'

The second was my father's running
thus :

'You have our son : touch not a hair of
his head :

Render him up unscathed : give him your
hand :

Cleave to your contract : tho' indeed we
hear

You hold the woman is the better man ;
A rampant heresy, such as if it spread
Would make all women kick against their
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Those winters of

A man I came to

<p>Thro' all the world, and which might well deserve That we this night should pluck your palace down ; And we will do it, unless you send us back Our son, on the instant, whole.' So far I read ; And then stood up and spoke impetuously.</p> <p>' O not to pry and peer on your reserve, But led by golden wishes, and a hope The child of regal compact, did I break Your precinct ; not a scorner of your sex But venerator, zealous it should be All that it might be : hear me, for I bear, Tho' man, yet human, whatsoe'er your wrongs, From the flaxen curl to the gray lock a life Less mine than yours : my nurse would tell me of you ; I babbled for you, as babies for the moon, Vague brightness ; when a boy, you stoop'd to me From all high places, lived in all fair lights, Came in long breezes rapt from inmost south And blown to inmost north ; at eve and dawn With Ida, Ida, Ida, rang the woods ; The leader wildswan in among the stars Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of glowworm light The mellow breaker murmur'd Ida. Now, Because I would have reach'd you, had you been Sphered up with Cassiopeia, or the en- throned Persephone in Hades, now at length, Those winters of abeyance all worn out, A man I came to see you : but, indeed,</p>	<p>Not in this frequency can I lend full tongue, O noble Ida, to those thoughts that wait On you, their centre : let me say but this, That many a famous man and woman, town And landskip, have I heard of, after seen The dwarfs of presage : tho' when known, there grew Another kind of beauty in detail Made them worth knowing ; but in you I found My boyish dream involved and dazzled down And master'd, while that after-beauty makes Such head from act to act, from hour to hour, Within me, that except you slay me here, According to your bitter statute-book, I cannot cease to follow you, as they say The seal does music ; who desire you more Than growing boys their manhood ; dying lips, With many thousand matters left to do, The breath of life ; O more than poor men wealth, Than sick men health—yours, yours, not mine—but half Without you ; with you, whole ; and of those halves You worthiest ; and howe'er you block and bar Your heart with system out from mine, I hold That it becomes no man to nurse despair, But in the teeth of clench'd antagonisms To follow up the worthiest till he die : Yet that I came not all unauthorized Behold your father's letter.'</p> <p>On one knee Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught, and dash'd</p>
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Unopen'd at her feet : a tide of fierce
 Invective seem'd to wait behind her lips,
 As waits a river level with the dam
 Ready to burst and flood the world with
 foam :

And so she would have spoken, but there
 rose

A hubbub in the court of half the maids
 Gather'd together : from the illumined
 hall

Long lanes of splendour slanted o'er a
 press

Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded
 ewes,

And rainbow robes, and gems and gem-
 like eyes,

And gold and golden heads ; they to and
 fro

Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some red,
 some pale,

All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the light,
 Some crying there was an army in the land,
 And some that men were in the very
 wa'ls,

And some they cared not ; till a clamour
 grew

As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,
 And worse-confounded : high above them
 stood

The placid marble Muses, looking peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head : but
 rising up

Robed in the long night of her deep hair,
 so

To the open window moved, remaining
 there

Fixt like a beacon-tower above the waves
 Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye
 Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the light
 Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd her
 arms and call'd

Across the tumult and the tumult fell.

'What fear ye, brawlers? am not I
 your Head?

On me, me, me, the storm first breaks :
 I dare

Al! these male thunderbolts : what is it
 ye fear?

Peace! there are those to avenge us and
 they come :

If not,—myself were like enough, O
 girls,

To unfurl the maiden banner of our rights,
 And clad in iron burst the ranks of war,
 Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,

Die : yet I blame you not so much for
 fear ;

Six thousand years of fear have made you
 that

From which I would redeem you : but for
 those

That stir 'his hubbub—you and you—I
 know

Your faces there in the crowd—to-
 morrow morn

We hold a great convention : then shall
 they

That love their voices more than duty,
 learn

With whom they deal, dismiss'd in shame
 to live

No wiser than their mothers, household
 stuff,

Live chattels, mincers of each other's fame,
 Full of weak poison, turnspits for the
 clown,

The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks
 of Time,

Whose brains are in their hands and in
 their heels,

But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to
 thrum,

To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and to
 scour,

For ever slaves at home and fools abroad.'

She, er
 the
 Muttering
 the
 A stroke o
 When all
 glo
 Of thunde
 said
 'You I
 tlen
 And like a
 for
 And you lo
 dres
 Well have
 man
 You saved
 than
 Better have
 the f
 Then men
 hind
 To take suc
 both
 Yet since ou
 hive,
 You would-b
 Barbarians,
 bears
 O would I h
 You that hav
 and g
 Our servant
 thwar
 I wed with th
 Your bride, y
 the go
 That veins the
 your c
 And every spo
 Sir,

She, ending, waved her hands : thereat
 the crowd
 Muttering, dissolved : then with a smile,
 that look'd
 A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,
 When all the glens are drown'd in azure
 gloom
 Of thunder-shower, she floated to us and
 said :
 'You have done well and like a gen-
 tleman,
 And like a prince : you have our thanks
 for all :
 And you look well too in your woman's
 dress :
 Well have you done and like a gentle-
 man.
 You saved our life : we owe you bitter
 thanks :
 Better have died and spilt our bones in
 the flood—
 Then men had said—but now—What
 hinders me
 To take such bloody vengeance on you
 both ?—
 Yet since our father—Wasps in our good
 hive,
 You would-be quenchers of the light to be,
 Barbarians, grosser than your native
 bears—
 O would I had his sceptre for one hour !
 You that have dared to break our bound,
 and gull'd
 Our servants, wrong'd and lied and
 thwarted us—
 I wed with thee ! I bound by precontract
 Your bride, your bonds slave ! not tho' all
 the gold
 That veins the world were pack'd to make
 your crown,
 And every spoken tongue should lord you,
 Sir,

Your falsehood and yourself are hateful
 to us :
 I trample on your offers and on you :
 Begone : we will not look upon you more.
 Here, push them out at gates,'
 In wrath she spake.
 Then those eight mighty daughters of the
 plough
 Bent their broad faces toward us and
 address'd
 Their motion : twice I sought to plead
 my cause,
 But on my shoulder hung their heavy
 hands,
 The weight of destiny : so from her face
 They push'd us, down the steps, and thro'
 the court,
 And with grim laughter thrust us out at
 gates.
 We cross'd the street and gain'd a petty
 mound
 Beyond it, whence we saw the lights and
 heard
 The voices murmuring. While I listen'd,
 came
 On a sudden the weird seizure and the
 doubt :
 I seem'd to move among a world of
 ghosts ;
 The Princess with her monstrous woman-
 guard,
 The jest and earnest working side by side,
 The cataract and the tumult and the kings
 Were shadows ; and the long fantastic
 night
 With all its doings had and had not been,
 And all things were and were not.
 This went by
 As strangely as it came, and on my spirits
 Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy ;
 Not long ; I shook it off ; for spite of
 doubts

THE PRINCESS; A MEDLEY.

And sudden ghostly shadowings I was one
To whom the touch of all mischance but
came

As night to him that sitting on a hill
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Norway
sun

Set into sunrise ; then we moved away.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands ;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands :
A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his brood about thy knee ;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

So Lilia sang : we thought her half-pos-
sess'd,

She struck such warbling fury thro' the
words ;

And, after, feigning pique at what she
call'd

The raillery, or grotesque, or false sub-
lime—

Like one that wishes at a dance to change
The music—clapt her hands and cried for
war,

Or some grand fight to kill and make an
end :

And he that next inherited the tale
Half turning to the broken statue, said,
'Sir Ralph has got your colours : if I
prove

Your knight, and fight your battle, what
for me ?'

It chanced, her empty glove upon the
tomb

Lay by her like a model of her hand.
She took it and she flung it. 'Fight'
she said,

'And make us all we would be, great
and good.'

He knightlike in his cap instead of casque,

A cap of Tyrol borrow'd from the hall,
Arranged the favour, and assumed the
Prince.

v.

Now, scarce three paces measured from
the mound,

We stumbled on a stationary voice,
And 'Stand, who goes ?' 'Two from
the palace' I.

'The second two : they wait,' he said,
'pass on ;

His Highness wakes : ' and one, that
clash'd in arms,

By glimmering lanes and walls of canvas,
led

Threading the soldier-city, till we heard
The drowsy folds of our great ensign shake
From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial tent
Whispers of war.

Entering, the sudden light
Dazed me half-blind : I stood and seem'd
to hear,

As in a poplar grove when a light wind
wakes

A hisping of the innumerable leaf and dies,
Each hissing in his neighbour's ear ; and
then

A strangled titter, out of which there
brake

On all sides, clamouring etiquette to death,
Unmeasured mirth ; while now the two
old kings

Began to wag their baldness up and down,
The fresh young captains flash'd their
glittering teeth,

The huge bush-bearded Barons heaved
and blew,

And slain with laughter roll'd the gilded
Squire.

At length my Sire, his rough cheek
wet with tears,

Panted from
free

We did but
If this be

thou
That tends

slud
For I was

with
More crum

shea
And all one

heel.
Then some

palm
A whisper'd

'Lo
He has been

take
The old w

(thus
Roar'd) mak

men.
Go : Cyril t

From ferule

Away we sto

From what w

To sheathing

scale

Of harness, i

Leapt from

Earth

And hit the

met u

A little shy a

We twain, w

given
For stroke a
where
Follow'd his
Thro' the da
night

Panted from weary sides 'King, you are free!

We did but keep you surety for our son,
If this be he,—or a draggled mawkin,
thou,

That tends her bristled grunterns in the
sludge :

For I was drench'd with ooze, and torn
with briers,

More crumpled than a poppy from the
sheath,

And all one rag, disprinc'd from head to
heel.

Then some one sent beneath his vaulted
palm

A whisper'd jest to some one near him,
'Look,

He has been among his shadows.' 'Satan
take

The old women and their shadows!
(thus the King

Roar'd) make yourself a man to fight with
men.

Go : Cyril told us all.'

As boys that slink

From ferule and the trespass-chiding eye,
Away we stole, and transient in a trice

From what was left of faded woman-slough
To sheathing splendours and the golden

scale
Of harness, issued in the sun, that now

Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the
Earth,

And hit the Northern hills. Here Cyril
met us.

A little shy at first, but by and by
We twain, with mutual pardon ask'd and

given
For stroke and song, resolder'd peace,
whereon

Follow'd his tale. Amazed he fled away
Thro' the dark land, and later in the

night

Had come on Psyche weeping : 'then we
fell

Into your father's hand, and there she lies,
But will not speak, nor stir.'

He show'd a tent

A stone-shot off : we enter'd in, and there
Among piled arms and rough accoutre-

ments,
Pitiful sight, wrapp'd in a soldier's cloak,
Like some sweet sculpture draped from

head to foot,
And push'd by rude hands from its

pedestal,
All her fair length upon the ground she

lay :

And at her head a follower of the camp,
A charr'd and wrinkled piece of woman-

hood,
Sat watching like a watcher by the dead.

Then Florian knelt, and 'Come' he
whisper'd to her,

'Lift up your head, sweet sister : lie not
thus.

What have you done but right? you
could not slay

Me, nor your prince : look up : be com-
forted :

Sweet is it to have done the thing one
ought,

When fall'n in darker ways.' And like-
wise I :

'Be comforted : have I not lost her too,
In whose least act abides the nameless

charm
That none has else for me?' She heard,
she moved,

She moan'd, a folded voice ; and up she
sat,

And raised the cloak from brows as pale
and smooth

As those that mourn half-shrouded over
death

In deathless marble. 'Her,' she said,
 'my friend—
 Parted from her—betray'd her cause and
 mine—
 Where shall I breathe? why kept ye not
 your faith?
 O base and bad! what comfort? none for
 me!
 To whom remorseful Cyril, 'Yet I pray
 Take comfort: live, dear lady, for your
 child!
 At which she lifted up her voice and cried.
 'Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah, my
 child,
 My one sweet child, whom I shall see no
 more!
 For now will cruel Ida keep her back;
 And either she will die from want of care,
 Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say
 The child is hers—for every little fault,
 The child is hers; and they will beat my
 girl
 Remembering her mother: O my flower!
 Or they will take her, they will make her
 hard,
 And she will pass me by in after-life
 With some cold reverence worse than
 were she dead.
 Ill mother that I was to leave her there,
 To lag behind, scared by the cry they
 made,
 The horror of the shame among them all:
 But I will go and sit beside the doors,
 And make a wild petition night and day,
 Until they hate to hear me like a wind
 Wailing for ever, till they open to me,
 And lay my little blossom at my feet,
 My babe, my sweet Aglaia, my one child:
 And I will take her up and go my way,
 And satisfy my soul with kissing her:
 Ah! what might that man not deserve of
 me

Who gave me back my child?' 'Be
 comforted,'
 Said Cyril, 'you shall have it:' but again
 She veil'd her brows, and prone she sank,
 and so
 Like tender things that being caught feign
 death,
 Spoke not, nor stirr'd.
 By this a murmur ran
 Thro' all the camp and inward raced the
 scouts
 With rumour of Prince Arac hard at hand.
 We left her by the woman, and without
 Found the gray kings at parle: and 'Look
 you' cried
 My father 'that our compact be fulfill'd:
 You have spoilt this child; she laughs at
 you and man:
 She wrongs herself, her sex, and me, and
 him:
 But red-faced war has rods of steel and
 fire;
 She yields, or war.'
 Then Gama turn'd to me:
 'We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy time
 With our strange girl: and yet they say
 that still
 You love her. Give us, then, your mind
 at large:
 How say you, war or not?'
 'Not war, if possible,
 O king,' I said, 'lest from the abuse of
 war,
 The desecrated shrine, the trampled year,
 The smouldering homestead, and the
 household flower
 Torn from the lintel—all the common
 wrong—
 A smoke go up thro' which I loom to her
 Three times a monster: now she lightens
 scorn
 At him that mars her plan, but then would
 hate

(And every
 And every f
 The general
 knot,
 By gentleness
 What were i
 Your cities i
 She would
 chain
 The lifting o
 Not ever wo
 turn
 The book
 chan
 Were caught
 wrong
 And crush'd
 than
 I would the
 dead,
 Forgotten, r
 Rotting on s
 wreck
 Or like an o
 ice,
 Not to be m
 My father, '
 girls.
 Boy, when I
 That idiot I
 Sir!
 Man is the h
 The sleek a
 chase,
 We hunt th
 skins
 They love u
 down
 Wheedling a
 for sh
 Boy, there's
 them

(And every voice she talk'd with ratify it,
And every face she look'd on justify it)
The general foe. More soluble is this
knot,

By gentleness than war. I want her love.
What were I nigher this altho' we dash'd
Your cities into shards with catapults,
She would not love ;—or brought I
chain'd, a slave,

The lifting of whose eyelash is my lor,
Not ever would she love ; but brooding
turn

The book of scorn, till all my flitting
chance

Were caught within the record of her
wrongs,

And crush'd to death : and rather, Sire,
than this

I would the old God of war himself were
dead,

Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills,
Rotting on some wild shore with ribs of
wreck,

Or like an old-world mammoth bulk'd in
ice,

Not to be molten out.'

And roughly spake
My father, 'Tut, you know them not, the
girls.

Boy, when I hear you prate I almost think
That idiot legend credible. Look you,
Sir !

Man is the hunter ; woman is his game :
The sleek and shining creatures of the
chase,

We hunt them for the beauty of their
skins ;

They love us for it, and we ride them
down.

Wheedling and siding with them ! Out !
for shame !

Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear to
them

As he that does the thing they dare not do,
Breathing and sounding beauteous battle,
comes

With the air of the trumpet round him,
and leaps in

Among the women, snares them by the
score

Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho' dash'd
with death

He reddens what he kisses : thus I won
Your mother, a good mother, a good wife,
Worth winning ; but this firebrand—
gentleness

To such as her ! if Cyril spake her true,
To catch a dragon in a cherry net,
To trip a tigress with a gossamer,
Were wisdom to it.'

'Yea but Sire,' I cried,
'Wild natures need wise curbs. The
soldier ? No :

What dares not Ida do that she should
prize

The soldier ? I beheld her, when she rose
The yesternight, and storming in extremes,
Stood for her cause, and flung defiance
down

Gagelike to man, and had not shunn'd the
death,

No, not the soldier's : yet I hold her, king,
True woman : but you clash them all in
one,

That have as many differences as we.
The violet varies from the lily as far'

As oak from elm : one loves the soldier,
one

The silken priest of peace, one this, one
that,

And some unworthily ; their sinless faith,
A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,
Glorifying clown and satyr ; whence they
need

More breadth of culture : is not Ida right ?
They worth it ? truer to the law within ?

<p>Severer in the logic of a life? Twice as magnetic to sweet influences Of earth and heaven? and she of whom you speak, My mother, looks as whole as some serene Creation minted in the golden moods Of sovereign artists; not a thought, a touch, But pure as lines of green that streak the white Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves; I say, Not like the piebald miscellany, man, Bursts of great heart and slips in sensual mire, But whole and one: and take them all-in- all, Were we ourselves but half as good, as kind, As truthful, much that Ida claims as right Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly theirs As dues of Nature. To our point: not war: Lest I lose all.'</p> <p>'Nay, nay, you spake but sense' Said Gama. 'We remember love ourself In our sweet youth; we did not rate him then This red-hot iron to be shaped with blows. You talk almost like Ida: <i>she</i> can talk; And there is something in it as you say: But you talk kindlier: we esteem you for it.— He seems a gracious and a gallant Prince, I would he had our daughter: for the rest, Our own detention, why, the causes weigh'd, Fatherly fears—you used us courteously— We would do much to gratify your Prince— We pardon it; and for your ingress here Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair land, You did but come as goblins in the night,</p>	<p>Nor in the furrow broke the ploughman's head, Nor burnt the grange, nor buss'd the milking-maid, Nor robb'd the farmer of his bowl of cream: But let your Prince (our royal word upon it, He comes back safe) ride with us to our lines, And speak with Arac: Arac's word is thrice As ours with Ida: something may be done— I know not what—and ours shall see us friends. You, likewise, our late guests, if so you will, Follow us: who knows? we four may build some plan Foursquare to opposition.'</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Here he reach'd</p> <p>White hands of farewell to my sire, who growl'd An answer which, half-muffled in his beard, Let so much out as gave us leave to go.</p> <p>Then rode we with the old king across the lawns Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings of Spring In every bole, a song on every spray Of birds that piped their Valentines, and woke Desire in me to infuse my tale of love In the old king's ears, who promised help and oozed All o'er with honey'd answer as we rode; And blossom-fragrant slipt the heavy dews Gather'd by night and peace, with each light air On our mail'd heads: but other thoughts than Peace</p>
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Burnt in us, when we saw the embattled
squares,

And squadrons of the Prince, trampling
the flowers

With clamour : for among them rose a cry
As if to greet the king ; they made a halt ;
The horses yell'd ; they clash'd their arms ;
the drum

Beat ; merrily-blowing shrill'd the mar-
tial life ;

And in the blast and bray of the long horn
And serpent-throated bugle, undulated
The banner : anon to meet us lightly
pranced

Three captains out ; nor ever had I seen
Such thews of men : the midmost and the
highest

Was Arac : all about his motion clung
The shadow of his sister, as the beam
Of the East, that play'd upon them, made
them glance

Like those three stars of the airy Giant's
zone,

That glitter burnish'd by the frosty dark ;
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,
And bickers into red and emerald, shone
Their morions, wash'd with morning, as
they came.

And I that prated peace, when first I
heard

War-music, felt the blind wildbeast of
force,

Whose home is in the sinews of a man,
Stir in me as to strike : then took the king
His three broad sons ; with now a wan-
dering hand

And now a pointed finger, told them all :
A common light of smiles at our disguise
Broke from their lips, and, ere the windy
jest

Had labour'd down within his ample
lungs,

The genial giant, Arac, roll'd himself
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in
words.

'Our land invaded, 'sdeath ! and he
himself

Your captive, yet my father wills not war :
And, 'sdeath ! myself, what care I, war
or no ?

But then this question of your troth re-
mains :

And there's a downright honest meaning
in her ;

She flies too high, she flies too high ! and yet
She ask'd but space and fairplay for her
scheme ;

She prest and prest it on me—I myself,
What know I of these things ? but, life
and soul !

I thought her half-right talking of her
wrongs ;

I say she flies too high, 'sdeath ! what of
that ?

I take her for the flower of womankind,
And so I often told her, right or wrong,
And, Prince, she can be sweet to those
she loves,

And, right or wrong, I care not : this is
all,

I stand upon her side : she made me swear
it—

'Sdeath—and with solemn rites by candle-
light—

Swear by St. something—I forget her
name—

Her that talk'd down the fifty wisest men ;
She was a princess too ; and so I swore.
Come, this is all ; she will not : waive
your claim :

If not, the foughten field, what else, at
once

Decides it, 'sdeath ! against my father's
will.'

I lagg'd in answer loth to render up
My precontract, and loth by brainless war
To cleave the rift of difference deeper yet;
Till one of those two brothers, half aside
And fingering at the hair about his lip,
To prick us on to combat 'Like to like!
The woman's garment hid the woman's
heart.'

A taunt that clench'd his purpose like a
blow!

For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-scoff,
And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon the
point

Where idle boys are cowards to their
shame,

'Decide it here: why not? we are three
to three.'

Then spake the third 'But three to
three? no more?

No more, and in our noble sister's cause?
More, more, for honour: every captain
waits

I hungry for honour, angry for his king.
More, more, some fifty on a side, that each
May breathe himself; and quick! by over-
throw

Of these or those, the question settled die.'

'Yea,' answer'd I, 'for this wild
wreath of air,
This flake of rainbow flying on the highest
Foam of men's deeds—this honour, if ye
will.

It needs must be for honour if at all:
Since, what decision? if we fail, we fail,
And if we win, we fail: she would not
keep

Her compact.' 'Sdeath! but we will
send to her,'

Said Arac, 'worthy reasons why she
should

Bide by this issue: let our missive thro',

And you shall have her answer by the
word.'

'Boys!' shriek'd the old king, but
vainlier than a hen

To her false daughters in the pool; for
none

Regarded; neither seem'd there more to
say:

Back rode we to my father's camp, and
found

He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,
To learn if Ida yet would cede our claim,
Or by denial flush her babbling wells
With her own people's life: three times
he went:

The first, he blew and blew, but none
appear'd:

He batter'd at the doors; none came:
the next,

An awful voice within had warn'd him
thence:

The third, and those eight daughters of
the plough

Came sallying thro' the gates, and caught
his hair,

And so belabour'd him on rib and cheek
They made him wild: not less one glance
he caught

Thro' open doors of Ida station'd there
Unshaken, clinging to her purpose, firm
Tho' compass'd by two armies and the
noise

Of arms; and standing like a stately
Pine

Set in a cataract on an island-crag,
When storm is on the heights, and right
and left

Suck'd from the dark heart of the long
hills roll

The torrents, dash'd to the vale: and yet
her will

Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

But when
pled
To fight in t
His iron pa
Himself wo
But overbor
With reason
perfo
He yielded,
denu
And many a
And sware
death

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Oration-like.

'O brother,
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Gives her har
scourge
Of living heart

<p>But when I told the king that I was pledged To fight in tourney for my bride, he clash'd His iron palms together with a cry ; Himself would tilt it out among the lads : But overborne by all his bearded lords With reasons drawn from age and state, perforce He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce demur : And many a bold knight started up in heat, And sware to combat for my claim till death.</p> <p>All on this side the palace ran the field Flat to the garden-wall : and likewise here, Above the garden's glowing blossom-belts, A column'd entry shone and marble stairs, And great bronze valves, emboss'd with Tomyris And what she did to Cyrus after fight, But now fast barr'd : so here upon the flat All that long morn the lists were hammer'd up, And all that morn the heralds to and fro, With message and defiance, went and came ; Last, Ida's answer, in a royal hand, But shaken here and there, and rolling words Oration-like. I kiss'd it and I read.</p> <p>'O brother, you have known the pangs we felt, What heats of indignation when we heard Of those that iron-cramp'd their women's feet ; Of lands in which at the altar the poor bride Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift a scourge ; Of living hearts that crack within the fire</p>	<p>Where smoulder their dead despots ; and of those,— Mothers,—that, all prophetic pity, fling Their pretty maids in the running flood, and swoops The vulture, beak and talon, at the heart Made for all noble motion : and I saw That equal baseness lived in sleeker times With smoother men : the old leaven leaven'd all : Millions of throats would bawl for civil rights, No woman named : therefore I set my face Against all men, and lived but for mine own. Far off from men I built a fold for them : I stored it full of rich memorial : I fenced it round with gallant institutes, And biting laws to scare the beasts of prey And prosper'd ; till a rout of saucy boys Brake on us at our books, and marr'd our peace, Mask'd like our maids, blustering I know not what Of insolence and love, some pretext held Of baby troth, invalid, since my will Seal'd not the bond—the striplings !—for their sport !— I tamed my leopards : shall I not tame these? Or you? or I? for since you think me touch'd In honour—what, I would not aught of false— Is not our cause pure? and whereas I know Your prowess, Arac, and what mother's blood You draw from, fight ; you failing, I abide What end soever : fail you will not. Still Take not his life : he risk'd it for my own ; His mother lives : yet whatso'er you do, Fight and fight well ; strike and strike home. O dear</p>
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<p>Brothers, the woman's Angel guards you, you The sole men to be mingled with our cause, The sole men we shall prize in the after- time, Your very armour hallow'd, and your statues Rear'd, sung to, when, this gad-fly brush'd aside, We plant a solid foot into the Time, And mould a generation strong to move With claim on claim from right to right, till she Whose name is yoked with children's, know herself; And Knowledge in our own land make her free, And, ever following those two crowned twins, Commerce and conquest, shower the fiery grain Of freedom broadcast over all that orbs Between the Northern and the Southern morn.'</p> <p>Then came a postscript dash'd across the rest. 'See that there be no traitors in your camp: We seem a nest of traitors—none to trust Since our arms fail'd—this Egypt-plague of men! Almost our maids were better at their homes, Than thus man-girdled here: indeed I think Our chiefest comfort is the little child Of one unworthy mother; which she left: She shall not have it back: the child shall grow To prize the authentic mother of her mind. I took it for an hour in mine own bed This morning: there the tender orphan hands</p>	<p>Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm from thence The wrath I nursed against the world: farewell.'</p> <p>I ceased; he said, 'Stubborn, but she may sit Upon a king's right hand in thunder- storms, And breed up warriors! See now, tho' yourself Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to sloughs That swallow common sense, the spind- ling king, This Gama swamp'd in lazy tolerance. When the man wants weight, the woman takes it up, And topples down the scales; but this is fixt As are the roots of earth and base of all; Man for the field and woman for the hearth: Man for the sword and for the needle she: Man with the head and woman with the heart: Man to command and woman to obey; All else confusion. Look you! the gray mare Is ill to live with, when her whinny shrills From tile to scullery, and her small good- man Shrinks in his arm-chair while the fires of Hell Mix with his hearth: but you—she's yet a colt— Take, break her: strongly groom'd and straitly curb'd She might not rank with those detestable That let the bantling scald at home, and brawl Their rights or wrongs like potherbs in the street. They say she's comely; there's the fairer chance:</p>
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I mused on
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I thought on
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And how the
end:
Then I remem
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And like a flas
King, camp an
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I seem'd to mo
And doing batt
To dream myse
And ere I woke
The lists were r
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We enter'd in, a
Opposed to fifty,
At the barrier lik
Of echoes, and a
The trumpet, an
storm
Of galloping ho
spears
And riders front to
In conflict with
points,

I like her none the less for rating at her !
 Besides, the woman wed is not as we,
 But suffers change of frame. A lusty brace
 Of twins may weed her of her folly. Boy,
 The bearing and the training of a child
 Is woman's wisdom.'

Thus the hard old king :
 I took my leave, for it was nearly noon :
 I peered upon her letter which I held,
 And on the little clause 'take not his
 life :'

I mused on that wild morning in the
 woods,
 And on the 'Follow, follow, thou shalt
 win :'

I thought on all the wrathful king had
 said,
 And how the strange betrothment was to
 end :

Then I remember'd that burnt sorcerer's
 curse

That one should fight with shadows and
 should fall ;

And like a flash the weird affection came :
 King, camp and college turn'd to hollow
 shows ;

I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,
 And doing battle with forgotten ghosts,
 To dream myself the shadow of a dream :
 And ere I woke it was the point of noon,
 The lists were ready. Empanoplied and
 plumed

We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there
 Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet blared
 At the barrier like a wild horn in a land
 Of echoes, and a moment, and once more
 The trumpet, and again : at which the
 storm

Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge of
 spears

And riders front to front, until they closed
 In conflict with the crash of shivering
 points,

And thunder. Yet it seem'd a dream, I
 dream'd

Of fighting. On his haunches rose the
 steed,

And into fiery splinters leapt the lance,
 And out of stricken helmets sprang the
 fire.

Part sat like rocks : part reel'd but kept
 their seats :

Part roll'd on the earth and rose again
 and drew :

Part stumbled mixt with floundering
 horses. Down

From those two bulks at Arac's side, and
 down

From Arac's arm, as from a giant's flail,
 The large blows rain'd, as here and every-
 where

He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing
 lists,

And all the plain,—brand, mace, and
 shaft, and shield—

Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvil bang'd
 With hammers ; till I thought, can this
 be he

From Gama's dwarfish loins ? if this be so,
 The mother makes us most—and in my
 dream

I glanced aside, and saw the palace-front
 Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies' eyes,
 And highest, among the statues, statue-
 like,

Between a cymbal'd Miriam and a Jael,
 With Psyche's babe, was Ida watching us,
 A single band of gold about her hair,
 Like a Saint's glory up in heaven : but she
 No saint—inexorable—no tenderness—

Too hard, too cruel : yet she sees me fight,
 Yea, let her see me fall ! with that I drove
 Among the thickest and bore down a
 Prince,

And Cyril, one. Yea, let me make my
 dream

All that I would. But that large-moulded
 man,
 His visage all agrin as at a wake,
 Made at me thro' the press, and, stagger-
 ing back
 With stroke on stroke the horse and
 horseman, came
 As comes a pillar of electric cloud,
 Flaying the roofs and sucking up the
 drains,
 And shadowing down the champain till it
 strikes
 On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and
 cracks, and splits,
 And twists the grain with such a roar that
 Earth
 Reels, and the herdsmen cry; for every-
 thing
 Gave way before him: only Florian, he
 That loved me closer than his own right
 eye,
 Thrust in between; but Arac rode him
 down:
 And Cyril seeing it, push'd against the
 Prince,
 With Psyche's colour round his helmet,
 tough,
 Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at
 arms;
 But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that
 smote
 And threw him: last I spurr'd; I felt my
 veins
 Stretch with fierce heat; a moment hand
 to hand,
 And sword to sword, and horse to horse
 we hung,
 Till I struck out and shouted; the blade
 glanced,
 I did but shear a feather, and dream and
 truth
 Flow'd from me; darkness closed me;
 and I fell.

VI.

Home they brought her warrior dead:
 She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:
 All her maidens, watching, said,
 'She must weep or she will die.'
 Then they praised him, soft and low,
 Call'd him worthy to be loved,
 Truest friend and noblest foe;
 Yet she neither spoke nor moved.
 Stole a maiden from her place,
 Lightly to the warrior stept,
 Took the face-cloth from the face;
 Yet she neither moved nor wept.
 Rose a nurse of ninety years,
 Set his child upon her knee—
 Like summer tempest came her tears—
 'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'
 My dream had never died or lived again.
 As in some mystic middle state I lay;
 Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard:
 Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me all
 So often that I speak as having seen.
 For so it seem'd, or so they said to me,
 That all things grew more tragic and more
 strange;
 That when our side was vanquish'd and
 my cause
 For ever lost, there went up a great cry,
 The Prince is slain. My father heard
 and ran
 In on the lists, and there unlaced my
 casque
 And grovell'd on my body, and after him
 Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaia.
 But high upon the palace Ida stood
 With Psyche's babe in arm: there on the
 roofs
 Like that great dame of Lapidoth she
 sang.
 'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n:
 the seed,

The little s
 Has risen a
 bulk
 Of spanless
 A thousand

'Our ene
 they
 The leaves
 they
 A noise of
 stand
 They mark'
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 There dwelt a
 The glittering
 arms,
 Their arms we
 blade.

'Our enem
 grow
 A night of S
 breadth
 Of Autumn, c
 and roll
 With music in t

The little seed they laugh'd at in the dark,
Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown a
bulk
Of spanless girth, that lays on every side
A thousand arms and rushes to the Sun.

'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n :
they came ;
The leaves were wet with women's tears :
they heard
A noise of songs they would not under-
stand :
They mark'd it with the red cross to the
fall,
And would have strown it, and are fall'n
themselves.

'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n :
they came,
The woodmen with their axes : lo the
tree !
But we will make it faggots for the hearth,
And shape it plank and beam for roof and
floor,
And boats and bridges for the use of men.

'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n :
they struck ;
With their own blows they hurt them-
selves, nor knew
There dwelt an iron nature in the grain :
The glittering axe was broken in their
arms,
Their arms were shatter'd to the shoulder
blade.

'Our enemies have fall'n, but this shall
grow
A night of Summer from the heat, a
breadth
Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power :
and roll'd
With music in the growing breeze of Time,

The tops shall strike from star to star, the
fangs
Shall move the stony bases of the world.

'And now, O maids, behold our
sanctuary
Is violate, our laws broken : fear we not
To break them more in their behoof,
whose arms
Champion'd our cause and won it with a
day
Blanch'd in our annals, and perpetual feast,
When dames and heroines of the golden
year
Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of
Spring,
To rain an April of ovation round
Their statues, borne aloft, the three : but
come,
We will be liberal, since our rights are
won.
Let them not lie in the tents with coarse
mankind,
Ill nurses ; but descend, and proffer these
The brethren of our blood and cause, that
there
Lie bruised and maim'd, the tender minis-
tries
Of female hands and hospitality.'

She spoke, and with the babe yet in
her arms,
Descending, burst the great bronze valves,
and led
A hundred maids in train across the Park.
Some cowl'd, and some bare-headed, on
they came,
Their feet in flowers, her loveliest : by
them went
The enamour'd air sighing, and on their
curls
From the high tree the blossom wavering
fell,

And over them the tremulous isles of light
Sided, they moving under shade : but
Blanche

At distance follow'd ; so they came : anon
Thro' open field into the lists they wound
Timorously ; and as the leader of the herd
That holds a stately fretwork to the Sun,
And follow'd up by a hundred airy does,
Steps with a tender foot, light as on air,
The lovely, lordly creature floated on
To where her wounded brethren lay ;
there stay'd ;

Knelt on one knee,—the child on one,—
and prest

Their hands, and call'd them dear de-
liverers,

And happy warriors, and immortal names,
And said 'You shall not lie in the tents
but here,

And nursed by those for whom you
fought, and served

With female hands and hospitality.'

Then, whether moved by this, or was
it chance,

She past my way. Up started from my
side

The old lion, glaring with his whelpless
eye,

Silent ; but when she saw me lying stark,
Dishelm'd and mute, and motionlessly
pale,

Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd ; and when
she saw

The haggard father's face and reverend
beard

Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the blood
Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of
pain

Tortured her mouth, and o'er her forehead
past

A shadow, and her hue changed, and she
said :

'He saved my life : my brother slew him
for it.'

No more : at which the king in bitter scorn
Drew from my neck the painting and the
tress,

And held them up : she saw them, and a
day

Rose from the distance on her memory,
When the good Queen, her mother, shore
the tress

With kisses, ere the days of Lady
Blanche :

And then once more she look'd at my pale
face :

Till understanding all the foolish work
Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,
Her iron will was broken in her mind ;
Her noble heart was molten in her breast ;
She bow'd, she set the child on the earth ;
she laid

A feeling finger on my brows, and pre-
sently

'O Sire,' she said, 'he lives : he is not
dead :

O let me have him with my brethren here
In our own palace : we will tend on him
Like one of these ; if so, by any means,
To lighten this great clog of thanks, that
make

Our progress falter to the woman's goal.'

She said : but at the happy word 'he
lives'

My father stoop'd, re-father'd o'er my
wounds.

So those two foes above my fallen life,
With brow to brow like night and even-
ing mixt

Their dark and gray, while Psyche ever
stole

A little nearer, till the babe that by us,
Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden
brede,

Lay like
Uncared
A blind
da
Its body,
arr
And lazy
pea
Brook'd no
nir
It is not y
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Ceased all
cry
So stood
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And turn'd
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With hollow
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Red grief an
And down d
half
The sacred
burst
The laces to
cared
Nor knew it
heard,
Look'd up, a
stood
Erect and silen
The mother, n
lay
Beside us, Cyr
Trail'd himself
drew
Her robe to me
look'd
At the arm'd m
seem'd,
Or self-involv
face,

Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the grass,
 Uncared for, spied its mother and began
 A blind and babbling laughter, and to
 dance
 Its body, and reach its fatling innocent
 arms
 And lazy lingering fingers. She the ap-
 peal
 Brook'd not, but clamouring out 'Mine—
 mine—not yours,
 It is not yours, but mine : give me the
 child '
 Ceased all on tremble : piteous was the
 cry :
 So stood the unhappy mother open-
 mouth'd,
 And turn'd each face her way : wan was
 her cheek
 With hollow watch, her blooming mantle
 torn,
 Red grief and mother's hunger in her eye,
 And down dead-heavy sank her curls, and
 half
 The sacred mother's bosom, panting,
 burst
 The laces toward her babe ; but she nor
 cared
 Nor knew it, clamouring on, till Ida
 heard,
 Look'd up, and rising slowly from me,
 stood
 Erect and silent, striking with her glance
 The mother, me, the child ; but he that
 lay
 Beside us, Cyril, batter'd as he was,
 Trail'd himself up on one knee : then he
 drew
 Her robe to meet his lips, and down she
 look'd
 At the arm'd man sideways, pitying as it
 seem'd,
 Or self-involved ; but when she learnt his
 face,

Remembering his ill-omen'd song, arose
 Once more thro' all her height, and o'er
 him grew
 Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand
 When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and he
 said :
 'O fair and strong and terrible !
 Lioness
 That with your long locks play the Lion's
 mane !
 But Love and Nature, these are two more
 terrible
 And stronger. See, your foot is on our
 necks,
 We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your
 will.
 What would you more ? give her the child !
 remain
 Orb'd in your isolation : he is dead,
 Or all as dead : henceforth we let you be :
 Win you the hearts of women ; and be-
 ware
 Lest, where you seek the common love of
 these,
 The common hate with the revolving wheel
 Should drag you down, and some great
 Nemesis
 Break from a darken'd future, crown'd
 with fire,
 And tread you out for ever : but howsoe'er
 Fix'd in yourself, never in your own arms
 To hold your own, deny not hers to her,
 Give her the child ! O if, I say, you keep
 One pulse that beats true woman, if you
 loved
 The breast that fed or arm that dandled
 you,
 Or own one part of sense not flint to
 prayer,
 Give her the child ! or if you scorn to lay it,
 Yourself, in hands so lately claspt with
 yours,

<p>Or speak to her, your dearest, her one fault The tenderness, not yours, that could not kill, Give <i>me</i> it : <i>I</i> will give it her.'</p> <p style="text-align: right;">He said :</p> <p>At first her eye with slow dilation roll'd Dry flame, she listening ; after sank and sank And, into mournful twilight mellowing, dwelt Full on the child ; she took it : ' Pretty bud ! Lily of the vale ! half open'd bell of the woods ! Sole comfort of my dark hour, when a world Of traitorous friend and broken system made No purple in the distance, mystery, Pledge of a love not to be mine, farewell ; These men are hard upon us as of old, We two must part : and yet how fain was I To dream thy cause embraced in mine, to think I might be something to thee, when I felt Thy helpless warmth about my barren breast In the dead prime : but may thy mother prove As true to thee as false, false, false to me ! And, if thou needs must bear the yoke, I wish it Gentle as freedom '—here she kiss'd it : then— 'All good go with thee ! take it Sir,' and so Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed hands, Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as she sprang To meet it, with an eye that swum in thanks ;</p>	<p>Then felt it sound and whole from head to foot, And hugg'd and never hugg'd it close enough, And in her hunger mouth'd and numbled it, And hid her bosom with it ; after that Put on more calm and added suppliantly : 'We two were friends : I go to mine own land For ever : find some other : as for me I scarce am fit for your great plans : yet speak to me, Say one soft word and let me part forgiven.'</p> <p>But Ida spoke not, rapt upon the child. Then Arac. 'Ida—'sdeath ! you blame the man ; You wrong yourselves—the woman is so hard Upon the woman. Come, a grace to me ! I am your warrior : I and mine have fought Your battle : kiss her ; take her hand, she weeps : 'Sdeath ! I would sooner fight thrice o'er than see it.'</p> <p>But Ida spoke. not, gazing on the ground, And reddening in the furrows of his chin, And moved beyond his custom, Gama said : 'I've heard that there is iron in the blood, And I believe it. Not one word ? not one ? Whence drew you this steel temper ? not from me, Not from your mother, now a saint with saints.</p>
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<p>She said you had a heart—I heard her say it— “Our Ida has a heart”—just ere she died— “But see that some one with authority Be near her still” and I—I sought for one— All people said she had authority— The Lady Blanche : much profit ! Not one word ; No ! tho’ your father sues : see how you stand Stiff as Lot’s wife, and all the good knights maim’d, I trust that there is no one hurt to death, For your wild whim : and was it then for this, Was it for this we gave our palace up, Where we withdrew from summer heats and state, And had our wine and chess beneath the planes, And many a pleasant hour with her that’s gone, Ere you were born to vex us ? Is it kind ? Speak to her I say : is this not she of whom, When first she came, all flush’d you said to me Now had you got a friend of your own age, Now could you share your thought ; now should men see Two women faster welded in one love Than pairs of wedlock ; she you walk’d with, she You talk’d with, whole nights long, up in the tower, Of sine and arc, spheroid and azimuth, And right ascension, Heaven knows what ; and now A word, but one, one little kindly word, Not one to spare her : out upon you, flint !</p>	<p>You love nor her, nor me, nor any ; nay, You shame your mother’s judgment too. Not one ? You will not ? well—no heart have you, or such As fancies like the vermin in a nut Have fretted all to dust and bitterness.’ So said the small king moved beyond his wont. But Ida stood nor spoke, drain’d of her force By many a varying influence and so long. Down thro’ her limbs a drooping languor wept : Her head a little bent ; and on her mouth A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded moon In a still water : then brake out my sire, Lifting his grim head from my wounds. ‘O you, Woman, whom we thought woman even now, And were half fool’d to let you tend our son, Because he might have wish’d it—but we see The accomplice of your madness unfor- given, And think that you might mix his draught with death, When your skies change again : the rougher hand Is safer : on to the tents : take up the Prince.’ He rose, and while each ear was prick’d to attend A tempest, thro’ the cloud that dimm’d her broke A genial warmth and light once more, and shone Thro’ glittering drops on her sad friend.</p>
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<p>O Psyche,' she cried out, 'embrace me, come, Quick while I melt; make reconciliation sure With one that cannot keep her mind an hour : Come to the hollow heart they slander so ! Kiss and be friends, like children being chid ! I seem no more : I want forgiveness too : I should have had to do with none but maids, That have no links with men. Ah false but dear, Dear traitor, too much loved, why?— why?—Yet see, Before these kings we embrace you yet once more With all forgiveness, all oblivion, And trust, not love, you less.</p>	<p>The soft and milky rabble of womankind, Poor weakling ev'n as they are.'</p>
<p>And now, O sire, Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait upon him, Like mine own brother. For my debt to him, This nightmare weight of gratitude, I know it ; Taunt me no more : yourself and yours shall have Free adit ; we will scatter all our maids Till happier times each to her proper hearth ; What use to keep them here—now ? grant my prayer. Help, father, brother, help ; speak to the king : Thaw this male nature to some touch of that Which kills me with myself, and drags me down From my fixt height to mob me up with all</p>	<p>Passionate tears Follow'd : the king replied not : Cyril said : ' Your brother, Lady,—Florian,—ask for him Of your great head—for he is wounded too— That you may tend upon him with the prince.' ' Ay so,' said Ida with a bitter smile, ' Our laws are broken : let him enter too.' Then Violet, she that sang the mournful song, And had a cousin tumbled on the plain, Petition'd too for him. ' Ay so,' she said, ' I stagger in the stream : I cannot keep My heart an eddy from the brawling hour : We break our laws with ease, but let it be,' ' Ay so?' said Blanche : ' Amazed am I to hear Your Highness : but your Highness breaks with ease The law your Highness did not make : 'twas I. I had been wedded wife, I knew mankind, And block'd them out ; but these men came to woo Your Highness—verily I think to win.'</p>
	<p>So she, and turn'd askance a wintry eye : But Ida with a voice, that like a bell Toll'd by an earthquake in a trembling tower, Rang ruin, answer'd full of grief and scorn. ' Fling our doors wide ! all, all, not one, but all,</p>

Not only he, but by my mother's soul,
 Whatever man lies wounded, friend or foe,
 Shall enter, if he will. Let our girls flit,
 Till the storm die ! but had you stood by
 us,
 The roar that breaks the Pharos from his
 base
 Had left us rock. She fain would sting
 us too,
 But shall not. Pass, and mingle with
 your likes.
 We brook no further insult but are gone.'

She turn'd ; the very nape of her white
 neck
 Was rosed with indignation : but the
 Prince
 Her brother came ; the king her father
 charm'd
 Her wounded soul with words : nor did
 mine own
 Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his hand.

Then us they lifted up, dead weights,
 and bare
 Straight to the doors : to them the doors
 gave way
 Groaning, and in the Vestal entry shriek'd
 The virgin marble under iron heels :
 And on they moved and gain'd the hall,
 and there
 Rested : but great the crush was, and
 each base,
 To left and right, of those tall columns
 drown'd
 In silken fluctuation and the swarm
 Of female whisperers : at the further end
 Was Ida by the throne, the two great cats
 Close by her, like supporters on a shield,
 Bow-back'd with fear : but in the centre
 stood
 The common men with rolling eyes ;
 amazed

They glared upon the women, and aghast
 The women stared at these, all silent, save
 When armour clash'd or jingled, while
 the day,
 Descending, struck athwart the hall, and
 shot
 A flying splendour out of brass and steel,
 That o'er the statues leapt from head to
 head,
 Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,
 Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on flame,
 And now and then an echo started up,
 And shuddering fled from room to room,
 and died
 Of fright in far apartments.

Then the voice
 Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance :
 And me they bore up the broad stairs,
 - and thro'
 The long-laid galleries past a hundred
 doors
 To one deep chamber shut from sound,
 and due
 To languid limbs and sickness ; left me
 in it ;
 And others otherwhere they laid ; and all
 That afternoon a sound arose of hoof
 And chariot, many a maiden passing home
 Till happier times ; but some were left of
 those
 Held sagest, and the great lords out and
 in,
 From those two hosts that lay beside the
 walls,
 Walk'd at their will, and everything was
 changed.

VII.

Ask me no more : the moon may draw the sea ;
 The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the
 shape,
 With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape ;
 But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee ?
 Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : what answer should I give ?
 I love not hollow cheek or faded eye :
 Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die !
 Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live ;
 Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : thy fate and mine are seal'd :
 I strove against the stream and all in vain :
 Let the great river take me to the main :
 No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield ;
 Ask me no more.

So was their sanctuary violated,
 So their fair college turn'd to hospital ;
 At first with all confusion : by and bye
 Sweet order lived again with other laws :
 A kindlier influence reign'd ; and every-
 where

Low voices with the ministering hand
 Hung round the sick : the maidens came,
 they talk'd,

They sang, they read : till she not fair
 began

To gather light, and she that was, became
 Her former beauty treble ; and to and fro
 With books, with flowers, with Angel
 offices,

Like creatures native unto gracious act,
 And in their own clear element, they
 moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,
 And hatred of her weakness, blent with
 shame.

Old studies fail'd ; seldom she spoke : but
 oft

Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for
 hours

On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men
 Darkening her female field : void was her
 usc,

And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze
 O'er land and main, and sees a great
 black cloud

Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of
 night,

Blot out the slope of sea from verge to
 shore,

And suck the blinding splendour from the
 sand,

And quenching lake by lake and tarn by
 tarn

Expunge the world : so fared she gazing
 there ;

So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank
 And waste it seem'd and vain ; till down
 she came,

And found fair peace once more among
 the sick.

And twilight dawn'd ; and morn by
 morn the lark

Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres,
 but I

Lay silent in the muffled cage of life :
 And twilight gloom'd ; and broader-
 grown the bowers

Drew the great night into themselves, and
 Heaven,

Star after star, arose and fell ; but I,
 Deeper than those weird doubts could
 reach me, lay

Quite sunder'd from the moving Universe,
 Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the
 hand

That nursed me, more than infants in
 their sleep.

But Psyche tended Florian : with her
 oft,

Melissa came ; for Blanche had gone, but
 left

Her child among us, willing she should
 keep

Court-favour : here and there the small
 bright head,

A light of healing, glanced about the
 couch,

Or thro' the parted silks the tender face

Peep'd
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Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded man
With blush and smile, a medicine in
themselves

To wile the length from languorous hours,
and draw

The sting from pain; nor seem'd it
strange that soon

He rose up whole, and those fair charities
Join'd at her side; nor stranger seem'd
that hearts

So gentle, so employ'd, should close in
love,

Than when two dewdrops on the petal
shake

To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper
down,

And slip at once all-fragrant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit ob-
tain'd

At first with Psyche. Not tho' Blanche
had sworn

That after that dark night among the fields
She needs must wed him for her own good
name;

Not tho' he built upon the babe restored;
Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she, but
fear'd

To incense the Head once more; till on
a day

When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind
Seen but of Psyche: on her foot she hung
A moment, and she heard, at which her
face

A little flush'd, and she past on; but each
Assumed from thence a half-consent in-
volved

In stillness, plighted troth, and were at
peace.

Nor only these: Love in the sacred
halls

Held carnival at will, and flying struck

With showers of random sweet on maid
and man.

Nor did her father cease to press my claim,
Nor did mine own now reconciled; nor
yet

Did those twin brothers, risen again and
whole;

Nor Arac, satiate with his victory.

But I lay still, and with me oft she sat:
Then came a change; for sometimes I
would catch

Her hand in wild delirium, gripe it hard,
And fling it like a viper off, and shriek
'You are not Ida;' clasp it once again,
And call her Ida, tho' I knew her not,
And call her sweet, as if in irony,
And call her hard and cold which seem'd
a truth:

And still she fear'd that I should lose my
mind,

And often she believed that I should die:
Till out of long frustration of her care,
And pensive tendance in the all-weary
noons,

And watches in the dead, the dark, when
clocks

Throb'd thunder thro' the palace floors,
or call'd

On flying Time from all their silver
tongues—

And out of memories of her kindlier days,
And sidelong glances at my father's grief,
And at the happy lovers heart in heart—
And out of hauntings of my spoken love,
And lonely listenings to my mutter'd
dream,

And often feeling of the helpless hands,
And wordless broodings on the wasted
check—

From all a closer interest flourish'd up,
Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to
these,

<p>Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with tears By some cold morning glacier; frail at first And feeble, all unconscious of itself, But such as gather'd colour day by day.</p> <p>Last I woke sane, but well-nigh close to death For weakness: it was evening: silent light Slept on the painted walls, wherein were wrought Two grand designs; for on one side arose The women up in wild revolt, and storm'd At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes, they cramm'd</p> <p>The forum, and half-crush'd among the rest A dwarf-like Cato cower'd. On the other side Hortensia spoke against the tax; behind, A train of dames: by axe and eagle sat, With all their foreheads drawn in Roman scowls, And half the wolf's-milk curdled in their veins, The fierce triumvirs; and before them paused Hortensia, pleading: angry was her face.</p> <p>I saw the forms: I knew not where I was: They did but look like hollow shows; nor more Sweet I la: palm to palm she sat: the dew In her eyes, and softer all her shape rounder seem'd: I moved: I sigh'd: a touch Came round my wrist, and tears upon my hand: Then all for languor and self-pity ran</p>	<p>Mine down my face, and with what life I had, And like a flower that cannot all unfold, So drench'd it is with tempest, to the sun, Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on her Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whisper- ingly:</p> <p>'If you be, what I think you, some sweet dream, I would but ask you to fulfil yourself: But if you be that Ida whom I knew, I ask you nothing: only, if a dream, Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die to- night. Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I die.'</p> <p>I could no more, but lay like one in trance, That hears his burial talk'd of by his friends, And cannot speak, nor move, nor make one sign, But lies and dreads his doom. She turn'd; she paused; She stoop'd; and out of languor leapt a cry; Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of death; And I believed that in the living world My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips; Till back I fell, and from mine arms she rose Glowing all over noble shame; and all Her falser self slipt from her like a robe, And left her woman, lovelier in her mood Than in her mould that other, when she came From barren deeps to court me: with love; And down the streaming breast dropt; and she Far-fleeted by the purple island-sides,</p>
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Naked, a double light in air and wave,
To meet her Graces, where they deck'd
her out

For worship without end ; nor end of mine,
Stateliest, for thee ! but mute she glided
forth,

Nor glanced behind her, and I sank and
slept,

Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a happy
sleep.

Deep in the night I woke : she, near
me, held

A volume of the Poets of her land :

There to herself, all in low tones, she read.

'Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the
white ;

Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk ;

Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry
font :

The fire-fly wakens : waken thou with me.

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like
a ghost,

And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the
stars,

And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and
leaves

A shining furrow, as thy thought in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake :

So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and
slip

Into my bosom and be lost in me.'

I heard her turn the page ; she found
a small

Sweet Idyl, and once more, as low, she
read :

'Come down, O maid, from yonder
mountain height :

What pleasure lives in height (the
shepherd sang)

In height and cold, the splendour of the
hills ?

But cease to move so near the Heavens,
and cease

To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,

To sit a star upon the sparkling spire ;

And come, for Love is of the valley, come,

For Love is of the valley, come thou down

And find him ; by the happy threshold, he,

Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,

Or red with spirted purple of the vats,

Or foxlike in the vine ; nor cares to walk

With Death and Morning on the silver
horns,

Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,

Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,

That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls

To roll the torrent out of dusky doors :

But follow ; let the torrent dance thee
down

To find him in the valley ; let the wild

Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave

The monstrous ledges there to slope, and
spill

Their thousand wreaths of dangling
water-smoke,

That like a broken purpose waste in air :

So waste not thou ; but come ; for all
vales

Await thee ; azure pillars of the light

Arise to thee ; the children call, and

Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every
sound,

Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is
sweet ;

Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.'

So she low-toned ; while with shut eyes
I lay

Listening ; then look'd. Pale was the
perfect face ;

The bosom with long sighs labour'd ; and
meek

Seem'd the full lips, and mild the lumi-
nous eyes,

And the voice trembled and the hand.
She said

Brokenly, that she knew it, she had fail'd
In sweet humility ; had fail'd in all ;

That all her labour was but as a block
Left in the quarry ; but she still were loth,

She still were loth to yield herself to one
That wholly scorn'd to help their equal
rights

Against the sons of men, and barbarous
laws.

She pray'd me not to judge their cause
from her

That wrong'd it, sought far less for truth
than power

In knowledge : something wild within
her breast,

A greater than all knowledge, beat her
down.

And she had nursed me there from week
to week :

Much had she learnt in little time. In part
It was ill counsel had misled the girl

To vex true hearts : yet was she but a
girl—

'Ah fool, and made myself a Queen of
farce !

When comes another such ? never, I think,
Till the Sun drop dead from the signs.'

Her voice

Choked, and her forehead sank upon her
hands,

And her great heart thro' all the faultful
Past

Went sorrowing in a pause I dared not
break ;

Till notice of a change in the dark world
Was lispt about the acacias, and a bird,

That early woke to feed her little ones,
Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light :

She moved, and at her feet the volume fell.

'Blame not thyself too much,' I said,
'nor blame

Too much the sons of men and barbarous
laws ;

These were the rough ways of the world
till now.

Henceforth thou hast a helper, me, that
know

The woman's cause is man's : they rise or
sink

Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free:
For she that out of Lethe scales with man

The shining steps of Nature, shares with
man

His nights, his days, moves with him to
one goal,

Stays all the fair young planet in her
hands—

If she be small, slight-natured, miserable,
How shall men grow ? but work no more
alone !

Our place is much : as far as in us lies
We two will serve them both in aiding
her—

Will clear away the parasitic forms
That seem to keep her up but drag her
down—

Will leave her space to burgeon out of all
Within her—let her make herself her own

To give or keep, to live and learn and be
All that not harms distinctive womanhood.

For woman is not under-kept man,
But diverse : could we make her as the man,

Sweet Love
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Life.'

And again

Sweet Love were slain : his dearest bond
 is this,
 Not like to like, but like in difference.
 Yet in the long years liker must they grow ;
 The man be more of woman, she of man ;
 He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
 Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw
 the world ;
 She mental breadth, nor fail in childward
 care,
 Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind ;
 Till at the last she set herself to man,
 Like perfect music unto noble words ;
 And so the twain, upon the skirts of Time,
 Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all their
 powers,
 Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
 Self-reverent each and reverencing each,
 Distinct in individualities,
 But like each other ev'n as those who love.
 Then comes the statelier Eden back to
 men :
 Then reign the world's great bridal, s
 chaste and calm :
 Then springs the crowning race of human-
 kind.
 May these things be !'
 Sighing she spoke ' I fear
 They will not.'
 ' Dear, but let us type them now
 In our own lives, and this proud watch-
 word rest
 Of equal ; seeing either sex alone
 Is half itself, and in true marriage lies
 Nor equal, nor unequal : each fulfils
 Defect in each, and always thought in
 thought,
 Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,
 The single pure and perfect animal,
 The two-cell'd heart beating, with one full
 stroke,
 Life.'
 And again sighing she spoke : ' A dream

That once was mine ! what woman taught
 you this ?'

' Alone,' I said, ' from earlier than I
 know,
 Immersed in rich foreshadowings of the
 world,
 I loved the woman : he, that doth not,
 lives
 A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,
 Or pines in sad experience worse than
 death,
 Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt with
 crime :
 Yet was there one thro' whom I loved
 her, one
 Not learned, save in gracious household
 ways,
 Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
 No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
 In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
 Interpreter between the Gods and men,
 Who look'd all native to her place, and
 yet
 On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
 Too gross to tread, and all male minds
 perforce
 Sway'd to her from their orbits as they
 moved,
 And girdled her with music. Happy he
 With such a mother ! faith in womankind
 Beats with his blood, and trust in all
 things high
 Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and
 fall
 He shall not blind his soul with clay.'
 ' But I,'
 Said Ida, tremulously, ' so all unlike—
 It seems you love to cheat yourself with
 words :
 This mother is your model. I have heard
 Of your strange doubts : they well might
 be : I seem

<p>A mockery to my own self. Never, Prince; You cannot love me.'</p> <p style="text-align: right;">'Nay but thee' I said</p> <p>'From yearlong poring on thy pictured eyes, Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen, and saw Thée woman thro' the crust of iron moods That mask'd thee from men's reverence up, and I . . .</p> <p>Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood : now, Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro' thee, Indeed I love : the new day comes, the light Dearer for night, as dearer thou for faults Lived over : lift thine eyes ; my doubts are dead, My haunting sense of hollow shows : the change, This truthful change in thee has kill'd it. Dear, Look up, and let thy nature strike on mine, Like yonder morning on the blind half- world ; Approach and fear not ; breathe upon my brows ; In that fine air I tremble, all the past Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and this Is morn to more, and all the rich to-come Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland reels Athwart the smoke of burning weeds. Forgive me, I waste my heart in signs : let be. My bride, My wife, my life. O we will walk this world, Yoked in all exercise of noble end,</p>	<p>And so thro' those dark gates across the wild That no man knows. Indeed I love thee : come, Yield thyself up : my hopes and thine are one : Accomplish thou my manhood and thy- self ; Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me.'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CONCLUSION.</p> <p>So closed our tale, of which I give you all The random scheme as wildly as it rose : The words are mostly mine ; for when we ceased There came a minute's pause, and Walter said, 'I wish she had not yielded !' then to me, 'What, if you drest it up poetically !' So pray'd the men, the women : I gave assent : Yet how to bind the scattered scheme of seven Together in one sheaf? What style could suit ? The men required that I should give throughout The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque, With which we banter'd little Lilia first : The women—and perhaps they felt their power, For something in the ballads which they sang, Or in their silent influence as they sat, Had ever seem'd to wrestle with burlesque, And drove us, last, to quite a solemn close— They hated banter, wish'd for something real, A gallant fight, a noble princess—why Not make her true-heroic—true-sublime ? Or all, they said, as earnest as the close ?</p>
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groves
Trim hamlet
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Half-lost in b
wheat
The shimmer
the sea

Which yet with such a framework scarce
could be.

Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,
Betwixt the mockers and the realists :
And I, betwixt them both, to please them
both,

And yet to give the story as it rose,
I moved as in a strange diagonal,
And maybe neither pleased myself nor
them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no
part

In our dispute : the sequel of the tale
Had touch'd her ; and she sat, she pluck'd
the grass,

She flung it from her, thinking : last, she
fixt

A showery glance upon her aunt, and said,
' You — tell us what we are ' who might
have told,

For she was cramm'd with theories out of
books,

But that there rose a shout : the gates
were closed

At sunset, and the crowd were swarming
now,

To take their leave, about the garden rails.

So I and some went out to these : we
climb'd

The slope to Vivian-place, and turnings saw
The happy valleys, half in light, and half

Far-shadowing from the west, a land of
peace ;

Gray halls alone among their massive
groves ;

Trim hamlets ; here and there a rustic
tower

Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths of
wheat ;

The shimmering glimpses of a stream ;
the seas ;

A red sail, or a white ; and far beyond,
Imagined more than seen, the skirts of
France.

' Look there, a garden ! ' said my
college friend,
The Tory member's elder son, ' and there !
God bless the narrow sea which keeps her
off,

And keeps our Britain, whole within her-
self,

A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled—
Some sense of duty, something of a faith,
Some reverence for the laws ourselves
have made,

Some patient force to change them when
we will,

Some civic manhood firm against the
crowd—

But yonder, whiff ! there comes a sudden
heat,

The gravest citizen seems to lose his head,
The king is scared, the soldier will not
fight,

The little boys begin to shoot and stab,
A kingdom topples over with a shriek

Like an old woman, and down rolls the
world

In mock heroics stranger than our own ;
Revolts, republics, revolutions, most

No graver than a schoolboys' barring out ;
Too comic for the solemn things they are,

Too solemn for the comic touches in them,
Like our wild Princess with as wise a
dream

As some of theirs—God bless the narrow
seas !

I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad.'

' Have patience,' I replied, ' ourselves
are full

Of social wrong ; and maybe wildest
dreams

Are but the needful preludes of the truth :
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,
The sport half-science, fill me with a
faith,

This fine old world of ours is but a child
Yet in the go-cart. Patience ! Give it
time

To learn its limbs : there is a hand that
guides.'

In such discourse we gain'd the garden
rails,

And there we saw Sir Walter where he
stood,

Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,
Among six boys, head under head, and
look'd

No little lily-handed Baronet he,
A great broad-shoulder'd genial English-
man,

A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,
A patron of some thirty charities,
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,
A quarter-sessions chairman, abler none ;
Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy morn ;
Now shaking hands with him, now him,
of those

That stood the nearest—now address'd to
speech—

Who spoke few words and pithy, such as
closed

Welcome, farewell, and welcome for the
year

To follow : a shout rose again, and made
The long line of the approaching rookery
swerve

From the elms, and shook the branches
of the deer

From slope to slope thro' distant ferns,
and rang

Beyond the bourn of sunset ; O, a shout
More joyful than the city-roar that hails

Premier or king ! Why should not these
great Sirs

Give up their parks some dozen times a year
To let the people breathe? So thrice
they cried,

likewise, and in groups they stream'd
away.

But we went back to the Abbey, and
sat on,

So much the gathering darkness charm'd :
we sat

But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,
Perchance upon the future man : the walls
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and
owls whoop'd,

And gradually the powers of the night,
That range above the region of the wind,
Deepening the courts of twilight broke
them up

Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of
Heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,
Disrobed the glimmering statue of Sir
Ralph

From those rich silks, and home well-
pleased we went.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

PUBLISHED IN 1852.

I.

BURY the Great Duke

With an empire's lamentation,

Let us bury the Great Duke

To the noise of the mourning of a
mighty nation,

Mourning when their leaders fall,

Warriors carry the warrior's pall,

And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

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O iron nerve
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II.

Where shall we lay the man whom we
deplore?

Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III.

Lead out the pageant : sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it
grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow ;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the
Past.

No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute ;
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, reso-
lute,

Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.

O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men
drew,

O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds
that blew !

Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be
seen no more.

V.

All is over and done :
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd :
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds :
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd :
And a deeper knell in the heart be
knoll'd ;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem
roll'd
Thro' the dome of the golden cross ;
And the volleying cannon thunder his
loss ;

He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a chime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom :
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame ;
With those deep voices our dead captain
taught

The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,

To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd
guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier
and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on
my rest?
Mighty Seanan, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous
man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes;
For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea;
His foes were thine; he kept us free;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee;
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gain'd a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
Clash'd with his fiery few and won;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works, the vast designs
Of his labour'd rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew

Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
Follow'd up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamour of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing
wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler
down;
A day of onsets of despair!
Dash'd on every rocky square
Their surging charges foam'd themselves
away;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
Thro' the long-tormented air
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and
overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there,
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
If aught of things that here befall
Touch a spirit among things divine,
If love of country move thee there at all,
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!
And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
In full acclaim,
A people's voice,
The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice
At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honour, honour, honour, honour to
him,
Eternal honour to his name,

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Your cannon
wall;
His voice is si
For ever; and
For ever silen
In thunder, sil

VII.

A people's voice ! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams
 forget,
 Confused by brainless mobs and lawless
 Powers ;
 Thank Him who isled us here, and
 roughly set
 His Briton in blown seas and storming
 showers,
 We have a voice, with which to pay the
 debt
 Of boundless love and reverence and re-
 gret
 To those great men who fought, and kept
 it ours,
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute
 control ;
 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye,
 the soul
 Of Europe, keep our noble England
 whole,
 And save the one true seed of freedom
 sown
 Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
 That sober freedom out of which there
 springs
 Our loyal passion for our temperate kings ;
 For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
 Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
 And drill the raw world for the march of
 mind,
 Till crowls at length be sane and crowns
 be just.
 But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
 Remember him who led your hosts ;
 He bad you guard the sacred coasts.
 Your cannons moulder on the seaward
 wall ;
 His voice is silent in your council-hall
 For ever ; and whatever tempests lour
 For ever silent ; even if they broke
 In thunder, silent ; yet remember all

He spoke among you, and the Man who
 spoke ;
 Who never sold the truth to serve the
 hour,
 Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power ;
 Who let the turbid streams of rumour flow
 Thro' either babbling world of high and
 low ;
 Whose life was work, whose language
 rife
 With rugged maxims hewn from life ;
 Who never spoke against a foe ;
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one
 rebuke
 All great self-seekers trampling on the
 right :
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred
 named ;
 Truth-lover was our English Duke ;
 Whatever record leap to light
 He never shall be shamed.

VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
 Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
 He, on whom from both her open hands
 Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,
 And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
 Yea, let all good things await
 Him who cares not to be great,
 But as he saves or serves the state.
 Not once or twice in our rough island-
 story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory :
 He that walks it, only thirsting
 For the right, and learns to deaden
 Love of self, before his journey closes,
 He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
 Into glossy purples, which outredden
 All voluptuous garden-roses.
 Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory :

He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has
won

His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty
scaled

Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and
sun.

Such was he : his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman
pure :

Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory :
And let the land whose hearths he saved
from shame

For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illumin'd cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honour, honour, honour, honour to
him,
Eternal honour to his name.

IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue
Far on in summers that we shall not see :
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung :
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one, upon whose hand and heart and
brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain !
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.

Whom we see not we revere ;
We revere, and we refrain

From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane :

We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.

For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will ;
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads
roll

Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul ?
On God and Godlike men we build our
trust.

Hush, the Dead March wails in the
people's ears :

The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs
and tears :

The black earth yawns : the mortal
disappears ;

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;

He is gone who seem'd so great.—
Gone ; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own

Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.

Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.

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THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY, 1852.

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THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY,
1852.

My Lords, we heard you speak : you told
us all
That England's honest censure went too
far ;
That our free press should cease to brawl,
Not sting the fiery Frenchman into war.
It was our ancient privilege, my Lords,
To fling whate'er we felt, not fearing, into
words.

We love not this French God, the child
of Hell,
Wild War, who breaks the converse of
the wise ;
But though we love kind Peace so well,
We dare not ev'n by silence sanction
lies.
It might be safe our censures to withdraw ;
And yet, my Lords, not well : there is a
higher law.

As long as we remain, we must speak free,
Tho' all the storm of Europe on us
break ;
No little German state are we,
But the one voice in Europe : we *must*
speak ;
That if to-night our greatness were struck
dead,
There might be left some record of the
things we said.

If you be fearful, then must we be bold.
Our Britain cannot salve a tyrant o'er.
Better the waste Atlantic roll'd
On her and us and ours for evermore.
What I have we fought for Freedom from
our prime,
At last to dodge and palter with a public
crime?

Shall we fear *him*? our own we never
fear'd,
From our first Charles by force we
wring our claims.
Prick'd by the Papal spur, we rear'd,
We flung the burthen of the second
James.
I say, we *never* feared ! and as for these,
We broke them on the land, we drove
them on the seas.

And you, my Lords, you make the people
muse
In doubt if you be of our Barons' breed—
Were those your sires who fought at
Lewes?
Is this the manly strain of Runny-
mede?
O fall'n nobility, that, overawed,
Would lisp in honey'd whispers of this
monstrous fraud !

We feel, at least, that silence here were
sin,
Not ours the fault if we have feeble
hosts—
If easy patrons of their kin
Have left the last free race with naked
coasts !
They knew the precious things they had
to guard :
For us, we will not spare the tyrant one
hard word.

Tho' niggard throats of Manchester may
bawl,
What England was, shall her true sons
forget ?
We are not cotton-spinners all,
But some love England and her honour
yet.
And these in our Thermopylæ shall stand,
And hold against the world this honour
of the land.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

I.

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!' he said:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II.

'Forward, the Light Brigade!'
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd:
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

IV.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian

Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.

V.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

VI.

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

ODE SUNG AT THE OPENING
OF THE INTERNATIONAL
EXHIBITION.

I.

UPLIFT a thousand voices full and sweet,
In this wide hall with earth's invention
stored,
And praise the invisible universal Lord,
Who lets once more in peace the nations
meet,
Where Science, Art, and Labour have
outpour'd
Their myriad horns of plenty at our feet.

II.

O silent father of our Kings to be
Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,
For this, for all, we weep our thanks to
thee!

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III.

The world-compelling plan was thine,—
And, lo ! the long laborious miles
Of Palace ; lo ! the giant aisles,
Rich in model and design ;
Harvest-tool and husbandry,
Loom and wheel and enginery,
Secrets of the sullen mine,
Steel and gold, and corn and wine,
Fabric rough, or fairy-fine,
Sunny tokens of the Line,
Polar marvels, and a feast
Of wonder, out of West and East,
And shapes and hues of Art divine !
All of beauty, all of use,
That one fair planet can produce,
Brought from under every star,
Blown from over every main,
And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,
The works of peace with works of war.

IV.

O ye, the wise who think, the wise who
reign,
From growing commerce loose her latest
chain, [fly
And let the fair white-wing'd peacemaker
To happy havens under all the sky,
And mix the seasons and the golden hours ;
Till each man find his own in all men's good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood,
Breaking their mailed fleets and armed
towers,
And ruling by obeying Nature's powers,
And gathering all the fruits of earth and
crown'd with all her flowers.

A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA.

MARCH 7, 1863.

SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the sea,
Alexandra !
Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
But all of us Danes in our welcome of thee,
Alexandra !

Welcome her, thunders of fort and of
fleet !

Welcome her, thundering cheer of the
street !

Welcome her, all things youthful and
sweet,

Scatter the blossom under her feet !

Break, happy land, into earlier flowers !

Make music, O bird, in the new-budded
bowers !

Blazon your mottoes of blessing and
prayer !

Welcome her, welcome her, all that is
ours !

Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blare !

Flags, flutter out upon turrets and towers !

Flames, on the windy headland flare !

Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire !

Clash, ye bells, in the merry March air !

Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire !

Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and
higher

Melt into stars for the land's desire !

Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice,

Roll as a ground-swell dash'd on the
strand,

Roar as the sea when he welcomes the
land,

And welcome her, welcome the land's
desire,

The sea-kings' daughter as happy as fair,

Blissful bride of a blissful heir,

Bride of the heir of the kings of the
sea—

O joy to the people and joy to the
throne,

Come to us, love us and make us your
own :

For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,

Tenton or Celt, or whatever we be,

We are each all Dane in our welcome of
thee,

Alexandra !

*A WELCOME TO HER ROYAL
HIGHNESS MARIE ALEXAN-
DROVNA, DUCHESS OF EDIN-
BURGH.*

MARCH 7, 1874.

I.

THE Son of him with whom we strove for
power—

Whose will is lord thro' all Lis world-
domain—

Who made the serf a man, and burst
his chain—

Has given our Prince his own imperial
Flower,

Alexandrovna.

And welcome, Russian flower, a people's
pride,

To Britain, when her flowers begin to
blow !

From love to love, from home to home
you go,

From mother unto mother, stately bride,
Marie Alexandrovna !

II.

The golden news along the steppes is
blown,

And at thy name the Tartar tents are
stirr'd ;

Elburz and all the Caucasus have heard ;
And all the sultry palms of India known,

Alexandrovna.

The voices of our universal sea

On capes of Afric as on cliffs of Kent,

The Maoris and that Isle of Continent,
And loyal pines of Canada murmur thee,

Marie Alexandrovna !

III.

Fair empires branching, both, in lusty
life !—

Yet Harold's England fell to Norman
swords ;

Yet thine own land has bow'd to Tartar
hordes

Since English Harold gave its throne a wife,
Alexandrovna !

For thrones and peoples are as waifs that
swing,

And float or fall, in endless ebb and
flow ;

But who love best have best the grace
to know

That Love by right divine is deathless king,
Marie Alexandrovna !

IV.

And Love has led thee to the stranger land,
Where men are bold and strongly say
their say ;—

See, empire upon empire smiles to-day,
As thou with thy young lover hand in hand
Alexandrovna !

So now thy fuller life is in the west,
Whose hand at home was gracious to
thy poor :

Thy name was blest within the narrow
door ;

Here also, Marie, shall thy name be blest,
Marie Alexandrovna !

V.

Shall fears and jealous hatreds flame again ?
Or at thy coming, Princess, everywhere,
The blue heaven break, and some
diviner air

Breathe thro' the world and change the
hearts of men,

Alexandrovna ?

But hearts that change not, love that
cannot cease,

And peace be yours, the peace of soul
in soul !

And howsoever this wild world may roll,
Between your peoples truth and manful
peace,

A Fred—Alexandrovna !

THE GRANDMOTHER.

I.

AND Willy, my eldest-born, is gone, you say, little Anne?
Ruddy and white, and strong on his legs, he looks like a man.
And Willy's wife has written: she never was over-wise,
Never the wife for Willy: he wouldn't take my advice.

II.

For, Annie, you see, her father was not the man to save,
Hadn't a head to manage, and drank himself into his grave.
Pretty enough, very pretty! but I was against it for one.
Eh!—but he wouldn't hear me—and Willy, you say, is gone.

III.

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the flower of the flock;
Never a man could fling him: for Willy stood like a rock.
'Here's a leg for a babe of a week!' says doctor; and he would be bound,
There was not his like that year in twenty parishes round.

IV.

Strong of his hands, and strong on his legs, but still of his tongue!
I ought to have gone before him: I wonder he went so young.
I cannot cry for him, Annie: I have not long to stay;
Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for he lived far away.

V.

Why do you look at me, Annie? you think I am hard and cold;
But all my children have gone before me, I am so old:
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I weep for the rest;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

VI.

For I remember a quarrel I had with your father, my dear,
All for a slanderous story, that cost me many a tear.
I mean your grandfather, Annie: it cost me a world of woe,
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

VII.

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the place, and I knew right well
That Jenny had tript in her time: I knew, but I would not tell.
And she to be coming and slandering me, the base little liar!
But the tongue is a fire as you know, my dear, the tongue is a fire.

VIII.

And the parson made it his text that week, and he said likewise,
That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies,
That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with outright,
But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.

IX.

And Willy had not been down to the farm for a week and a day ;
And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it was the middle of May.
Jenny, to slander me, who knew what Jenny had been !
But soiling another, Annie, will never make oneself clean.

X.

And I cried myself well-nigh blind, and all of an evening late
I climb'd to the top of the garth, and stood by the road at the gate.
The moon like a rick on fire was rising over the dale,
And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside me chirrup the nightingale.

XI.

All of a sudden he stopt : there past by the gate of the farm,
Willy,—he didn't see me,—and Jenny hung on his arm.
Out into the road I started, and spoke I scarce knew how ;
Ah, there's no fool like the old one—it makes me angry now.

XII.

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd the thing that he meant ;
Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking courtsey and went.
And I said, 'Let us part : in a hundred years it'll all be the same,
You cannot love me at all, if you love not my good name.'

XIII.

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all wet, in the sweet moonshine :
'Sweetheart, I love you so well that your good name is mine.
And what do I care for Jane, let her speak of you well or ill ;
But marry me out of hand : we two shall be happy still.'

XIV.

'Marry you, Willy !' said I, 'but I needs must speak my mind,
And I fear you'll listen to tales, be jealous and hard and unkind.'
But he turn'd and claspt me in his arms, and answer'd, 'No, love, no ;'
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

XV.

So Willy and I were wedded : I wore a lilac gown ;
And the ringers rang with a will, and he gave the ringers a crown.
But the first that ever I bare was dead before he was born,
Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and thorn.

XVI.

That was the first time, too, that ever I thought of death,
There lay the sweet little body that never had drawn a breath.
I had not wept, little Anne, not since I had been a wife ;
But I wept like a child that day, for the babe had fought for his life.

XVII.

His dear little face was troubled, as if with anger or pain :
 I look'd at the still little body—his trouble had all been in vain.
 For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him another morn :
 But I wept like a child for the child that was dead before he was born.

XVIII.

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for he seldom said me nay :
 Kind, like a man, was he ; like a man, too, would have his way :
 Never jealous—not he : we had many a happy year ;
 And he died, and I could not weep—my own time seem'd so near.

XIX.

But I wish'd it had been God's will that I, too, then could have died :
 I began to be tired a little, and fain had slept at his side.
 And that was ten years back, or more, if I don't forget :
 But as to the children, Annie, they're all about me yet.

XX.

Pattering over the boards, my Annie who left me at two,
 Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an Annie like you :
 Pattering over the boards, she comes and goes at her will,
 While Harry is in the five-acre and Charlie ploughing the hill.

XXI.

And Harry and Charlie, I hear them too—they sing to their team :
 Often they come to the door in a pleasant kind of a dream.
 They come and sit by my chair, they hover about my bed—
 I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.

XXII.

And yet I know for a truth, there's none of them left alive ;
 For Harry went at sixty, your father at sixty-five :
 And Willy, my eldest born, at nigh threescore and ten ;
 I knew them all as babies, and now they're elderly men.

XXIII.

For mine is a time of peace, it is not often I grieve ;
 I am oftener sitting at home in my father's farm at eve :
 And the neighbours come and laugh and gossip, and so do I ;
 I find myself often laughing at things that have long gone by.

XXIV.

To be sure the preacher says, our sins should make us sad :
 But mine is a time of peace, and there is Grace to be had ;
 And God, not man, is the Judge of us all when life shall cease ;
 And in this Book, little Annie, the message is one of Peace.

XXV.

And age is a time of peace, so it be free from pain,
And happy has been my life ; but I would not live it again.
I seem to be tired a little, that's all, and long for rest ;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the best.

XXVI.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my eldest-born, my flower ;
But how can I weep for Willy, he has but gone for an hour, —
Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into the next ;
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time have I to be vext ?

XXVII.

And Willy's wife has written, she never was over-wise.
Get me my glasses, Annie : thank God that I keep my eyes.
There is but a trifle left you, when I shall have past away.
But stay with the old woman now : you cannot have long to stay.

NORTHERN FARMER.

OLD STYLE.

I.

WHEER 'asta beän saw long and meä liggin' 'ere aloän ?
Noorse ? thoort nowt o' a noorse' : whoy, Doctor's abeän an' agoän :
Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle : but I beänt a fool :
Git ma my aäle, fur I beänt a-gooïn' to bræk my rule.

II.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a says what's nawways true :
Naw soort o' koind o' use to sää the things that a do.
I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight sin' I beän 'ere,
An' I've 'ed my quant ivry market-noight for foorty year.

III.

Parson's a beän loikewise, an' a sittin' 'ere o' my bed.
'The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my friend,' a said,
An' a towd ma my sins, an's toithe were due, an' I gied it in hond ;
I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy the lond.

IV.

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot sa mooch to larn.
But a cast oop, thot a did, 'boot Bessy Marris's barne.
Thaw a knaws I hallus voäted wi' Squire an' choorch an' staäte,
An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver agin the raäte.

V.

An' I hallus coom'd to 's choorch afoor moy Sally wur deääd,
 An' 'cerd 'um a bummin' awaäy loike a buzzard-clock¹ ower my 'cääd,
 An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd but I thowt a 'ad summut to sääy,
 An' I thowt a säid whot a owt to 'a säid an' I coom'd awaäy.

VI.

Bessy Marris's barne! tha knaws she laäid it to meä.
 Mowt a beän, mayhap, for she wur a bad un, sheä.
 'Siver, I kep 'um, I kep 'um, my lass, tha mun understand;
 I done moy duty boy 'um as I 'a done boy the lond.

VII.

But Parson a comes an' a goos, an' a says it cäsy an' freeä
 'The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my friend,' says 'eä.
 I weänt sääy men be loiars, thaw summun säid it in 'aäste:
 But 'e reäds wonn sarmin a wecäk, an' I 'a stubb'd Thurnaby waäste.

VIII.

D'ya moind the waäste, my lass? naw, naw, tha was not born then;
 Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'cerd 'um mysen;
 Moäst loike a butter-bump,² fur I 'cerd 'um about an' aboot,
 But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an' raäved an' rembled 'um oot.

IX.

Keäper's it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer a-laäid of 'is faäce
 Doon i' the woild 'enemies³ afoor I coom'd to the plaäce.
 Noäks or Thimbleby—toäner 'ed shot 'um as deääd as a naäil.
 Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize—but git ma my aäle.

X.

Dubbut loook at the waäste: theer warn't not feeäd for a cow;
 Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an' loook at it now—
 Warnt worth nowt a haäere, an' now theer's lots o' fceäd,
 Fourscoor yows upon it an' some on it doon i' secääd.

XI.

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd to 'a stubb'd it at fall,
 Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd plow thruff it an' all,
 If godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let ma aloän,
 Meä, wi' haäte onderd haäere o' Squire's, an' lond o' my oän.

XII.

Do godamoighty knaw what a's doing a-taäkin' o' meä?
 I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an' yonder a pea;
 An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all—a' dear a' dear!
 And I 'a managed for Squire coom Michaelmas thutty year.

¹ Cockchafer.² Bittern.³ Anemones.

XIII.

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant nor a 'aäpoth o' sense,
Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins—a niver mended a fence :
But godamoighty a moost taäke meä an' taäke ma now
Wi' aäf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby hoälns to plow !

XIV.

Look 'ow quoloty smoiles when they secäs ma a passin' boy,
Says to thessén naw doubt 'what a man a beä sewer-loy !'
Fur they knaws what I beän to Squire sin fust a coom'd to the 'All ;
I done moy duty by Squire an' I done moy duty boy hall.

XV.

Squire's i' Lunnan, an' sunmun I reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,
For whoä's to howd the lond ater meä thot muddles ma quoit ;
Sartin-sewer I beä, thot a 'weänt niver give it to Joänes,
Naw, nor a moänt to Robins—a niver rembles the stoäns.

XVI.

But sunmun 'ell come ater meä mayhap wi' 'is kittle o' steim
Huzzin' an' 'waäzin' the blessed feälds wi' the Devil's oan teäim.
Sin' I mun ~~do~~ I mun doy, thaw loife they says is sweet,
But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I couldn abeär to see it.

XVII.

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' docsn bring ma the aäle ?
Doctor's a 'toättler, lass, an a's hallus i' the owd taäle ;
I weänt breäk rules fur Doctor, a knaws naw moor nor a floy ;
Git ma my aäle I tell tha, an' if I mun doy I mun doy.

NORTHERN FARMER.

NEW STYLE.

I.

Dosn't thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they canters awaäy ?
Proputty, proputty, proputty—that's what I 'ears 'em saäy.
Proputty, proputty, proputty—Sam, thou's an ass for thy paaäns :
Theer's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs nor in all thy braäins,

II.

Woä—theer's a craw to pluck wi' tha, Sam : yon's parson's 'oussc—
Dons't thou know that a man mun be eäther a man or a mouse ?
Time to think on it then ; for thou'll be twenty to weäc,¹
Proputty proputty—woä then woä—let ma 'ear mysén spääc.

¹ This week.

III.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as bean a-talkin' o' thee;
 Thou's been talkin' to muther, an' she bean a tellin' it me.
 Thou'll not marry for munny—thou's sweet upo' I 's lass
 Noä—thou'll marry for luvv—an' we boäth on us 's tha an ass.

IV.

Seeä'd her todaäy goä by—Saäint's-daäy—they was ringin the bells.
 She's a beauty thou thinks—an' soä is scoors o' gells,
 Them as 'as munny an' all—wot's a beauty?—the flower as blaws.
 But propuppy, propuppy sticks, an' propuppy, propuppy graws.

V.

Do'ant be stunt :¹ taäke time : I knaws what maäkes tha sa mad.
 Warn't I craäzed fur the lasses mysén when I wur a lad?
 But I knaw'd a Quaäker feller as often 'as tow'd ma this :
 'Doänt thou marry for munny, but goä wheer munny is !'

VI.

An' I went wheer munny war : an' thy muther coom to 'and,
 Wi' lots o' munny laäid by, an' a nicetish bit o' land.
 Maäybe she warn't a beauty :—I niver giv it a thowt—
 But warn't she as good to cuddle an' kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt?

VII.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weänt 'a nowt when 'e's deäd,
 Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and addle² her bread :
 Why? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an' weänt niver git naw 'igher ;
 An' 'e maäide the bed as 'e ligs on afoor 'e coom'd to the shire.

VIII.

An thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi' lots o' Varsity debt,
 Stook to his taail they did, an' 'e 'ant got shut on 'em yet.
 An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi' noän to lend 'im a shove,
 Woorse nor a far-welter'd³ yowe : fur, Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

IX.

Luvv? what's luvv? thou can luvv thy lass an' 'er munny too,
 Maakin' 'em goä together as they've good right to do.
 Could'n I luvv thy muther by cause o' 'er munny laäid by?
 Naäy—fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight mcor fur it : reäson why.

X.

Äy an' thy muther says thou wants to marry the lass,
 Cooms of a gentleman burn : an' we boäth on us thinks tha an ass.
 Woä then, propuppy, wiltha?—an ass as near as mays nowt⁴—
 Woä then, wiltha? dangtha !—the bees is as fell as owt.⁵

¹ Obstinate.² Earn.⁴ Makes nothing.³ Or fow-welter'd,—said of a sheep lying on its back in the furrow.⁵ The flies are as fierce as anything.



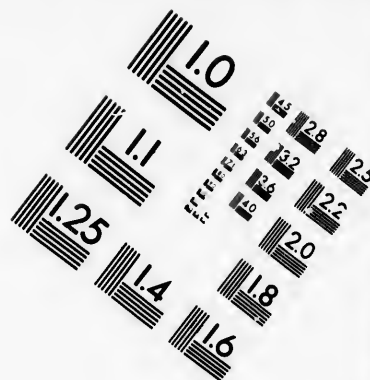
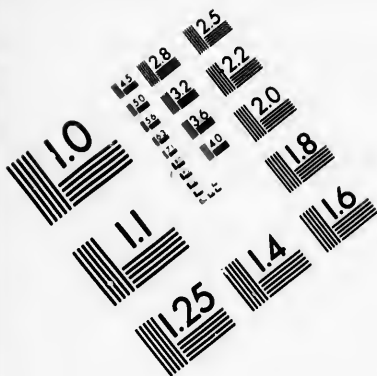
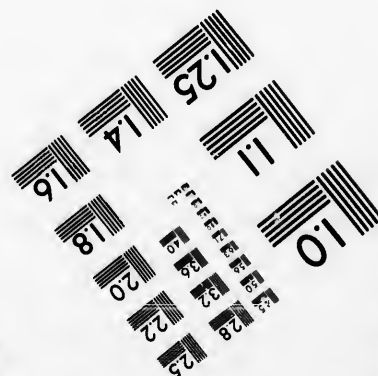
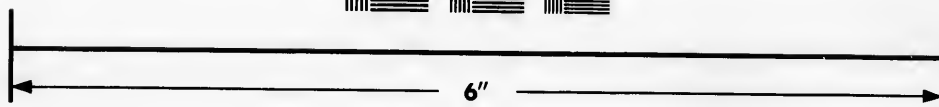
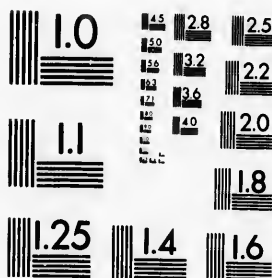


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XI.

Breäk me a bit o' the esh for his 'eäd, lad, out o' the fence !
 Gentleman burn ! what's gentleman burn ? is it shillins an' pence ?
 Proputty, proputty's ivrything 'ere, an', Sammy, I'm blest
 If it isn't the saäme oop yonder, fur them as 'as it's the best.

XII.

Tis'n them as 'as munny as breäks into 'ouses an' steäls,
 Them as 'as coäts to their backs an' tääkes their regular meäls.
 Noä, but it's them as niver knaws wheer a meäl's to be 'ad.
 Tääke my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad.

XIII.

Them or thir feythers, tha sees, mun 'a beän a laäzy lot,
 Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin' whiniver munny was got.
 Feyther 'ad ammost nowt ; leästways 'is munny was 'id.
 But 'e tued an' moil'd 'issén deäd, an' 'e died a good un, 'e did.

XIV.

Look thou theer wheer Wigglesby beck comes out by the 'ill !
 Feyther run up to the farm, an' I runs up to the mill ;
 An' I'll run up to the brig, an' that thou'll live to see ;
 And if thou marries a good un I'll leave the land to thee.

XV.

Thim's my noätions, Sammy, wheerby I means to stick ;
 But if thou marries a bad un, I'll leave the land to Dick.—
 Coom oop, proputty, proputty—that's what I 'ears 'im saäy—
 Proputty, proputty, proputty—canter an' canter awaäy.

THE DAISY.

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

O LOVE, what hours were thine and mine,
 In lands of palm and southern pine ;
 In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
 Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbia show'd
 In ruin, by the mountain road ;
 How like a gem, beneath, the city
 Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell
 The torrent vineyard streaming fell
 To meet the sun and sunny waters,
 That only heaved with a summer swell.

What slender campanili grew
 By bays, the peacock's neck in hue ;
 Where, here and there, on sandy
 beaches
 A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove,
 Yet present in his natal grove,
 Now watching high on mountain cor-
 nice,
 And steering, now, from a purple cove,

Now pacing mute by ocean's rim ;
 Till, in a narrow street and dim,
 I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,
 And drank, and loyally drank to him.

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 A mount

Nor knew we well what pleased us most,
Not the clipt palm of which they boast ;

But distant colour, happy hamlet,
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen
A light amid its olives green ;
Or olive-hoary cape in ocean ;
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flush'd the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread ;
And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and cold,
Those niched shapes of noble mould,
A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,
In those long galleries, were ours ;
What drives about the fresh Cascinè,
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete,
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,
Or palace, how the city glitter'd,
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we crost the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain ;
Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma ;
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard piles ;
Porch-pillars on the lion resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,
The giant windows' blazon'd fires,
The height, the space, the gloom, the
glory !
A mount of marble, a hundred spires !

I climb'd the roofs at break of day ;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.

I stood among the silent statues,
And statued pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there
A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last
To Como ; shower and storm and blast
Had blown the lake beyond his limit,
And all was flooded ; and how we past

From Como, when the light was gray,
And in my head, for half the day,
The rich Virgilian rustic measure
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-burthen music, kept,
As on The Lariano crept
To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept ;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake
A cypress in the moonlight shake,
The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall Agave above the lake.

What more ? we took our last adieu,
And up the snowy Splugen drew,
But ere we reach'd the highest sum-
mit

I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,
And now it tells of Italy.
O love, we two shall go no longer
To lands of summer across the sea ;

So dear a life your arms enfold
Whose crying is a cry for gold :
Yet here to-night in this dark city,
When ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,
This nurseling of another sky
Still in the little book you lent me,
And where you tenderly laid it by :

And I forgot the clouded Forth,
The gloom that saddens Heaven and Earth,

The bitter east, the misty summer
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,
Perchance, to dream you still beside me,
My fancy fled to the South again.

TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.

COME, when no graver cares employ,
Godfather, come and see your boy :

Your presence will be sun in winter,
Making the little one leap for joy.

For, being of that honest few,
Who give the Fiend himself his due,
Should eighty-thousand college-coun-
cils

Thunder 'Anathema,' friend, at you ;

Should all our churchmen foam in spite
At you, so careful of the right,

Yet one lay-hearth would give you wel-
come

(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight ;

Where, far from noise and smoke of town,
I watch the twilight falling brown

All round a careless-order'd garden
Close to the ridge of a noble down.

You'll have no scandal while you dine,
But honest talk and wholesome wine,

And only hear the magpie gossip
Garrulous under a roof of pine :

For groves of pine on either hand,
To break the blast of winter, stand ;
And further on, the hoary Channel
Tumbles a billow on chalk and sand ;

Where, if below the milky steep
Some ship of battle slowly creep,
Art on thro' zones of light and shadow
Glimmer away to the lonely deep,

We might discuss the Northern sin
Which made a selfish war begin ;
Dispute the claims, arrange the chances ;
Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win :

Or whether war's avenging rod
Shall lash all Europe into blood ;
Till you should turn to dearer matters,
Dear to the man that is dear to God ;

How best to help the slender store,
How mend the dwellings, of the poor ;
How gain in life, as life advances,
Valour and charity more and more.

Come, Maurice, come : the law at
Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet ;
But when the wreath of March has
blossom'd,

Crocus, anemone, violet,

Or later, pay one visit here,
For those are few we hold as dear ;
Nor pay but one, but come for many,
Many and many a happy year.

January, 1854.

WILL.

I.

O WELL for him whose will is strong !
He suffers, but he will not suffer long ;
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong :

For him nor moves the loud world's
random mock,
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves confound,
Who seems a promontory of rock,
That, compass'd round with turbulent
sound,
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffed, citadel-crown'd.

II.

But ill for him who, bettering not with time,
Corrupts the strength of heaven-descended
Will,
And ever weaker grows thro' acted crime,
Or seeming-genial venial fault,
Recurring and suggesting still !
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,
Toiling in immeasurable sand,
And o'er a weary sultry land,
Far beneath a blazing vault,
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

IN THE VALLEY OF
CAUTERETZ.

ALL along the valley, stream that flashest
white,
Deepening thy voice with the deepening
of the night,
All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty
years ago.
All along the valley, while I walk'd to-day,
The two and thirty years were a mist that
rolls away ;
For all along the valley, down thy rocky
bed,
Thy living voice to me was as the voice
of the dead,
And all along the valley, by rock and
cave and tree,
The voice of the dead was a living voice
to me.

IN THE GARDEN AT
SWAINSTON.

NIGHTINGALES warbled without,
Within was weeping for thee :
Shadows of three dead men
Walk'd in the walks with me,
Shadows of three dead men and thou
wast one of the three.

Nightingales sang in his woods :
The Master was far away :
Nightingales warbled and sang
Of a passion that lasts but a day ;
Still in the house in his coffin the Prince
of courtesy lay.

Two dead men have I known
In courtesy like to thee :
Two dead men have I loved
With a love that ever will be :
Three dead men have I loved and thou
art last of the three.

THE FLOWER.

ONCE in a golden hour
I cast to earth a seed,
Up there came a flower,
The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
Thro' my garden-bower,
And muttering discontent
Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall
It wore a crown of light,
But thieves from o'er the wall
Stole the seed by night.

Sow'd it far and wide
By every town and tower,
Till all the people cried,
' Splendid is the flower.'

Read my little fable :
He that runs may read.
Most can raise the flowers now,
For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,
And some are poor indeed ;
And now again the people
Call it but a weed.

REQUIESCAT.

FAIR is her cottage in its place,
Where yon broad water sweetly slowly
glides.

It sees itself from thatch to base
Dream in the sliding tides.

And fairer she, but ah how soon to die !
Her quiet dream of life this hour may
cease.

Her peaceful being slowly passes by
To some more perfect peace.

THE SAILOR BOY.

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,
Shot o'er the seething harbour-bar,
And reach'd the ship and caught the rope,
And whistled to the morning star.

And while he whistled long and loud
He heard a fierce mermaid cry,
' O boy, tho' thou art young and proud,
I see the place where thou wilt lie.

' The sands and yeasty surges mix
In caves about the dreary bay,
And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,
And in thy heart the scrawl shall play.'

' Fool,' he answer'd, ' death is sure
To those that stay and those that roam,
But I will nevermore endure
To sit with empty hands at home.

' My mother clings about my neck,
My sisters crying, " Stay for shame ;"
My father raves of death and wreck,
They are all to blame, they are all to
blame.

' God help me ! save I take my part
Of danger on the roaring sea,
A devil rises in my heart,
Far worse than any death to me.'

THE ISLET.

' WHITHER, O whither, love, shall we go,
For a score of sweet little summers or so ?'
The sweet little wife of the singer said,
On the day that follow'd the day she was
wed,

' Whither, O whither, love, shall we go ?'
And the singer shaking his curly head
Turn'd as he sat, and struck the keys
There at his right with a sudden crash,
Singing, ' And shall it be over the seas
With a crew that is neither rude nor rash,
But a bevy of Eroses apple-cheek'd,
In a shallop of crystal ivory-beak'd,
With a satin sail of a ruby glow,
To a sweet little Eden on earth that I
know,

A mountain islet pointed and peak'd ;
Waves on a diamond shingle dash
Cataract brooks to the ocean run,
Fairly-delicate palaces shine
Mixt with myrtle and clad with vine,
And overstream'd and silvery-streak'd
With many a rivulet high against the Sun
The facets of the glorious mountain flash
Above the valleys of palm and pine.'

' Thither, O thither, love, let us go.'

' No, no, no !
For in all that exquisite isle, my dear,

There is but one bird with a musical
throat,
And his compass is but of a single note,
That it makes one weary to hear.'

'Mock me not ! mock me not ! love, let
us go.'

'No, love, no.
For the bud ever breaks into bloom on
the tree,
And a storm never wakes on the lonely sea,
And a worm is there in the lonely wood,
That pierces the liver and blackens the
blood ;
And makes it a sorrow to be.'

THE SPITEFUL LETTER.

HERE, it is here, the close of the year,
And with it a spiteful letter.
My name in song has done him much
wrong,
For himself has done much better.

O little bard, is your lot so hard,
If men neglect your pages ?
I think not much of yours or of mine,
I hear the roll of the ages.

Rhymes and rhymes in the range of the
times !
Are mine for the moment stronger ?
Yet hate me not, but abide your lot,
I last but a moment longer.

This faded leaf, our names are as brief ;
What room is left for a hater ?
Yet the yellow leaf hates the greener leaf,
For it hangs one moment later.

Greater than I—is that your cry ?
And men will live to see it.
Well—if it be so—so it is, you know ;
And if it be so, so be it.

Brief, brief is a summer leaf,
But this is the time of hollies.
O hollies and ivies and evergreens,
How I hate the spites and the follies !

LITERARY SQUABBLES.

Al! God ! the petty fools of rhyme
That shriek and sweat in pigmy wars
Before the stony face of Time,
And look'd at by the silent stars :

Who hate each other for a song,
And do their little best to bite
And pinch their brethren in the throng,
And scratch the very dead for spite :

And strain to make an inch of room
For their sweet selves, and cannot hear
The sullen Lethe rolling doom
On them and theirs and all things here :

When one small touch of Charity
Could lift them nearer God-like state
Than if the crowded Orb should cry
Like those who cried Diana great :

And I too, talk, and lose the touch
I talk of. Surely, after all,
The noblest answer unto such
Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

THE VICTIM.

I.

A PLAGUE upon the people fell,
A famine after laid them low,
Then thorpe and byre arose in fire,
For on them brake the sudden foe ;
So thick they died the people cried,
'The Gods are moved against the land,'
The Priest in horror about his altar
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand :
'Help us from famine
And plague and strife !

What would you have of us?
Human life?
Were it our nearest,
Were it our dearest,
(Answer, O answer)
We give you his life.'

II.

But still the foeman spoil'd and burn'd,
And cattle died, and deer in wood,
And bird in air, and fishes turn'd
And whiten'd all the rolling flood;
And dead men lay all over the way,
Or down in a furrow scathed with flame:
And ever and aye the Priesthood moan'd,
Till at last it seem'd that an answer
came.
'The King is happy
In child and wife;
Take you his dearest,
Give us a life.'

III.

The Priest went out by heath and hill;
The King was hunting in the wild;
They found the mother sitting still;
She cast her arms about the child.
The child was only eight summers old,
His beauty still with his years increased,
His face was ruddy, his hair was gold,
He seem'd a victim due to the priest.
The Priest beheld him,
And cried with joy,
'The Gods have answer'd:
We give them the boy.'

IV.

The King return'd from out the wild,
He bore but little game in hand;
The mother said, 'They have taken the
child
To spill his blood and heal the land:

The land is sick, the people diseased,
And blight and famine on all the lea:
The holy Gods, they must be appeased,
So I pray you tell the truth to me.
They have taken our son,
They will have his life.
Is *he* your dearest?
Or I, the wife?'

V.

The King bent low, with hand on brow,
He stay'd his arms upon his knee:
'O wife, what use to answer now?
For now the Priest has judged for
me.'
The King was shaken with holy fear;
'The Gods,' he said, 'would have
chosen well;
Yet both are near, and both are dear,
And which the dearest I cannot tell!'
But the Priest was happy,
His victim won:
'We have his dearest,
His only son!'

VI.

The rites prepared, the victim bared,
The knife uprising toward the blow
To the altar-stone she sprang alone,
'Me, not my darling, no!'
He caught her away with a sudden
cry;
Suddenly from him brake his wife,
And shrieking 'I am his dearest, I—
I am his dearest!' rush'd on the knife.
And the Priest was happy,
'O, Father Odin,
We give you a life.
Which was his nearest?
Who was his dearest?
The Gods have answer'd;
We give them the wife!'

WAGES.

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,
Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea—
Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong—
Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no lover of glory she :
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be,

The wages of sin is death : if the wages of Virtue be dust,
Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly ?
She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky :
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns ?

Is not the Vision He ? tho' He be not that which He seems ?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams ?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him ?

Dark is the world to thee : thyself art the reason why ;
For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel ' I am I ? '

Glory about thee, without thee ; and thou fulfillest thy doom
Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendour and gloom.

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise ; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.

Law is God, say some : no God at all, says the fool ;
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool ;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see ;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision—were it not He ?

THE VOICE AND THE PEAK.

I.

THE voice and the Peak
Far over summit and lawn,
The lone glow and long roar [dawn !
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of

II.

All night have I heard the voice
Rave over the rocky bar,
But thou wert silent in heaven,
Above thee glided the star.

III.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak,
That standest high above all ?
'I am the voice of the Peak,
I roar and rave for I fall.

IV.

'A thousand voices go
To North, South, East, and West ;
They leave the heights and are troubled,
And moan and sink to their rest.

V.

'The fields are fair beside them,
The chestnut towers in his bloom ;
But they—they feel the desire of the deep—
Fall, and follow their doom.

VI.

'The deep has power on the height,
And the height has power on the deep ;
They are raised for ever and ever,
And sink again into sleep.'

VII.

Not raised for ever and ever,
But when their cycle is o'er,
The valley, the voice, the peak, the star
Pass, and are found no more.

VIII.

The Peak is high and flush'd
At his highest with sunrise fire ;
The Peak is high, and the stars are high,
And the thought of a man is higher.

IX.

A deep below the deep,
And a height beyond the height !
Our hearing is not hearing,
And our seeing is not sight.

X.

The voice and the Peak
Far into heaven withdrawn,
The lone glow and long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of
dawn !

FLOWER in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies ;—
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

A DEDICATION.

DEAR, near and true—no truer Time
himself

Can prove you, tho' he make you ever-
more

Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life
Shoots to the fall—take this and pray
that he

Who wrote it, honouring your sweet faith
in him,

May trust himself ; and after praise and
scorn,

As one who feels the immeasurable world,
Attain the wise indifference of the wise ;
And after Autumn past—if left to pass
His autumn into seeming-leafless days—
Draw toward the long frost and longest
night,

Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the fruit
Which in our winter woodland looks a
flower.¹

¹ The fruit of the Spindle-tree (*Enonymus
Europæus*).

EXPERIMENTS.

BOÄDICEA.

WHILE about the shore of Mona those Neronian legionaries
Burnt and broke the grove and altar of the Druid and Druidess,
Far in the East Boädicea, standing loftily charioted,
Mad and maddening all that heard her in her fierce volubility,
Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near the colony Cámulodúne,
Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters o'er a wild confederacy.

'They that scorn the tribes and call us Britain's barbarous populates,
Did they hear me, would they listen, did they pity me supplicating?
Shall I heed them in their anguish? shall I brook to be supplicated?
Hear Icenian, Catiuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!
Must their ever-ravaging eagle's beak and talon annihilate us?
Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave it gorily quivering?
Bark an answer, Britain's raven! bark and blacken innumerable,
Blacken round the Roman carrion, make the carcase a skeleton,
Kite and kestrel, wolf and wolfkin, from the wilderness, wallow in it,
Till the face of Bel be brighten'd, Taranis be propitiated.
Lo their colony half-defended! lo their colony, Cámulodúne!
There the horde of Roman robbers mock at a barbarous adversary.
There the hive of Roman liars worship a gluttonous emperor-idiot.
Such is Rome, and this her deity: hear it, Spirit of Cássivëlaún!

'Hear it, Gods! the Gods have heard it, O Icenian, O Coritanian!
Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd, Catiuchlanian, Trinobant.
These have told us all their anger in miraculous utterances,
Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a murmur heard aërially,
Phantom sound of blows descending, moan of an enemy massacred,
Phantom wail of women and children, multitudinous agonies.
Bloodily flow'd the Tamesa rolling phantom bodies of horses and men;
Then a phantom colony smoulder'd on the reflux estuary;
Lastly yonder yester-even, suddenly giddily tottering—
There was one who watch'd and told me—down their statue of Victory fell.
Lo their precious Roman bantling, lo the colony Cámulodúne,
Shall we teach it a Roman lesson? shall we care to be pitiful?
Shall we deal with it as an infant? shall we dandle it amorously?

'Hear Icenian, Catiuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant!
While I roved about the forest, long and bitterly meditating,

There I heard them in the darkness, at the mystica' ceremony,
Loosely robed in flying raiment, sang the terrible prophetesses,
"Fear not, isle of blowing woodland, isle of silvery parapets !
Tho' the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho' the gathering enemy narrow thee,
Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle, thou shalt be the mighty one yet !
Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine the deeds to be celebrated,
Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light and shadow illimitable,
Thine the lands of lasting summer, many-blossoming Paradises,
Thine the North and thine the South and thine the battle-thunder of God,"
So they chanted : how shall Britain light upon auguries happier ?
So they chanted in the darkness, and there cometh a victory now.

'Hear Icenian, Catiuchlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant !
Me the wife of rich Prasútagus, me the lover of liberty,
Me they seized and me they tortured, me they lash'd and humiliated,
Me the sport of ribald Veterans, mine of ruffian violators !
See they sit, they hide their faces, miserable in ignominy !
Wherefore in me burns an anger, not by blood to be satiated.
Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the colony Cúmulodúne !
There they ruled, and thence they wasted all the flourishing territory,
Thither at their will they haled the yellow-ringleted Britoness—
Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe, unexhausted, inexorable.
Shout Icenian, Catiuchlanian, shout Coritanian, Trinobant,
Till the victim hear within and yearn to hurry precipitously
Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind, like the smoke in a hurricane whirl'd.
Lo the colony, there they rioted in the city of Cúnobeline !
There they drank in cups of emerald, there at tables of ebony lay,
Rolling on their purple couches in their tender effeminacy.
There they dwelt and there they rioted ; there—there—they dwell no more.
Burst the gates, and burn the palaces, break the works of the statuary,
Take the hoary Roman head and shatter it, hold it abominable,
Cut the Roman boy to pieces in his lust and voluptuousness,
Lash the maiden into swooning, me they lash'd and humiliated,
Chop the breasts from off the mother, dash the brains of the little one out,
Up my Britons, on my chariot, on my chargers, trample them under us.'

So the Queen Boádicéa, standing loftily charioted,
Brandishing in her hand a dart and rolling glances lioness-like,
Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters in her fierce volubility.
Till her people all around the royal chariot agitated,
Madly dash'd the darts together, writhing barbarous lineaments,
Made the noise of frosty woodlands, when they shiver in January,
Roar'd as when the rolling breakers boom and blanch on the precipices,
Yell'd as when the winds of winter tear an oak on a promontory.

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So the silent colony hearing her tumultuous adversaries
 Clash the darts and on the buckler beat with rapid unanimous hand,
 Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all her pitiless avarice,
 Till she felt the heart within her fall and flutter tremulously,
 Then her pulses at the clamouring of her enemy fainted away.
 Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyranny tyranny buds,
 Ran the land with Roman slaughter, multitudinous agonies.
 Perish'd many a maid and matron, many a valourous legionary
 Fell the colony, city, and citadel, London, Verulam, C  mulo  ne.

IN QUANTITY.

ON TRANSLATIONS OF HOMER.

Hexameters and Pentameters.

THESE lame hexameters the strong-wing'd music of Homer !
 No—but a most burlesque barbarous experiment.
 When was a harsher sound ever heard, ye Muses, in England ?
 When did a frog coarser croak upon our Helicon ?
 Hexameters no worse than daring Germany gave us,
 Barbarous experiment, barbarous hexameters.

MILTON.

Alcaics.

O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D inventor of har-
 monies,
 O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
 God-gifted organ-voice of England,
 Milton, a name to resound for
 ages;
 Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
 Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armouries,
 Tower, as the deep-domed empyr  an
 Rings to the roar of an angel
 onset—
 Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
 The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
 And bloom profuse and cedar arches
 Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
 Where some refulgent sunset of India
 Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
 And crimson-hued the stately palm-
 woods
 Whisper in odorous heights of even.

Heptasyllabics.

O YOU chorus of indolent reviewers,
 Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,
 Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem
 All composed in a metre of Catullus,
 All in quantity, careful of my motion,
 Like the skater on ice that hardly bears
 him,
 Lest I fall unawares before the people,
 Waking laughter in indolent reviewers.
 Should I flounder awhile without a tumble
 Thro' this metrifcation of Catullus,
 They should speak to me not without a
 welcome,
 All that chorus of indolent reviewers.
 Hard, hard, hard is it, only not to tumble,
 So fantastical is the dainty metre.
 Wherefore slight me not wholly, nor
 believe me
 Too presumptuous, indolent reviewers.
 O blatant Magazines, regard me rather—

Since I blush to belaud myself a moment—

As some rare little rose, a piece of inmost
Horticultural art, or half coquette-like
Maiden, not to be greeted unbenignly.

*SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION
OF THE ILIAD IN BLANK
VERSE.*

So Hector spake; the Trojans roar'd
applause;

Then loosed their sweating horses, from
the yoke,

And each beside his chariot bound his
own;

And oxen from the city, and goodly
sheep

In haste they drove, and honey-hearted
wine

And bread from out the houses brought,
and heap'd

Their firewood, and the winds from off
the plain

Roll'd the rich vapour far into the heaven.

And these all night upon the bridge¹ of
war

Sat glorying; many a fire before them
blazed:

As when in heaven the stars about the
moon

Look beautiful, when all the winds are
laid,

And every height comes out, and jutting
peak

And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the
stars

Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in his
heart:

So many a fire between the ships and
stream

Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of
Troy,

A thousand on the plain; and close by each
Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;

And eating hoary grain and pulse the
steeds,

Fixt by their cars, waited the golden
dawn. *Iliad* VIII. 542-561.

THE WINDOW;

OR, THE SONG OF THE WRENS.

FOUR years ago Mr. Sullivan requested me to write a little song-cycle, German fashion, for him to exercise his art upon. He had been very successful in setting such old songs as 'Orpheus with his lute,' and I drest up for him, partly in the old style, a puppet, whose almost only merit is, perhaps, that it can dance to Mr. Sullivan's instrument. I am sorry that my four-year-old puppet should have to dance at all in the dark shadow of these days; but the music is now completed, and I am bound by my promise.

December, 1870.

A. TENNYSON.

THE WINDOW.

ON THE HILL.

THE lights and shadows fly!

Yonder it brightens and darkens down on
the plain.

A jewel, a jewel dear to a lover's eye!

Oh is it the brook, or a pool, or her win-
dow pane,

When the winds are up in the morning?

¹ Or, ridge.

Clouds that are racing above,
And winds and lights and shadows that
cannot be still,
All running on one way to the home of
my love,
You are all running on, and I stand on
the slope of the hill,
And the winds are up in the morning !

Follow, follow the chase !
And my thoughts are as quick and as
quick, ever on, on, on.
O lights, are you flying over her sweet
little face ?
And my heart is there before you are
come, and gone,
When the winds are up in the morning !

Follow them down the slope !
And I follow them down to the window-
pane of my dear,
And it brightens and darkens and
brightens like my hope,
And it darkens and brightens and darkens
like my fear,
And the winds are up in the morning.

AT THE WINDOW.

Vine, vine and eglantine,
Clasp her window, trail and twine !
Rose, rose and clematis,
Trail and twine and clasp and kiss,
Kiss, kiss ; and make her a bower
All of flowers, and drop me a flower,
Drop me a flower.

Vine, vine and eglantine,
Cannot a flower, a flower, be mine ?
Rose, rose and clematis,
Drop me a flower, a flower, to kiss,
Kiss, kiss—and out of her bower
All of flowers, a flower, a flower,
Dropt, a flower

GONE.

Gone !
Gone, till the end of the year,
Gone, and the light gone with her, and
left me in shadow here !
Gone—flitted away,
Taken the stars from the night and the sun
from the day !
Gone, and a cloud in my heart, and a
storm in the air !
Flown to east or the west, flitted I
know not where !
Down in the south is a flash and a groan :
she is there ! she is there !

WINTER.

The frost is here,
And fuel is dear,
And woods are sear,
And fires burn clear,
And frost is here
And has bitten the heel of the going year.
Bite, frost, bite !
You roll up away from the light
The blue wood-louse, and the plump dor-
mouse,
And the bees are stilled, and the flies are
kill'd,
And you bite far into the heart of the house,
But not into mine.
Bite, frost, bite !
The woods are all the searer,
The fuel is all the dearer,
The fires are all the clearer,
My spring is all the nearer,
You have bitten into the heart of the earth,
But not into mine.

SPRING.

Birds' love and birds' song
Flying here and there,
Birds' song and birds' love,
And you with gold for hair !

Birds' song and birds' love,
 Passing with the weather,
 Men's song and men's love,
 To love once and for ever.

Men's love and birds' love,
 And women's love and men's !
 And you my wren with a crown of gold,
 You my queen of the wrens !
 You the queen of the wrens—
 We'll be birds of a feather,
 I'll be King of the Queen of the wrens,
 And all in a nest together.

THE LETTER.

Where is another sweet as my sweet,
 Fine of the fine, and shy of the shy ?
 Fine little hands, fine little feet—
 Dewy blue eye.

Shall I write to her ? shall I go ?
 Ask her to marry me by and by ?
 Somebody said that she'd say no ;
 Somebody knows that she'll say ay !

Ay or no, if ask'd to her face ?
 Ay or no, from shy of the shy ?
 Go, little letter, apace, apace,
 Fly ;
 Fly to the light in the valley below—
 Tell my wish to her dewy blue eye :
 Somebody said that she'd say no ;
 Somebody knows that she'll say ay !

NO ANSWER.

The mist and the rain, the mist and the rain !
 Is it ay or no ? is it ay or no ?
 And never a glimpse of her window pane !
 And I may die but the grass will grow,
 And the grass will grow when I am gone,
 And the wet west wind and the world
 will go on.

Ay is the song of the wedded spheres,
 No is trouble and cloud and storm,
 Ay is life for a hundred years,
 No will push me down to the worm,
 And when I am there and dead and
 gone,
 The wet west wind and the world will go
 on.

The wind and the wet, the wind and the
 wet !
 Wet west wind how you blow, you
 blow !

And never a line from my lady yet !
 Is it ay or no ? is it ay or no ?
 Blow then, blow, and when I am gone,
 The wet west wind and the world may go
 on.

NO ANSWER.

Winds are loud and you are dumb,
 Take my love, for love will come,
 Love will come but once a life.
 Winds are loud and winds will pass !
 Spring is here with leaf and grass :
 Take my love and be my wife.
 After-loves of maids and men
 Are but dainties drest again :
 Love me now, you'll love me then :
 Love can love but once a life.

THE ANSWER.

Two little hands that meet,
 Clasp't on her seal, my sweet !
 Must I take you and break you,
 Two little hands that meet ?
 I must take you, and break you,
 And loving hands must part—
 Take, take—break, break—
 Break—you may break my heart.
 Faint heart never won—
 Break, break, and all's done.

AY.

Be merry, all birds, to-day,
 Be merry on earth as you never were
 merry before,
 Be merry in heaven, O larks, and far away,
 And merry for ever and ever, and one
 day more.

Why?

For it's easy to find a rhyme.
 Look, look, how he flits,
 The fire-crown'd king of the wrens, from
 out of the pine !

Look how they tumble the blossom, the
 mad little tits !

'Cuck-oo ! Cuck-oo !' was ever a May
 so fine ?

Why?

For it's easy to find a rhyme.
 O merry the linnet and dove,
 And swallow and sparrow and throistles,
 and have your desire !

O merry my heart, you have gotten the
 wings of love,
 And flit like the king of the wrens with
 a crown of fire.

Why?

For it's ay ay, ay ay.

WHEN.

Sun comes, moon comes,
 Time slips away.
 Sun sets, moon sets,
 Love, fix a day.

'A year hence, a year hence.'

'We shall both be gray.'

'A month hence, a month hence.'

'Far, far away.'

'A week hence, a week hence.'

'Ah, the long delay.'

'Wait a little, wait a little,
 You shall fix a day.'

'To-morrow, love, to-morrow
 And that's an age away.'
 Blaze upon her window, sun,
 And honour all the day.

MARRIAGE MORNING.

Light, so low upon earth,
 You send a flash to the sun.

Here is the golden close of love,
 All my wooing is done.

Oh, the woods and the meadows,
 Woods where we hid from the wet,
 Stiles where we stay'd to be kind,
 Meadows in which we met !

Light, so low in the vale

You flash and lighten afar,
 For this is the golden morning of
 love,

And you are his morning star.
 Flash, I am coming, I come,
 By meadow and stile and wood,
 Oh, lighten into my eyes and my heart,
 Into my heart and my blood !

Heart, are you great enough
 For a love that never tires ?

O heart, are you great enough for love ?
 I have heard of thorns and briers,

Over the thorns and briers,
 Over the meadows and stiles,

Over the world to the end of it
 Flash for a million miles,



IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.

OBITU MDCCLXXXIII.

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy
face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove ;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade ;
Thou madest Life in man and brute ;
Thou madest Death ; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust :
Thou madest man, he knows not
why ;
He thinks he was not made to die ;
And thou hast made him : thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou :
Our wills are ours, we know not how ;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day ;
They have their day and cease to be :
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith : we cannot know ;
For knowledge is of things we see ;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness : let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell ;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight ;
We mock thee when we do not fear :
But help thy foolish ones to bear ;
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me ;
What seem'd my worth since I began :
For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth ;
Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

1849.

I.

I HELD it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years
And find in loss a gain to match ?
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch
The far-off interest of tears ?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drown'd,
Let darkness keep her raven gloss :
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
To dance with death, to beat the ground,

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Than that the victor Hours should scorn
 The long result of love, and boast,
 'Behold the man that loved and lost,
 But all he was is overworn.'

II.

Old Yew, which graspest at the stones
 That name the under-lying dead,
 Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
 Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again,
 And bring the firstling to the flock ;
 And in the dusk of thee, the clock
 Beats out the little lives of men.

O not for thee the glow, the bloom,
 Who changest not in any gale,
 Nor branding summer suns avail
 To touch thy thousand years of gloom :

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
 Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
 I seem to fail from out my blood
 And grow incorporate into thee.

III.

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,
 O Priestess in the vaults of Death,
 O sweet and bitter in a breath,
 What whispers from thy lying lip?

'The stars,' she whispers, 'blindly run ;
 A web is wov'n across the sky ;
 From out waste places comes a cry,
 And murmurs from the dying sun :

'And all the phantom, Nature, stands—
 With all the music in her tone,
 A hollow echo of my own,—
 A hollow form with empty hands.'

And shall I take a thing so blind,
 Embrace her as my natural good ;
 Or crush her, like a vice of blood,
 Upon the threshold of the mind ?

IV.

To Sleep I give my powers away ;
 My will is bondsman to the dark ;
 I sit within a helmless bark,
 And with my heart I muse and say :

O heart, how fares it with thee now,
 That thou should'st fail from thy
 Desire,
 Who scarcely darest to inquire,
 'What is it makes me beat so low ?'

Something it is which thou hast lost,
 Some pleasure from thine early years.
 Break, thou deep vase of chilling
 tears,

That grief hath shaken into frost !
 Such clouds of nameless trouble cross
 All night below the darken'd eyes ;
 With morning wakes the will, and
 cries,

'Thou shalt not be the fool of loss.

V.

I sometimes hold it half a sin
 To put in words the grief I feel ;
 For words, like Nature, half reveal
 And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
 A use in measured language lies ;
 The sad mechanic exercise,
 Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,
 Like coarsest clothes against the cold ;
 But that large grief which these enfold
 Is given in outline and no more.

VI.

One writes, that 'Other friends remain,'
 That 'Loss is common to the race'—
 And common is the commonplace,
 And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make
 My own less bitter, rather more :
 Too common ! Never morning wore
 To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,
 Who pledgest now thy gallant son ;
 A shot, ere half thy draught be done,
 Hath still'd the life that beat from thee.

O mother, praying God will save
 Thy sailor,—while thy head is bow'd,
 His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud
 Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought
 At that last hour to please him well ;
 Who mused on all I had to tell,
 And something written, something
 thought ;

Expecting still his advent home ;
 And ever met him on his way
 With wishes, thinking, here to-day,
 Or here to-morrow will he come.

O somewhere, meek unconscious dove,
 That sittest ranging golden hair ;
 And glad to find thyself so fair,
 Poor child, that waitest for thy love !

For now her father's chimney glows
 In expectation of a guest ;
 And thinking 'this will please him
 best,'

She takes a riband or a rose ;

For he will see them on to-night ;
 And with the thought her colour
 burns ;
 And, having left the glass, she turns
 Once more to set a ringlet right ;

And, even when she turn'd, the curse
 Had fallen, and her future Lord
 Was drown'd in passing thro' the ford,
 Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

O what to her shall be the end ?
 And what to me remains of good ?
 To her, perpetual maidenhood,
 And unto me no second friend.

VII.

Dark house, by which once more I stand
 Here in the long unlovely street,
 Doors, where my heart was used to
 beat

So quickly, waiting for a hand,
 A hand that can be clasp'd no more—
 Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
 And like a guilty thing I creep
 At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here ; but far away
 The noise of life begins again,
 And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
 On the bald street breaks the blank day.

VIII.

A happy lover who has come
 To look on her that loves him well,
 Who 'lights and rings the gateway bell,
 And learns her gone and far from home ;

He saddens, all the magic light
 Dies off at once from bower and hall,
 And all the place is dark, and all
 The chambers emptied of delight :

So find I every pleasant spot
 In which we two were wont to meet,
 The field, the chamber, and the street,
 For all is dark where thou art not.

Yet as that other, wandering there
 In those deserted walks, may find
 A flower beat with rain and wind,
 Which once she foster'd up with care ;

So seems it in my deep regret,
 O my forsaken heart, with thee
 And this poor flower of poesy
 Which little cared for fades not yet.

But since it pleased a vanish'd eye,
I go to plant it on his tomb,
That if it can it there may bloom,
Or dying, there at least may die.

IX.

Fair ship, that from the Italian shore
Sail'st the placid ocean-plains
With my lost Arthur's loved remains,
Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn
In vain ; a favourable speed
Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead
Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex
Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright
As our pure love, thro' early light
Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above ;
Sleep, gentle heavens, before the
prow ;
Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps now,
My friend, the brother of my love ;

My Arthur, whom I shall not see
Till all my widow'd race be run ;
Dear as the mother to the son,
More than my brothers are to me.

X.

I hear the noise about thy keel ;
I hear the bell struck in the night ;
I see the cabin-window bright ;
I see the sailor at the wheel.

Thou bring'st the sailor to his wife,
And travell'd men from foreign lands ;
And letters unto trembling hands ;
And, thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.

So bring him : we have idle dreams :
This look of quiet flatters thus
Our home-bred fancies : O to us,
The fools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover sod,
That takes the sunshine and the rains,
Or where the kneeling hamlet drains
The chalice of the grapes of God ;

Than if with thee the roaring wells
Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine ;
And hands so often clasp'd in mine,
Should toss with tangle and with shells.

XI.

Calm is the morn without a sound,
Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
And only thro' the faded leaf
The chestnut pattering to the ground :

Calm and deep peace on this high wold,
And on these dews that drench the
furze,
And all the silvery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold :

Calm and still light on yon great plain
That sweeps with all its autumn
bowers,
And crowded farms and lessening
towers,
To mingle with the bounding main :

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,
These leaves that reddlen to the fall ;
And in my heart, if calm at all,
If any calm, a calm despair :

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,
And waves that sway themselves in
rest,
And dead calm in that noble breast
Which heaves but with the heaving deep.

XII.

Lo, as a dove when up she springs
To bear thro' Heaven a tale of woe,
Some dolorous message knit below
The wild pulsation of her wings ;

Like her I go ; I cannot stay ;
I leave this mortal ark behind,
A weight of nerves without a mind,
And leave the cliffs, and haste away

O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large,
And reach the glow of southern skies,
And see the sails at distance rise,
And linger weeping on the marge,

And saying ; ' Comes he thus, my friend ?
Is this the end of all my care ? '
And circle moaning in the air :
' Is this the end ? Is this the end ? '

And forward dart again, and play
About the prow, and back return
To where the body sits, and learn
That I have been an hour away.

XIII.

Tears of the widower, when he sees
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,
And moves his doubtful arms, and
feels

Her place is empty, fall like these ;

Which weep a loss for ever new,
A void where heart on heart reposed ;
And, where warm hands have prest
and closed,

Silence, till I be silent too.

Which weep the comrade of my choice,
An awful thought, a life removed,
The human-hearted man I loved,
A Spirit, not a breathing voice.

Come Time, and teach me, many years,
I do not suffer in a dream ;
For now so strange do these things
seem,

Mine eyes have leisure for their tears ;

My fancies time to rise on wing,
And glance about the approaching
sails,
As tho' they brought but merchants'
bales,
And not the burthen that they bring.

XIV.

If one should bring me this report,
That thou hadst touch'd the land
to-day,
And I went down unto the quay,
And found thee lying in the port ;

And standing, muffled round with woe,
Should see thy passengers in rank
Come stepping lightly down the
plank,

And beckoning unto those they know ;

And if along with these should come
The man I held as half-divine ;
Should strike a sudden hand in mine,
And ask a thousand things of home ;

And I should tell him all my pain,
And how my life had droop'd of late,
And he should sorrow o'er my state
And marvel what possess'd my brain ;

And I perceived no touch of change,
No hint of death in all his frame,
But found him all in all the same,
I should not feel it to be strange.

XV.

To-night the winds begin to rise
And roar from yonder dropping day :
The last red leaf is whirl'd away,
The rooks are blown about the skies ;

The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,
The cattle huddled on the lea ;
And wildly dash'd on tower and tree
The sunbeam strikes along the world ;

And but for fancies, which aver
That all thy motions gently pass
Athwart a plane of molten glass,
I scarce could brook the strain and stir
That makes the barren branches loud ;
And but for fear it is not so,
The wild unrest that lives in woe
Would dote and pore on yonder cloud

That rises upward always higher,
And onward drags a labouring breast,
And topples round the dreary west,
A looming bastion fringed with fire.

XVI.

What words are these have fall'n from me ?
Can calm despair and wild unrest
Be tenants of a single breast,
Or sorrow such a changeling be ?

Or doth she only seem to take
The touch of change in calm or storm ;
But knows no more of transient form
In her deep self, than some dead lake

That holds the shadow of a lark
Hung in the shadow of a heaven ?
Or has the shock, so harshly given,
Confused me like the unhappy bark

That strikes by night a craggy shelf,
And staggers blindly ere she sink ?
And stunn'd me from my power to think

And all my knowledge of myself ;

And made me that delirious man
Whose fancy fuses old and new,
And flashes into false and true,
And mingles all without a plan ?

XVII.

Thou comest, much wept for : such a
breeze
Compell'd thy canvas, and my prayer
Was as the whisper of an air
To breathe thee over lonely seas.

For I in spirit saw thee move
Thro' circles of the bounding sky,
Week after week : the days go by :
Come quick, thou bringest all I love.

Henceforth, wherever thou may'st roam,
My blessing, like a line of light,
Is on the waters day and night,
And like a beacon guards thee home.

So may whatever tempest mars
Mid-ocean, spare thee, sacred bark ;
And balmy drops in summer dark
Slide from the bosom of the stars.

So kind an office hath been done,
Such precious relics brought by
thee ;

The dust of him I shall not see
Till all my widow'd race be run.

XVIII.

'Tis well ; 'tis something ; we may stand
Where he in English earth is laid,
And from his ashes may be made
The violet of his native land.

'Tis little ; but it looks in truth
As if the quiet bones were blest
Among familiar names to rest
And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and bear the head
That sleeps or wears the mask of
sleep,

And call whatever loves to weep,
And hear the ritual of the dead.

Ah yet, ev'n yet, if this might be,
 I, falling on his faithful heart,
 Would breathing thro' his lips impart
 The life that almost dies in me ;

That dies not, but endures with pain,
 And slowly forms the firmer mind,
 Treasuring the look it cannot find,
 The words that are not heard again.

XIX.

The Danube to the Severn gave
 The darken'd heart that beat no
 more ;
 They laid him by the pleasant shore,
 And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills ;
 The salt sea-water passes by,
 And hushes half the babbling Wye,
 And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,
 And hush'd my deepest grief of all,
 When fill'd with tears that cannot fall,
 I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again
 Is vocal in its wooded walls ;
 My deeper anguish also falls,
 And I can speak a little then.

XX.

The lesser griefs that may be said,
 That breathe a thousand tender vows,
 Are but as servants in a house
 Where lies the master newly dead ;

Who speak their feeling as it is,
 And weep the fulness from the mind :
 'It will be hard,' they say, 'to find
 Another service such as this.'

My lighter moods are like to these,
 That out of words a comfort win ;
 But there are other griefs within,
 And tears that at their fountain freeze ;

For by the hearth the children sit
 Cold in that atmosphere of Death,
 And scarce endure to draw the breath,
 Or like to noiseless phantoms flit :

But open converse is there none,
 So much the vital spirits sink
 To see the vacant chair, and think,
 'How good ! how kind ! and he is gone.'

XXI.

I sing to him that rests below,
 And, since the grasses round me
 wave,
 I take the grasses of the grave,
 And make them pipes whereon to blow.

The traveller hears me now and then,
 And sometimes harshly will he speak ;
 'This fellow would make weakness
 weak,
 And melt the waxen hearts of men.'

Another answers, 'Let him be,
 He loves to make parade of pain,
 That with his piping he may gain
 The praise that comes to constancy.'

A third is wroth : 'Is this an hour
 For private sorrow's barren song,
 When more and more the people
 throng
 The chairs and thrones of civil power ?

A time to sicken and to swoon,
 When Science reaches forth her arms
 To feel from world to world, and
 charms
 Her secret from the latest moon ?'

Behold, ye speak an idle thing :
 Ye never knew the sacred dust :
 I do but sing because I must,
 And pipe but as the linnets sing :

And one is glad ; her note is gay,
 For now her little ones have ranged ;
 And one is sad ; her note is changed,
 Because her brood is stol'n away.

XXII.

The path by which we twain did go,
 Which led by tracts that pleased us
 well,
 Thro' four sweet years arose and fell,
 From flower to flower, from snow to
 snow :

And we with singing cheer'd the way,
 And, crown'd with all the season lent,
 From April on to April went,
 And glad at heart from May to May :

But where the path we walk'd began
 To slant the fifth autumnal slope,
 As we descended following Hope,
 There sat the Shadow fear'd of man ;

Who broke our fair companionship,
 And spread his mantle dark and cold,
 And wrapt thee formless in the fold,
 And dull'd the murmur on thy lip,

And bore thee where I could not see
 Nor follow, tho' I walk in haste,
 And think, that somewhere in the
 waste

The Shadow sits and waits for me.

XXIII.

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,
 Or breaking into song by fits,
 Alone, alone, to where he sits,
 The Shadow cloak'd from head to foot,

Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,
 I wander, often falling lame,
 And looking back to whence I came,
 Or on to where the pathway leads ;

And crying, How changed from where it
 ran

Thro' lands where not a leaf was
 dumb ;

But all the lavish hills would hum
 The murmur of a happy Pan :

When each by turns was guide to each,
 And Fancy light from Fancy caught,
 And Thought leapt out to wed with
 Thought
 Ere Thought could wed itself with Speech ;

And all we met was fair and good,
 And all was good that Time could
 bring,
 And all the secret of the Spring
 Moved in the chambers of the blood ;

And many an old philosophy
 On Argive heights divinely sang,
 And round us all the thicket rang
 To many a flute of Arcady.

XXIV.

And was the day of my delight
 As pure and perfect as I say ?
 The very source and fount of Day
 Is dash'd with wandering isles of night.

If all was good and fair we met,
 This earth had been the Paradise
 It never look'd to human eyes
 Since our first Sun arose and set.

And is it that the haze of grief
 Makes former gladness loom so great ?
 The lowness of the present state,
 That sets the past in this relief ?

Or that the past will always win
A glory from its being far ;
And orb into the perfect star
We saw not, when we moved therein ?

XXV.

I know that this was Life,—the track
Whereon with equal feet we fared ;
And then, as now, the day prepared
The daily burden for the back.

But this it was that made me move
As light as carrier-birds in air ;
I loved the weight I had to bear,
Because it needed help of Love :

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,
'When mighty Love would cleave in
twain
The lading of a single pain,
And part it, giving half to him.

XXVI.

Still onward winds the dreary way ;
I with it ; for I long to prove
No lapse of moons can canker Love,
Whatever fickle tongues may say.

And if that eye which watches guilt
And goodness, and hath power to see
Within the green the moulder'd tree,
And towers fall as soon as built—

Oh, if indeed that eye should see
Or see (in Him as I before)
In more of life true life no more
And Love the indifference to be,

Then might I find, ere yet the morn
Breaks hither over Indian seas,
That Shadow waiting with the keys,
To shroud me from my proper scorn.

XXVII.

I envy not in any moods
The captive void of noble rage,
The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer woods :

I envy not the beast that takes
His license in the field of time,
Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes ;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
The heart that never plighted troth
But stagnates in the weeds of sloth ;
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall ;
I feel it, when I sorrow most ;
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

XXVIII.

The time draws near the birth of Christ :
The moon is hid ; the night is still ;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,
From far and near, on mead and moor,
Swell out and fail, as if a door
Were shut between me and the sound :

Each voice four changes on the wind,
That now dilate, and now decrease,
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and
peace,
Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,
I almost wish'd no more to wake,
And that my hold on life would break
Before I heard those bells again :

But they my troubled spirit rule,
 For they controll'd me when a boy ;
 They bring me sorrow touch'd with
 joy,
 The merry merry bells of Yule.

XXIX.

With such compelling cause to grieve
 As daily vexes household peace,
 And chains regret to his decease,
 How dare we keep our Christmas-eve ;
 Which brings no more a welcome guest
 To enrich the threshold of the night
 With shower'd largess of delight,
 In dance and song and game and jest ?
 Yet go, and while the holly boughs
 Entwine the cold baptismal font,
 Make one wreath more for Use and
 Wont,
 That guard the portals of the house ;
 Old sisters of a day gone by,
 Gray nurses, loving nothing new ;
 Why should they miss their yearly due
 Before their time ? They too will die.

XXX.

With trembling fingers did we weave
 The holly round the Christmas
 hearth ;
 A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,
 And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.
 At our old pastimes in the hall
 We gambol'd, making vain pretence
 Of gladness, with an awful sense
 Of one mute Shadow watching all.
 We paused : the winds were in the beech ;
 We heard them sweep the winterland ;
 And in a circle hand-in-hand
 Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang ;
 We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
 A merry song we sang with him
 Last year : impetuously we sang :

We ceased : a gentler feeling crept
 Upon us : surely rest is meet :
 'They rest,' we said, 'their sleep is
 sweet,'
 And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range ;
 Once more we sang : 'They do not die
 Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
 Nor change to us, although they change ;

Rapt from the fickle and the frail
 With gather'd power, yet the same,
 Pierces the keen seraphic flame
 From orb to orb, from veil to veil.'

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
 Draw forth the cheerful day from
 night :
 O Father, touch the east, and light
 The light that shone when Hope was born.

XXXI.

When Lazarus left his charnel-cave,
 And home to Mary's house return'd,
 Was this demanded—if he yearn'd
 To hear her weeping by his grave ?

'Where wert thou, brother, those four
 days ?'
 There lives no record of reply,
 Which telling what it is to die
 Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbours met,
 The streets were fill'd with joyful
 sound,
 A solemn gladness even crown'd
 The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ !
 The rest remaineth unreveal'd ;
 He told it not ; or something seal'd
 The lips of that Evangelist.

XXXII.

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
 Nor other thought her mind admits
 But, he was dead, and there he sits,
 And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
 All other, when her ardent gaze
 Roves from the living brother's face,
 And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,
 Borne down by gladness so complete,
 She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
 With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful
 prayers,
 Whose loves in higher love endure ;
 What souls possess themselves so pure,
 Or is there blessedness like theirs ?

XXXIII.

O thou that after toil and storm
 Mayst seem to have reach'd a purer
 air,
 Whose faith has centre everywhere,
 Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,
 Her early Heaven, her happy views ;
 Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse
 A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,
 Her hands are quicker unto good :
 Oh, sacred be the flesh and blood
 To which she links a truth divine !

See thou, that countest reason ripe
 In holding by the law within,
 Thou fail not in a world of sin,
 And ev'n for want of such a type.

XXXIV.

My own dim life should teach me this,
 That life shall live for evermore,
 Else earth is darkness at the core,
 And dust and ashes all that is ;

This round of green, this orb of flame,
 Fantastic beauty ; such as lurks
 In some wild Poet, when he works
 Without a conscience or an aim.

What then were God to such as I ?
 'Twere hardly worth my while to
 choose
 Of things all mortal, or to use
 A little patience ere I die ;

'Twere best at once to sink to peace,
 Like birds the charming serpent
 draws,
 To drop head-foremost in the jaws
 Of vacant darkness and to cease.

XXXV.

Yet if some voice that man could trust
 Should murmur from the narrow
 house,
 'The cheeks drop in ; the body bows ;
 Man dies : nor is there hope in dust :'

Might I not say ? 'Yet even here,
 But for one hour, O Love, I strive
 To keep so sweet a thing alive :'
 But I should turn mine ears and hear

The moanings of the homeless sea,
 The sound of streams that swift or
 slow
 Draw down Æonian hills, and sow
 The dust of continents to be ;

And Love would answer with a sigh,
 'The sound of that forgetful shore
 Will change my sweetness more and
 more,
 Half-dead to know that I shall die.'

O me, what profits it to put
 An idle case? If Death were seen
 At first as Death, Love had not been,
 Or been in narrowest working shut,
 Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,
 Or in his coarsest Satyr-shape
 Had bruised the herb and crush'd
 the grape,
 And bask'd and batten'd in the woods.

XXXVI.

Tho' truths in manhood darkly join,
 Deep-seated in our mystic frame,
 We yield all blessing to the name
 Of Him that made them current coin ;
 For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,
 Where truth in closest words shall fail,
 When truth embodied in a tale
 Shall enter in at lowly doors.
 And so the Word had breath, and wrought
 With human hands the creed of creeds
 In loveliness of perfect deeds,
 More strong than all poetic thought ;
 Which he may read that binds the sheaf,
 Or builds the house, or digs the grave,
 And those wild eyes that watch the
 wave
 In roarings round the coral reef.

XXXVII.

Urania speaks with darken'd brow :
 'Thou pratest here where thou art
 least ;
 This faith has many a purer priest,
 And many an abler voice than thou.

Go down beside thy native rill,
 On thy Parnassus set thy feet,
 And hear thy laurel whisper sweet
 About the ledges of the hill.'

And my Melpomene replies,
 A touch of shame upon her cheek :
 'I am not worthy ev'n to speak
 Of thy prevailing mysteries ;

For I am but an earthly Muse,
 And owning but a little art
 To lull with song an aching heart,
 And render human love his dues ;

But brooding on the dear one dead,
 And all he said of things divine,
 (And dear to me as sacred wine
 To dying lips is all he said),

I murmur'd, as I came along,
 Of comfort clasp'd in truth reveal'd ;
 And loiter'd in the master's field,
 And darken'd sanctities with song.'

XXXVIII.

With weary steps I loiter on,
 Tho' always under alter'd skies
 The purple from the distance dies,
 My prospect and horizon gone.

No joy the blowing season gives,
 The herald melodies of spring,
 But in the songs I love to sing
 A doubtful gleam of solace lives.

If any care for what is here
 Survive in spirits render'd free,
 Then are these songs I sing of thee
 Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

XXXIX.

Old warder of these buried bones,
 And answering now my random stroke
 With fruitful cloud and living smoke,
 Dark yew, that graspest at the stones

And dippest toward the dreamless head,
To thee too comes the golden hour
When flower is feeling after flower;
But Sorrow—fixt upon the dead,

And darkening the dark graves of men,—
What whisper'd from her lying lips?
Thy gloom is kindled at the tips,
And passes into gloom again.

XL.

Could we forget the widow'd hour
And look on Spirits breathed away,
As on a maiden in the day
When first she wears her orange-flower!

When crown'd with blessing she doth rise
To take her latest leave of home,
And hopes and light regrets that come
Make April of her tender eyes;

And doubtful joys the father move,
And tears are on the mother's face,
As parting with a long embrace
She enters other realms of love;

Her office there to rear, to teach,
Becoming as is meet and fit
A link among the days, to knit
The generations each with each;

And, doubtless, unto thee is given
A life that bears immortal fruit
In those great offices that suit
The full-grown energies of heaven.

Ay me, the difference I discern!
How often shall her old fireside
Be cheer'd with tidings of the bride,
How often she herself return,

And tell them all they would have told,
And bring her babe, and make her
boast,

Till ev'n those that miss'd her most,
Shall count new things as dear as old:

But thou and I have shaken hands,
Till growing winters lay me low;
My paths are in the fields I know
And thine in undiscover'd lands.

XLI.

Thy spirit ere our fatal loss
Did ever rise from high to higher;
As mounts the heavenward altar-fire,
As flies the lighter thro' the gross.

But thou art turn'd to something strange,
And I have lost the links that bound
Thy changes; here upon the ground,
No more partaker of thy change.

Deep folly! yet that this could be—
That I could wing my will with might
To leap the grades of life and light,
And flash at once, my friend, to thee.

For tho' my nature rarely yields
To that vague fear implied in death;
Nor shudders at the gulfs beneath,
The howlings from forgotten fields;

Yet oft when sundown skirts the moor
An inner trouble I behold,
A spectral doubt which makes me
cold,

That I shall be thy mate no more,
Tho' following with an upward mind
The wonders that have come to thee,
Tho' all the secular to-be,
But evermore a life behind.

XLII.

I vex my heart with fancies dim:
He still outstript me in the race;
It was but unity of place
That made me dream I rank'd with him.

And so may Place retain us still,
And he the much-beloved again,
A lord of large experience, train
To riper growth the mind and will:

And what delights can equal those
That stir the spirit's inner deeps,
When one that loves but knows not,
reaps
A truth from one that loves and knows ?

XLIII.

If Sleep and Death be truly one,
And every spirit's folded bloom
Thro' all its intervital gloom
In some long trance should slumber on ;

Unconscious of the sliding hour,
Bare of the body, might it last,
And silent traces of the past
Be all the colour of the flower :

So then were nothing lost to man ;
So that still garden of the souls
In many a figured leaf enrolls
The total world since life began ;

And love will last as pure and whole
As when he loved me here in Time,
And at the spiritual prime
Rewaken with the dawning soul.

XLIV.

How fares it with the happy dead ?
For here the man is more and more ;
But he forgets the days before
God shut the doorways of his head.

The days have vanish'd, tone and tint,
And yet perhaps the hoarding sense
Gives out at times (he knows not
whence)

A little flash, a mystic hint ;

And in the long harmonious years
(If Death so taste Lethæan springs,)
May some dim touch of earthly things
Surprise thee ranging with thy peers.

If such a dreamy touch should fall,
O turn thee round, resolve the doubt ;
My guardian angel will speak out
In that high place, and tell thee all.

XLV.

The baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that 'this is I :'

But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of 'I,' and 'me,'
And finds 'I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch.'

So rounds he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may
begin,
As thro' the frame that binds him in
His isolation grows defined.

This use may lie in blood and breath,
Which else were fruitless of their due,
Had man to learn himself anew
Beyond the second birth of Death.

XLVI.

We ranging down this lower track,
The path we came by, thorn and
flower,
Is shadow'd by the growing hour,
Lest life should fail in looking back.

So be it : there no shade can last
In that deep dawn behind the tomb,
But clear from marge to marge shall
bloom

The eternal landscape of the past ;

A lifelong tract of time reveal'd ;
The fruitful hours of still increase ;
Days order'd in a wealthy peace,
And those five years its richest field.

O Love, thy province were not large,
A bounded field, nor stretching far;
Look also, Love, a brooding star,
A rosy warmth from marge to marge.

XLVII.

That each, who seems a separate whole,
Should move his rounds, and fusing
all
The skirts of self again, should fall
Remerging in the general Soul,

Is faith as vague as all unsweet :
Eternal form shall still divide
The eternal soul from all beside ;
And I shall know him when we meet :

And we shall sit at endless feast,
Enjoying each the other's good :
What vaster dream can hit the mood
Of Love on earth? He seeks at least

Upon the last and sharpest height,
Before the spirits fade away,
Some landing-place, to clasp and say,
'Farewell! We lose ourselves in light.'

XLVIII.

If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,
Were taken to be such as closed
Grave doubts and answers here proposed,
Then these were such as men might scorn :

Her care is not to part and prove ;
She takes, when harsher moods remit,
What slender shade of doubt may flit,
And makes it vassal unto love :

And hence, indeed, she sports with words,
But better serves a wholesome law,
And holds it sin and shame to draw
The deepest measure from the chords :

Nor dare she trust a larger lay,
But rather loosens from the lip
Short swallow-flights of song, that dip
Their wings in tears, and skim away.

XLIX.

From art, from nature, from the schools,
Let random influences glance,
Like light in many a shiver'd lance
That breaks about the dappled pools :

The lightest wave of thought shall lisp,
The fancy's tenderest eddy wreath,
The slightest air of song shall breathe
To make the sullen surface crisp.

And look thy look, and go thy way,
But blame not thou the winds that
make
The seeming-wanton ripple break,
The tender-pencil'd shadow play.

Beneath all fancied hopes and fears
Ay me, the sorrow deepens down,
Whose muffled motions blindly
drown
The bases of my life in tears.

L.

Be near me when my life is low,
When the blood creeps, and the
nerves prick
And tingle; and the heart is sick
And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame
Is rack'd with pangs that conquer trust;
And Time, a maniac scattering dust,
And Life, a Fury slinging flame,

Be near me when my faith is dry,
And men the flies of latter spring,
That lay their eggs, and sting and sing,
And weave their petty cells and die.

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Be near me when I fade away,
To point the term of human strife,
And on the low dark verge of life
The twilight of eternal day.

LI.

Do we indeed desire the dead
Should still be near us at our side?
Is there no baseness we would hide?
No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,
I had such reverence for his blame,
See with clear eye some hidden
shame

And I be lessen'd in his love?

I wrong the grave with fears untrue :
Shall love be blamed for want of faith?
There must be wisdom with great
Death :

The dead shall look me thro' and thro'.

Be near us when we climb or fall :
Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours
With larger other eyes than ours,
To make allowance for us all.

LII.

I cannot love thee as I ought,
For love reflects the thing beloved ;
My words are only words, and moved
Upon the topmost froth of thought.

'Yet blame not thou thy plaintive song,'
The Spirit of true love replied ;
'Thou canst not move me from thy
side,
Nor human frailty do me wrong.

'What keeps a spirit wholly true
To that ideal which he bears?
What record? not the sinless years
That breathed beneath the Syrian blue :

'So fret not, like an idle girl,
That life is dash'd with flecks of sin.
Abide : thy wealth is gather'd in,
When Time hath sunder'd shell from
pearl.'

LIII.

How many a father have I seen,
A sober man, among his boys,
Whose youth was full of foolish
noise,
Who wears his manhood hale and green :

And dare we to this fancy give,
That had the wild oat not been sown,
The soil, left barren, scarce had
grown
The grain by which a man may live?

Oh, if we held the doctrine sound
For life outliving heats of youth,
Yet who would preach it as a truth
To those that eddy round and round?

Hold thou the good : define it well :
For fear divine Philosophy
Should push beyond her mark and
be

Procure to the Lords of Hell.

LIV.

Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;

That nothing walks with aimless feet ;
That not one life shall be destroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete ;

That not a worm is cloven in vain ;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivel'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything ;
 I can but trust that good shall fall
 At last—far off—at last, to all,
 And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream : but what am I ?
 An infant crying in the night :
 An infant crying for the light :
 And with no language but a cry.

LV.

The wish, that of the living whole
 No life may fail beyond the grave,
 Derives it not from what we have
 The likeliest God within the soul ?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
 That Nature lends such evil dreams ?
 So careful of the type she seems,
 So careless of the single life ;

That I, considering everywhere
 Her secret meaning in her deeds,
 And finding that of fifty seeds
 She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,
 And falling with my weight of
 cares
 Upon the great world's altar-stairs
 That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
 And gather dust and chaff, and call
 To what I feel is Lord of all,
 And faintly trust the larger hope.

LVI.

'So careful of the type?' but no.
 From scarped cliff and quarried stone
 She cries, 'A thousand types are
 gone :
 I care for nothing, all shall go.

'Thou makest thine appeal to me :
 I bring to life, I bring to death :
 The spirit does but mean the breath :
 I know no more.' And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,
 Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
 Who roll'd the psalm to wintry
 skies,

Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed
 And love Creation's final law—
 Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
 With ravine, shriek'd against his creed —

Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills,
 Who battled for the True, the Just,
 Be blown about the desert dust,
 Or seal'd within the iron hills ?

No more? A monster then, a dream,
 A discord. Dragons of the prime,
 That tare each other in their slime,
 Were mellow music match'd with him,

O life as futile, then, as frail !
 O for thy voice to soothe and bless !
 What hope of answer, or redress ?
 Behind the veil, behind the veil.

LVII.

Peace ; come away : the song of woe
 Is after all an earthly song :
 Peace ; come away : we do him
 wrong
 To sing so wildly : let us go.

Come ; let us go : your cheeks are
 pale ;
 But half my life I leave behind :
 Methinks my friend is richly shrined ;
 But I shall pass ; my work will fail.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,
 One set slow bell will seem to toll
 The passing of the sweetest soul
 That ever look'd with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,
 Eternal greetings to the dead ;
 And 'Ave, Ave, Ave,' said,
 'Adieu, adieu' for evermore.

LVIII.

In those sad words I took farewell :
 Like echoes in sepulchral halls,
 As drop by drop the water falls
 In vaults and catacombs, they fell ;

And, falling, idly broke the peace
 Of hearts that beat from day to day,
 Half-conscious of their dying clay,
 And those cold crypts where they shall
 cease.

The high Muse answer'd : 'Wherefore
 grieve
 Thy brethren with a fruitless tear ?
 Abide a little longer here,
 And thou shalt take a nobler leave.'

LIX.

O Sorrow, wilt thou live with me
 No casual mistress, but a wife,
 My bosom-friend and half of life ;
 As I confess it needs must be ;

O Sorrow, wilt thou rule my blood,
 Be sometimes lovely like a bride,
 And put thy harsher moods aside,
 If thou wilt have me wise and good.

My centred passion cannot move,
 Nor will it lessen from to-day ;
 But I'll have leave at times to play
 As with the creature of my love ;

And set thee forth, for thou art mine,
 With so much hope for years to come,
 That, howsoe'er I know thee, some
 Could hardly tell what name were thine.

LX.

He past ; a soul of nobler tone :
 My spirit loved and loves him yet,
 Like some poor girl whose heart is set
 On one whose rank exceeds her own.

He mixing with his proper sphere,
 She finds the baseness of her lot,
 Half jealous of she knows not what,
 And envying all that meet him there.

The little village looks forlorn ;
 She sighs amid her narrow days,
 Moving about the household ways,
 In that dark house where she was born.

The foolish neighbours come and go,
 And tease her till the day draws by :
 At night she weeps, 'How vain
 am I !
 How should he love a thing so low ?'

LXI.

If, in thy second state sublime,
 Thy ransom'd reason change replies
 With all the circle of the wise,
 The perfect flower of human time ;

And if thou cast thine eyes below,
 How dimly character'd and slight,
 How dwarf'd a growth of cold and
 night,
 How blanch'd with darkness must I grow !

Yet turn thee to the doubtful shore,
 Where thy first form was made a man ;
 I loved thee, Spirit, and love, nor
 can
 The soul of Shakspeare love thee more.

LXII.

Tho' if an eye that's downward cast
 Could make thee somewhat blench
 or fail,
 Then be my love an idle tale,
 And fading legend of the past ;
 And thou, as one that once declined,
 When he was little more than boy,
 On some unworthy heart with joy,
 But lives to wed an equal mind ;
 And breathes a novel world, the while
 His other passion wholly dies,
 Or in the light of deeper eyes
 Is matter for a flying smile.

LXIII.

Yet pity for a horse o'er-driven,
 And love in which my hound has part,
 Can hang no weight upon my heart
 In its assumptions up to heaven ;

And I am so much more than these,
 As thou, perchance, art more than I,
 And yet I spare them sympathy,
 And I would set their pains at ease.

So may'st thou watch me where I weep,
 As, unto vaster motions bound,
 The circuits of thine orbit round
 A higher height, a deeper deep.

LXIV.

Dost thou look back on what hath been,
 As some divinely gifted man,
 Whose life in low estate began
 And on a simple village green ;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
 And grasps the skirt of happy
 chance,
 And breasts the blows of circumstance,
 And grapples with his evil star ;

Who makes by force his merit known
 And lives to clutch the golden keys,
 To mould a mighty state's decrees,
 And shape the whisper of the throne ;

And moving up from high to higher,
 Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope
 The pillar of a people's hope,
 The centre of a world's desire ;

Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,
 When all his active powers are still,
 A distant dearness in the hill,
 A secret sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,
 While yet beside its vocal springs
 He play'd at counsellors and kings,
 With one that was his earliest mate ;

Who ploughs with pain his native lea
 And reaps the labour of his hands,
 Or in the furrow musing stands ;
 ' Does my old friend remember me ? '

LXV.

Sweet soul, do with me as thou wilt ;
 I hurl a fancy trouble-tost
 With ' Love's too precious to be lost,
 A little grain shall not be spilt. '

And in that solace can I sing,
 Till out of painful phases wrought
 There flutters up a happy thought,
 Self-balanced on a lightsome wing :

Since we deserved the name of friends,
 And thine effect so lives in me,
 A part of mine may live in thee
 And move thee on to noble ends.

LXVI.

You thought my heart too far diseased ;
 You wonder when my fancies play
 To find me gay among the gay,
 Like one with any trifle pleased.

The shade by which my life was crost,
Which makes a desert in the mind,
Has made me kindly with my kind,
And like to him whose sight is lost ;

Whose feet are guided thro' the land,
Whose jest among his friends is free,
Who takes the children on his knee,
And winds their curls about his hand :

He plays with threads, he beats his chair
For pastime, dreaming of the sky ;
His inner day can never die,
His night of loss is always there.

LXVII.

When on my bed the moonlight falls,
I know that in thy place of rest
By that broad water of the west,
There comes a glory on the walls :

Thy marble bright in dark appears,
As slowly steals a silver flame
Along the letters of thy name,
And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away ;
From off my bed the moonlight dies ;
And closing eaves of wearied eyes
I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray :

And then I know the mist is drawn
A lucid veil from coast to coast,
And in the dark church like a ghost
Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

LXVIII.

When in the down I sink my head,
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times
my breath ;
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, knows
not Death,
Nor can I dream of thee as dead

I walk as ere I walk'd forlorn,
When all our path was fresh with dew,
And all the bugle breezes blew
Reveillée to the breaking morn.

But what is this ? I turn about,
I find a-trouble in thine eye,
Which makes me sad I know not
why,
Nor can my dream resolve the doubt :

But ere the lark hath left the lea
I wake, and I discern the truth ;
It is the trouble of my youth
That foolish sleep transfers to thee.

LXIX.

I dream'd there would be Spring no
more,
That Nature's ancient power was lost :
The streets were black with smoke
and frost,
They chatter'd trifles at the door :

I wander'd from the noisy town,
I found a wood with thorny boughs :
I took the thorns to bind my brows,
I wore them like a civic crown :

I met with scoffs, I met with scorns
From youth and babe and hoary
hairs :
They call'd me in the public squares
The fool that wears a crown of thorns :

They call'd me fool, they call'd me child :
I found an angel of the night ;
The voice was low, the look was
bright ;

He look'd upon my crown and smiled :
He reach'd the glory of a hand,
That seem'd to touch it into leaf :
The voice was not the voice of grief,
The words were hard to understand.

LXX.

I cannot see the features right,
 When on the gloom I strive to paint
 The face I know ; the hues are faint
 And mix with hollow masks of night ;

Cloud-towers by ghostly masons wrought,
 A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,
 A hand that points, and palled shapes
 In shadowy thoroughfares of thought ;

And crowds that stream from yawning
 doors,
 And shoals of pucker'd faces drive ;
 Dark bulks that tumble half alive,
 And lazy lengths on boundless shores ;

Till all at once beyond the will
 I hear a wizard music roll,
 And thro' a lattice on the soul
 Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

LXXI.

Sleep, kinsman thou to death and trance
 And madness, thou hast forged at last
 A night-long Present of the Past
 In which we went thro' summer France.

Hadst thou such credit with the soul ?
 Then bring an opiate trebly strong,
 Drug down the blindfold sense of
 wrong

That so my pleasure may be whole ;

While now we talk as once we talk'd
 Of men and minds, the dust of change,
 The days that grow to something
 strange,

In walking as of old we walk'd

Beside the river's wooded reach,
 The fortress, and the mountain ridge,
 The cataract flashing from the bridge,
 The breaker breaking on the beach.

LXXII.

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,
 And howlest, issuing out of night,
 With blasts that blow the poplar
 white,
 And lash with storm the streaming pane ?

Day, when my crown'd estate begun
 To pine in that reverse of doom,
 Which sicken'd every living bloom,
 And blur'd the splendour of the sun ;

Who usherest in the dolorous hour
 With thy quick tears that make the
 rose
 Pull sideways, and the daisy close
 Her crimson fringes to the shower ;

Who might'st have heaved a windless
 flame
 Up the deep East, or, whispering,
 play'd
 A chequer-work of beam and shade
 Along the hills, yet look'd the same,

As wan, as chill, as wild as now ;
 Day, mark'd as with some hideous
 crime,
 When the dark hand struck down
 thro' time,
 And cancell'd nature's best : but thou,

Lift as thou may'st thy burthen'd brows
 Thro' clouds that drench the morning
 star,
 And whirl the ungarn'd sheaf afar,
 And sow the sky with flying boughs,

And up thy vault with roaring sound
 Climb thy thick noon, disastrous
 day ;
 Touch thy dull goal of joyless gray,
 And hide thy shame beneath the ground.

LXXIII.

So many worlds, so much to do,
 So little done, such things to be,
 How know I what had need of thee,
 For thou wert strong as thou wert true?

The fame is quench'd that I foresaw,
 The head hath miss'd an earthly
 wreath :
 I curse not nature, no, nor death ;
 For nothing is that errs from law.

We pass ; the path that each man trod
 Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds :
 What fame is left for human deeds
 In endless age? It rests with God.

O hollow wraith of dying fame,
 Fade wholly, while the soul exults,
 And self-infolds the large results
 Of force that would have forged a name.

LXXIV.

As sometimes in a dead man's face,
 To those that watch it more and more,
 A likeness, hardly seen before,
 Comes out—to some one of his race :

So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,
 I see thee what thou art, and know
 Thy likeness to the wise below,
 Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,
 And what I see I leave unsaid,
 Nor speak it, knowing Death has
 made
 His darkness beautiful with thee.

LXXV.

I leave thy praises unexpress'd
 In verse that brings myself relief,
 And by the measure of my grief
 I leave thy greatness to be guess'd ;

What practice howsoe'er expert
 In fitting aptest words to things,
 Or voice the richest-toned that sings,
 Hath power to give thee as thou wert?

I care not in these fading days
 To raise a cry that lasts not long,
 And round thee with the breeze of
 song
 To stir a little dust of praise.

Thy leaf has perish'd in the green,
 And, while we breathe beneath the
 sun,
 The world which credits what is done
 Is cold to all that might have been.

So here shall silence guard thy fame ;
 But somewhere, out of human view,
 What'e'r thy hands are set to do
 Is wrought with tumult of acclaim.

LXXVI.

Take wings of fancy, and ascend,
 And in a moment set thy face
 Where all the starry heavens of space
 Are sharpen'd to a needle's end ;

Take wings of foresight ; lighten thro'
 The secular abyss to come,
 And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb
 Before the mouldering of a yew ;

And if the matin songs, that woke
 The darkness of our planet, last,
 Thine own shall wither in the vast,
 Ere half the lifetime of an oak.

Ere these have clothed their branchy
 bowers
 With fifty Mays, thy songs are vain ;
 And what are they when these remain
 The ruin'd shells of hollow towers?

LXXVII.

What hope is here for modern rhyme
To him who turns a musing eye
On songs, and deeds, and lives, that
lie

Foreshorten'd in the tract of time?

These mortal lullabies of pain
May bind a book, may line a box,
May serve to curl a maiden's locks;
Or when a thousand moons shall wane

A man upon a stall may find,
And, passing, turn the page that tells
A grief, then changed to something
else,

Sung by a long-forgotten mind.

But what of that? My darken'd ways
Shall ring with music all the same;
To breathe my loss is more than fame,
To utter love more sweet than praise.

LXXVIII.

Again at Christmas did we weave
The holly round the Christmas
hearth;

The silent snow possess'd the earth,
And calmly fell our Christmas-eve;

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
No wing of wind the region swept,
But over all things brooding slept
The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,
Again our ancient games had place,
The mimic picture's breathing grace,
And dance and song and hoodman-blind.

Who show'd a token of distress?
No single tear, no mark of pain:
O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?
O grief, can grief be changed to less?

O last regret, regret can die!

No—mixt with all this mystic frame,
Her deep relations are the same,
But with long use her tears are dry.

LXXIX.

'More than my brothers are to me'—
Let this not vex thee, noble heart!
I know thee of what force thou art
To hold the costliest love in fee.

But thou and I are one in kind,
As moulded like in nature's mint;
And hill and wood and field did print
The same sweet forms in either mind.

For us the same cold streamlet curl'd
Thro' all his eddying coves; the same
All winds that roam the twilight came
In whispers of the beautiful world.

At one dear knee we proffer'd vows,
One lesson from one book we learn'd,
Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet turn'd
To black and brown on kindred brows.

And so my wealth resembles thine,
But he was rich where I was poor,
And he supplied my want the more
As his unlikeness fitted mine.

LXXX.

If any vague desire should rise,
That holy Death ere Arthur died
Had moved me kindly from his side,
And dropt the dust on tearless eyes;

Then fancy shapes, as fancy can,
The grief my loss in him had wrought,
A grief as deep as life or thought,
But stay'd in peace with God and man.

I make a picture in the brain;
I hear the sentence that he speaks;
He bears the burthen of the weeks,
But turns his burthen into gain.

His credit thus shall set me free ;
 And, influence-rich to soothe and
 save,
 Unused example from the grave
 Reach out dead hands to comfort me.

LXXXI.

Could I have said while he was here,
 'My love shall now no further range ;
 There cannot come a mellow
 change,
 For now is love mature in ear.'

Love, then, had hope of richer store :
 What end is here to my complaint ?
 This haunting whisper makes me faint,
 'More years had made me love thee more.'

But Death returns an answer sweet :
 'My sudden frost was sudden gain,
 And gave all ripeness to the grain,
 It might have drawn from after-heat.'

LXXXII.

I wage not any feud with Death
 For changes wrought on form and
 face ;

No lower life that earth's embrace
 May breed with him, can fright my faith.

Eternal process moving on,
 From state to state the spirit walks ;
 And these are but the shatter'd stalks,
 Or ruin'd chrysalis of one.

Nor blame I Death, because he bare
 The use of virtue out of earth :
 I know transplanted human worth
 Will bloom to profit, elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak
 The wrath that garners in my heart ;
 He put our lives so far apart
 We cannot hear each other speak.

LXXXIII.

Dip down upon the northern shore,
 O sweet new-year delaying long ;
 Thou doest expectant nature wrong ;
 Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded noons,
 Thy sweetness from its proper place ?
 Can trouble live with April days,
 Or sadness in the summer moons ?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,
 The little speedwell's darling blue,
 Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,
 Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,
 Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
 That longs to burst a frozen bud,
 And flood a fresher throat with song.

LXXXIV.

When I contemplate all alone
 The life that had been thine below,
 And fix my thoughts on all the glow
 To which thy crescent would have grown ;

I see thee smiling crown'd with good,
 A central warmth diffusing bliss
 In glance and smile, and clasp and
 kiss,
 On all the branches of thy blood ;

Thy blood, my friend, and partly mine ;
 For now the day was drawing on,
 When thou should'st link thy life with
 one
 Of mine own house, and boys of thine

I had babbled 'Uncle' on my knee ;
 But that remorseless iron hour
 Made cypress of her orange flower,
 Despair of Hope, and earth of thee.

I seem to meet their least desire,
To clap their cheeks, to call them mine.
I see their unborn faces shine
Beside the never-lighted fire.

I see myself an honour'd guest,
Thy partner in the flowery walk
Of letters, genial table-talk,
Or deep dispute, and graceful jest ;

While now thy prosperous labour fills
The lips of men with honest praise,
And sun by sun the happy days
Descend below the golden hills

With promise of a morn as fair ;
And all the train of bounteous hours
Conduct by paths of growing powers,
To reverence and the silver hair ;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,
Her lavish mission richly wrought,
Leaving great legacies of thought,
Thy spirit should fail from off the globe ;

What time mine own might also flee,
As link'd with thine in love and fate,
And, hovering o'er the dolorous strait
To the other shore, involved in thee,

Arrive at last the blessed goal,
And He that died in Holy Land
Would reach us out the shining hand,
And take us as a single soul.

What reed was that on which I leant ?
Ah, backward fancy, wherefore wake
The old bitterness again, and break
The low beginnings of content.

LXXXV.

This truth came borne with bier and pall,
I felt it when I sorrow'd most,
'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all—

O true in word, and tried in deed,
Demanding, so to bring relief
To this which is our common grief,
What kind of life is that I lead ;

And whether trust in things above
Be dimm'd of sorrow, or sustain'd ;
And whether love for him have drain'd
My capabilities of love ;

Your words have virtue such as draws
A faithful answer from the breast,
Thro' light reproaches, half exprest,
And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,
Till on mine ear this message falls,
That in Vienna's fatal walls
God's finger touch'd him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair
That range above our mortal state,
In circle round the blessed gate,
Received and gave him welcome there ;

And led him thro' the blissful climes,
And show'd him in the fountain fresh
All knowledge that the sons of flesh
Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remain'd, whose hopes were dim,
Whose life, whose thoughts were
little worth,
To wander on a darken'd earth,
Where all things round me breath'd of him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,
O heart, with kindest motion warm,
O sacred essence, other form,
O solemn ghost, O crowned soul !

Yet none could better know than I,
How much of act at human hands
The sense of human will demands
By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,
 I felt and feel, tho' left alone,
 His being working in mine own,
 The footsteps of his life in mine ;

A life that all the Muses deck'd
 With gifts of grace, that might express
 All-comprehensive tenderness,
 All-subtilising intellect :

And so my passion hath not swerved
 To works of weakness, but I find
 An image comforting the mind,
 And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,
 That lov'd to handle spiritual strife,
 Diffused the shock thro' all my life,
 But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again
 For other friends that once I met ;
 Nor can it suit me to forget
 The mighty hopes that make us men.

I woo your love : I count it crime
 To mourn for any overmuch ;
 I, the divided half of such
 A friendship as had master'd Time ;

Which masters Time indeed, and is
 Eternal, separate from fears :
 The all-assuming months and years
 Can take no part away from this :

But Summer on the steaming floods,
 And Spring that swells the narrow
 brooks,

And Autumn, with a noise of rooks,
 That gather in the waning woods,

And every pulse of wind and wave
 Recalls, in change of light or gloom,
 My old affection of the tomb,
 And my prime passion in the grave :

My old affection of the tomb,
 A part of stillness, years to speak :
 'Arise, and get thee forth and seek
 A friendship for the years to come.

I watch thee from the quiet shore ;
 Thy spirit up to mine can reach ;
 But in dear words of human speech
 We two communicate no more.'

And I, 'Can clouds of nature stain
 The starry clearness of the free?
 How is it? Canst thou feel for me
 Some painless sympathy with pain?'

And lightly does the whisper fall ;
 'Tis hard for thee to fathom this ;
 I triumph in conclusive bliss,
 And that serene result of all.'

So hold I commerce with the dead ;
 Or so methinks the dead would say ;
 Or so shall grief with symbols play,
 And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,
 That these things pass, and I shall
 prove
 A meeting somewhere, love with love,
 I crave your pardon, O my friend ;

If not so fresh, with love as true,
 I, clasping brother-hands, aver
 I could not, if I would, transfer
 The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart
 The promise of the golden hours?
 First love, first friendship, equal
 powers,

That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine, that cannot but deplore,
 That beats within a lonely place,
 That yet remembers his embrace,
 But at his footstep leaps no more,

My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest
Quite in the love of what is gone,
But seeks to beat in time with one
That warms another living breast.

Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,
Knowing the primrose yet is dear,
The primrose of the later year,
As not unlike to that of Spring.

LXXXVI.

Sweet after showers, anibrosial air,
That rollest from the gorgeous gloom
Of evening over brake and bloom
And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below
Thro' all the dewy-tassell'd wood,
And shadowing down the horned
flood

In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh
The full new life that feeds thy
breath

Throughout my frame, till Doubt and
Death,

Ill brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas
On leagues of odour streaming far,
To where in yonder orient star
A hundred spirits whisper 'Peace.'

LXXXVII.

I past beside the reverend walls

In which of old I wore the gown ;
I roved at random thro' the town,
And saw the tumult of the halls ;

And heard once more in college fanes
The storm their high-built organs
make,

And thunder-music, rolling, shake
The prophets blazon'd on the panes ;

And caught once more the distant shout,
The measured pulse of racing oars
Among the willows ; paced the shores
And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt
The same, but not the same ; and
last

Up that long walk of limes I past
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door :
I linger'd ; all within was noise
Of songs, and clapping hands, and
boys

That crash'd the glass and beat the floor ;

Where once we held debate, a band
Of youthful friends, on mind and
art,
And labour, and the changing mart,
And all the framework of the land ;

When one would aim an arrow fair,
But send it slackly from the string ;
And one would pierce an outer ring,
And one an inner, here and there ;

And last the master-bowman, he,
Would cleave the mark. A willing
ear
We lent him. Who, but hung to
hear

The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point, with power and grace
And music in the bounds of law,
To those conclusions when we saw
The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow
In azure orbits heavenly-wise ;
And over those ethereal eyes
The bar of Michael Angelo.

LXXXVIII.

Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
 Rings Eden thro' the budded quicks,
 O tell me where the senses mix,
 O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate : fierce extremes employ
 Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,
 And in the midmost heart of grief
 Thy passion clasps a secret joy :

And I—my harp would prelude woe—
 I cannot all command the strings ;
 The glory of the sum of things
 Will flash along the chords and go.

LXXXIX.

Witch-elds that counterchange the floor
 Of this flat lawn with dusk and
 bright ;
 And thou, with all thy breadth and
 height
 Of foliage, towering sycamore ;

How often, hither wandering down,
 My Arthur found your shadows fair,
 And shook to all the liberal air
 The dust and din and steam of town :

He brought an eye for all he saw ;
 He mixt in all our simple sports ;
 They pleased him, fresh from brawl-
 ing courts
 And dusty purlieus of the law.

O joy to him in this retreat,
 Immantled in ambrosial dark,
 To drink the cooler air, and mark
 The landscape winking thro' the heat :

O sound to rout the brood of cares,
 The sweep of scythe in morning dew,
 The gust that round the garden flew,
 And tumbled half the mellowing pears !

O bliss, when all in circle drawn
 About him, heart and ear were fed
 To hear him, as he lay and read
 The Tuscan poets on the lawn :

Or in the all-golden afternoon
 A guest, or happy sister, sung,
 Or here she brought the harp and flung
 A ballad to the brightening moon :

Nor less it pleased in livelier moods,
 Beyond the bounding hill to stray,
 And break the livelong summer day
 With banquet in the distant woods ;

Whereat we glanced from theme to theme,
 Discuss'd the books to love or hate,
 Or touch'd the changes of the state,
 Or threaded some Socratic dream ;

But if I praised the busy town,
 He loved to rail against it still,
 For ' ground in yonder social mill
 We rub each other's angles down,

And merge' he said 'in form and gloss
 The picturesque of man and man.'
 We talk'd : the stream beneath us ran,
 The wine-flask lying couch'd in moss,

Or cool'd within the glooming wave ;
 And last, returning from afar,
 Before the crimson-circled star
 Had fall'n into her father's grave,

And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,
 We heard behind the woodbine veil
 The milk that bubbled in the pail,
 And buzzings of the honied hours.

XC.

He tasted love with half his mind,
 Nor ever drank the inviolate spring
 Where nighest heaven, who first
 could fling

This bitter seed among mankind ;

That could the dead, whose dying eyes
Were closed with wail, resume their
life,

They would but find in child and wife
An iron welcome when they rise :

'Twas well, indeed, when warm with wine,
To pledge them with a kindly tear,
To talk them o'er, to wish them here,
To count their memories half divine ;

But if they came who past away,
Behold their brides in other hands ;
The hard heir strides about their
lands,

And will not yield them for a day.

Yea, tho' their sons were none of these,
Not less the yet-loved sire would make
Confusion worse than death, and
shake

The pillars of domestic peace.

Ah dear, but come thou back to me :
Whatever change the years have
wrought,

I find not yet one lonely thought
That cries against my wish for thee.

XCI.

When rosy plumelets tuft the larch,
And rarely pipes the mounted thrush ;
Or underneath the barren bush
Flits by the sea-blue bird of March ;

Come, wear the form by which I know
Thy spirit in time among thy peers ;
The hope of unaccomplish'd years
Be large and lucid round thy brow.

When summer's hourly-mellowing change
May breathe, with many roses sweet,
Upon the thousand waves of wheat,
That ripple round the lonely grange ;

Come : not in watches of the night,
But where the sunbeam broodeth
warm,
Come, beauteous in thine after form,
And like a finer light in light.

XCII.

If any vision should reveal
Thy likeness, I might count it vain
As but the canker of the brain ;
Yea, tho' it spake and made appeal

To chances where our lots were cast
Together in the days behind,
I might but say, I hear a wind
Of memory murmuring the past.

Yea, tho' it spake and bared to view
A fact within the coming year ;
And tho' the months, revolving near,
Should prove the phantom-warning true,

They might not seem thy prophecies,
But spiritual presentiments,
And such refraction of events
As often rises ere they rise.

XCIII.

I shall not see thee. Dare I say
No spirit ever brake the band
That stays him from the native land,
Where first he walk'd when claspt in clay ?

No visual shade of some one lost,
But he, the Spirit himself, may come
Where all the nerve of sense is
numb ;
Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.

O, therefore from thy sightless range
With gods in unconjectur'd bliss,
O, from the distance of the abyss
Of tenfold-complicated change,

Descend, and touch, and enter ; hear
 The wish too strong for words to
 name ;
 That in this blindness of the frame
 My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

XCIV.

How pure at heart and sound in head,
 With what divine affections bold
 Should be the man whose thought
 would hold

An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call
 The spirits from their golden day,
 Except, like them, thou too canst say,
 My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,
 Imaginations calm and fair,
 The memory like a cloudless air,
 The conscience as a sea at rest :

But when the heart is full of din,
 And doubt beside the portal waits,
 They can but listen at the gates,
 And hear the household jar within.

XCV.

By night we linger'd on the lawn,
 For underfoot the herb was dry ;
 And genial warmth ; and o'er the
 sky

The silvery haze of summer drawn ;

And calm that let the tapers burn
 Unwavering : not a cricket chirr'd :
 The brook alone far-off was heard,
 And on the board the fluttering urn :

And bats went round in fragrant skies,
 And wheel'd or lit the filmy shapes
 That haunt the dusk, with ermine
 capes

And woolly breasts and beaded eyes ;

While now we sang old songs that peal'd
 From knoll to knoll, where, couch'd
 at ease,
 The white kine glimmer'd, and the
 trees

Laid their dark arms about the field.

But when those others, one by one,
 Withdrew themselves from me and
 night,

And in the house light after light
 Went out, and I was all alone,

A hunger seized my heart ; I read
 Of that glad year which once had been,
 In those fall'n leaves which kept their
 green,

The noble letters of the dead :

And strangely on the silence broke
 The silent-speaking words, and
 strange

Was love's dumb cry defying change
 To test his worth ; and strangely spoke

The faith, the vigour, bold to dwell
 On doubts that drive the coward back,
 And keen thro' wordy snares to track
 Suggestion to her inmost cell.

So word by word, and line by line,
 The dead man touch'd me from the
 past,

And all at once it seem'd at last
 The living soul was flash'd on mine,

And mine in this was wound, and whirl'd
 About empyreal heights of thought,
 And came on that which is, and caught
 The deep pulsations of the world,

Æonian music measuring out

The steps of Time—the shocks of
 Chance—

The blows of Death. At length my
 trance

Was cancell'd, stricken thro' with doubt.

Vague words ! but ah, how hard to frame
 In matter-moulded forms of speech,
 Or ev'n for intellect to reach
 Thro' memory that which I became :

Till now the doubtful dusk reveal'd
 The knolls once more where, couch'd
 at ease,
 The white kine glimmer'd, and the
 trees

Laid their dark arms about the field :

And suck'd from out the distant gloom
 A breeze began to tremble o'er
 The large leaves of the sycamore,
 And fluctuate all the still perfume,

And gathering freshier overhead,
 Rock'd the full-foliaged elms, and
 swung

The heavy-folded rose, and flung
 The lilies to and fro, and said

'The dawn, the dawn,' and died away;
 And East and West, without a breath,
 Mixt their dim lights, like life and
 death,

To broaden into boundless day.

XCVI.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue
 eyes

Are tender over drowning flies,
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not : one indeed I knew
 In many a subtle question versed,
 Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,
 But ever strove to make it true :

Perplex in faith, but pure in deeds,
 At last he beat his music out.
 There lives more faith in honest
 doubt,
 Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd
 strength,

He would not make his judgment
 blind,

He faced the spectres of the mind
 And laid them : thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own ;
 And Power was with him in the
 night,

Which makes the darkness and the
 light,

And dwells not in the light alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,
 As over Sinai's peaks of old,
 While Israel made their gods of gold,
 Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

XCVII.

My love has talk'd with rocks and trees ;
 He finds on misty mountain-ground
 His own vast shadow glory-crown'd ;
 He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life—
 I look'd on these and thought of thee
 In vastness and in mystery,
 And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two—they dwelt with eye on eye,
 Their hearts of old have beat in
 tune,

Their meetings made December June,
 Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away ;
 The days she never can forget
 Are earnest that he loves her yet,
 Whate'er the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart,
 He loves her yet, she will not weep,
 Tho' rapt in matters dark and deep
 He seems to slight her simple heart.

He thrids the labyrinth of the mind,
 He reads the secret of the star,
 He seems so near and yet so far,
 He looks so cold : she thinks him kind.

She keeps the gift of years before,
 A wither'd violet is her bliss :
 She knows not what his greatness is ;
 For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings
 Of early faith and plighted vows ;
 She knows but matters of the house
 And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixt and cannot move,
 She darkly feels him great and wise,
 She dwells on him with faithful eyes,
 'I cannot understand : I love.'

xcviii.

You leave us : you will see the Rhine,
 And those fair hills I sail'd below,
 When I was there with him ; and go
 By summer belts of wheat and vine

To where he breathed his latest breath,
 That City. All her splendour seems
 No livelier than the wisp that gleams
 On Lethe in the eyes of Death.

Let her great Danube rolling fair
 Enwind her isles, unmark'd of me :
 I have not seen, I will not see
 Vienna ; rather dream that there,

A treble darkness, Evil haunts
 The birth, the bridal ; friend from
 friend
 Is oftener parted, fathers bend
 Above more graves, a thousand wants

Gnarr at the heels of men, and prey
 By each cold hearth, and sadness flings
 Her shadow on the blaze of kings :
 And yet myself have heard him say,

That not in any mother town
 With statelier progress to and fro
 The double tides of chariots flow
 By park and suburb under brown
 Of lustier leaves ; nor more content,
 He told me, live in any crowd,
 When all is gay with lamps, and loud
 With sport and song, in booth and tent,
 Imperial halls, or open plain ;
 And wheels the circled dance, and
 breaks
 The rocket molten into flakes
 Of crimson or in emerald rain.

xcix.

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,
 So loud with voices of the birds,
 So thick with lowings of the herds,
 Day, when I lost the flower of men ;
 Who tremblest thro' thy darkling red
 On yon swoll'n brook that bubbles fast
 By meadows breathing of the past,
 And woodlands holy to the dead ;

Who murmurest in the foliaged eaves
 A song that slights the coming care,
 And Autumn laying here and there
 A fiery finger on the leaves ;

Who wakenest with thy balmy breath
 To myriads on the genial earth,
 Memories of bridal, or of birth,
 And unto myriads more, of death.

O wheresoever those may be,
 Betwixt the slumber of the poles,
 To-day they count as kindred souls
 They know me not, but mourn with me.

c.

I climb the hill : from end to end
 Of all the landscape underneath,
 I find no place that does not breathe
 Some gracious memory of my friend ;

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,
Or low morass and whispering reed,
Or simple stile from mead to mead,
Or sheepwalk up the windy wold ;

Nor hoary knoll of ash and haw
That hears the latest linnet trill,
Nor quarry trench'd along the hill,
And haunted by the wrangling daw ;

Nor runlet tinkling from the rock ;
Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves
To left and right thro' meadowy
curves,

That feed the mothers of the flock ;
But each has pleased a kindred eye,
And each reflects a kindlier day ;
And, leaving these, to pass away,
I think once more he seems to die.

CI.

Unwatch'd, the garden bough shall
sway,
The tender blossom flutter down,
Unlov'd, that beech will gather
brown,
This maple burn itself away ;

Unlov'd, the sun-flower, shining fair,
Ray round with flames her disk of
seed,
And many a rose-carnation feed
With summer spice the humming air ;

Unlov'd, by many a sandy bar,
The brook shall babble down the
plain,
At noon or when the lesser wain
Is twisting round the polar star ;

Uncared for, gird the windy grove,
And flood the haunts of hern and
crake ;
Or into silver arrows break
The sailing moon in creek and cove ;

Till from the garden and the wild
A fresh association blow,
And year by year the landscape grow
Familiar to the stranger's child ;

As year by year the labourer tills
His wonted glebe, or lops the
glades ;
And year by year our memory fades
From all the circle of the hills.

CII.

We leave the well-beloved place
Where first we gazed upon the sky ;
The roofs, that heard our earliest cry,
Will shelter one of stranger race.

We go, but ere we go from home,
As down the garden-walks I move,
Two spirits of a diverse love
Contend for loving masterdom.

One whispers, here thy boyhood sung
Long since its matin song, and
heard
The low love-language of the bird
In native hazels tassel-hung.

The other answers, ' Yea, but here
Thy feet have stray'd in after hours
With thy lost friend among the
bowers,
And this hath made them trebly dear.'

These two have striven half the day,
And each prefers his separate claim,
Poor rivals in a losing game,
That will not yield each other way.

I turn to go : my feet are set
To leave the pleasant fields and
farms ;
They mix in one another's arms
To one pure image of regret.

CIII.

On that last night before we went
 From out the doors where I was
 bred,
 I dream'd a vision of the dead,
 Which left my after-morn content.
 Methought I dwelt within a hall,
 And maidens with me : distant hills
 From hidden summits fed with rills
 A river sliding by the wall.
 The hall with harp and carol rang.
 They sang of what is wise and good
 And graceful. In the centre stood
 A statue veil'd, to which they sang ;
 And which, tho' veil'd, was known to me,
 The shape of him I loved, and love
 For ever : then flew in a dove
 And brought a summons from the sea :
 And when they learnt that I must go
 They wept and wail'd, but led the
 way
 To where a little shallop lay
 At anchor in the flood below ;
 And on by many a level mead,
 And shadowing bluff that made the
 banks,
 We glided winding under ranks
 Of iris, and the golden reed ;
 And still as vaster grew the shore
 And roll'd the floods in grander
 space,
 The maidens gather'd strength and
 grace
 And presence, lordlier than before ;
 And I myself, who sat apart
 And watch'd them, wax'd in every
 limb ;
 I felt the thews of Anakim,
 The pulses of a Titan's heart ;

As one would sing the death of war,
 And one would chant the history
 Of that great race, which is to be,
 And one the shaping of a star ;
 Until the forward-creeping tides
 Began to foam, and we to draw
 From deep to deep, to where we saw
 A great ship lift her shining sides.
 The man we lov'd was there on deck,
 But thrice as large as man he bent
 To greet us. Up the side I went,
 And fell in silence on his neck :
 Whereat those maidens with one mind
 Bewail'd their lot ; I did them wrong :
 'We served thee here,' they said,
 'so long,
 And wilt thou leave us now behind ?'
 So rapt I was, they could not win
 An answer from my lips, but he
 Replying, 'Enter likewise ye
 And go with us : ' they enter'd in.
 And while the wind began to sweep
 A music out of sheet and shroud,
 Westeer'd her toward a crimson cloud
 That landlike slept along the deep.

CIV.

The time draws near the birth of Christ ;
 The moon is hid, the night is still ;
 A single church below the hill
 Is pealing, folded in the mist.
 A single peal of bells below,
 That wakens at this hour of rest
 A single murmur in the breast,
 That these are not the bells I know.
 Like strangers' voices here they sound,
 In lands where not a memory strays,
 Nor landmark breathes of other days,
 But all is new unhallow'd ground.

CV.

To-night ungather'd let us leave
 This laurel, let this holly stand ;
 We live within the stranger's land,
 And strangely falls our Christmas eve.
 Our father's dust is left alone
 And silent under other snows ;
 There in due time the woodbine
 blows,
 The violet comes, but we are gone.
 No more shall wayward grief abuse
 The genial hour with mask and
 mime ;
 For change of place, like growth of
 time,
 Has broke the bond of dying use.
 Let cares that petty shadows cast,
 By which our lives are chiefly proved,
 A little spare the night I loved,
 And hold it solemn to the past.
 But let no footstep beat the floor,
 Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm ;
 For who would keep an ancient form
 Thro' which the spirit breathes no more ?
 Be neither song, nor game, nor feast ;
 Nor harp be touch'd, nor flute be
 blown ;
 No dance, no motion, save alone
 What lightens in the lucid east
 Of rising worlds by yonder wood.
 Long sleeps the summer in the seed ;
 Run out your measured arcs, and lead
 The closing cycle rich in good.

CVI.

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
 The flying cloud, the frosty light :
 The year is dying in the night ;
 Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
 Ring, happy bells, across the snow :
 The year is going, let him go ;
 Ring out the false, ring in the true.
 Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
 For those that here we see no more ;
 Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
 Ring in redress to all mankind.
 Ring out a slowly dying cause,
 And ancient forms of party strife ;
 Ring in the nobler modes of life,
 With sweeter manners, purer laws.
 Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
 The faithless coldness of the times ;
 Ring out, ring out my mournful
 rhymes,
 But ring the fuller minstrel in.
 Ring out false pride in place and blood,
 The civic slander and the spite ;
 Ring in the love of truth and right,
 Ring in the common love of good.
 Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.
 Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.

CVII.

It is the day when he was born,
 A bitter day that early sank
 Behind a purple-frosty bank
 Of vapour, leaving night forlorn.
 The time admits not flowers or leaves
 To deck the banquet. Fiercely flies
 The blast of North and East, and ice
 Makes daggers at the sharpen'd eaves,

And bristles all the brakes and thorns
 To yon hard crescent, as she hangs
 Above the wood which grides and
 clangs
 Its leafless ribs and iron horns

Together, in the drifts that pass
 To darken on the rolling brine
 That breaks the coast. But fetch
 the wine,
 Arrange the board and brim the glass ;

Bring in great logs and let them lie,
 To make a solid core of heat ;
 Be cheerful-minded, talk and treat
 Of all things ev'n as he were by ;

We keep the day. With festal cheer,
 With books and music, surely we
 Will drink to him, whate'er he be,
 And sing the songs he loved to hear.

CVIII.

I will not shut me from my kind,
 And, lest I stiffen into stone,
 I will not eat my heart alone,
 Nor feed with sighs a passing wind :

What profit lies in barren faith,
 And vacant yearning, tho' with
 might
 To scale the heaven's highest height,
 Or dive below the wells of Death ?

What find I in the highest place,
 But mine own phantom chanting
 hymns ?
 And on the depths of death there
 swims
 The reflex of a human face.

I'll rather take what fruit may be
 Of sorrow under human skies :
 'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise,
 Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

CIX.

Heart-affluence in discursive talk
 From household fountains never dry ;
 The critic clearness of an eye,
 That saw thro' all the Muses' walk ;

Seraphic intellect and force
 To seize and throw the doubts of man ;
 Impassion'd logic, which outran
 The hearer in its fiery course ;

High nature amorous of the good,
 But touch'd with no ascetic gloom ;
 And passion pure in snowy bloom
 Thro' all the years of April blood ;

A love of freedom rarely felt,
 Of freedom in her regal seat
 Of England ; not the schoolboy heat,
 The blind hysterics of the Celt ;

And manhood fused with female grace
 In such a sort, the child would twine
 A trustful hand, unask'd, in thine,
 And find his comfort in thy face ;

All these have been, and thee mine eyes
 Have look'd on : if they look'd in vain,
 My shame is greater who remain,
 Nor let thy wisdom make me wise.

CX.

Thy converse drew us with delight,
 The men of rathe and riper years :
 The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,
 Forgot his weakness in thy sight.

On thee the loyal-hearted hung,
 The proud was half disarm'd of pride,
 Nor cared the serpent at thy side
 To flicker with his double tongue.

The stern were mild when thou wert by,
 The flippant put himself to school
 And heard thee, and the brazen fool
 Was soften'd, and he knew not why ;
 Y

While I, thy nearest, sat apart,
And felt thy triumph was as mine ;
— And loved them more, that they were
thine,
The graceful tact, the Christian art ;

Nor mine the sweetness or the skill,
But mine the love that will not
tire,
And, born of love, the vague desire
That spurs an imitative will.

CXI.

The churl in spirit, up or down
Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,
To him who grasps a golden ball,
By blood a king, at heart a clown ;

The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil
His want in forms for fashion's
sake,

Will let his coltish nature break
At seasons thro' the gilded pale :

For who can always act ? but he,
To whom a thousand memories call,
Not being less but more than all
The gentleness he seen'd to be,

Best seen'd the thing he was, and join'd
Each office of the social hour
To noble manners, as the flower
And native growth of noble mind ;

Nor ever narrowness or spite,
Or villain fancy fleeting by,
Drew in the expression of an eye,
Where God and Nature met in light ;

And thus he bore without abuse
The grand old name of gentleman,
Defamed by every charlatan,
And soil'd with all ignoble use.

CXII.

High wisdom holds my wisdom less,
That I, who gaze with temperate eyes
On glorious insufficiencies,
Set light by narrower perfectness.

But thou, that fillest all the room
Of all my love, art reason why
I seem to cast a careless eye
On souls, the lesser lords of doom.

For what wert thou ? some novel power
Sprang up for ever at a touch,
And hope could never hope too much,
In watching thee from hour to hour,

Large elements in order brought,
And tracts of calm from tempest
made,
And world-wide fluctuation sway'd
In vassal tides that follow'd thought,

CXIII.

'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise ;
Yet how much wisdom sleeps with
thee
Which not alone had guided me,
But served the seasons that may rise ;

For can I doubt, who knew thee keen
In intellect, with force and skill
To strive, to fashion, to fulfil—
I doubt not what thou wouldst have been :

A life in civic action warm,
A soul on highest mission sent,
A potent voice of Parliament,
A pillar steadfast in the storm,

Should licensed boldness gather force,
Becoming, when the time has birth,
A lever to uplift the earth
And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and go,
With agonies, with energies,
With overthrowings, and with cries,
And undulations to and fro.

CXIV.

Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall
 rail
 Against her beauty? May she mix
 With men and prosper! Who shall
 fix

Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire :
 She sets her forward countenance
 And leaps into the future chance,
Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain—
 She cannot fight the fear of death
 What is she, cut from love and truth,
But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of Demons? fiery hot to burst
 All barriers in her onward race
 For power. Let her know her place ;
She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,
 If all be not in vain ; and guide
 Her footsteps, moving side by side
With wisdom, like the younger child :

For she is earthly of the mind,
 But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.
 O, friend, who camest to thy goal
So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew like thee,
 Who grewest not alone in power
 And knowledge, but by year and
 hour

In reverence and in charity.

CXV.

Now fades the last long streak of snow,
Now burgeons every maze of quick
About the flowering squares, and
 thick

By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,
The distance takes a lovelier hue,
And drown'd in yonder living blue
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
The flocks are whiter down the vale,
And milkier every milky sail
On winding stream or distant sea ;

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives
In yonder greening gleam, and fly
The happy birds, that change their sky
To build and brood ; that live their lives

From land to land ; and in my breast
Spring wakens too ; and my regret
Becomes an April violet,
And buds and blossoms like the rest.

CXVI.

Is it, then, regret for buried time
That keenlier in sweet April wakes,
And meets the year, and gives and
 takes

The colours of the crescent prime?

Not all : the songs, the stirring air,
The life re-orient out of dust,
Cry thro' the sense to hearten trust
In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret : the face will shine
Upon me, while I muse alone ;
And that dear voice, I once have
 known,

Still speak to me of me and mine :

Yet less of sorrow lives in me
 For days of happy commune dead ;
 Less yearning for the friendship fled,
 Than some strong bond which is to be.

CXVII.

O days and hours, your work is this,
 To hold me from my proper place,
 A little while from his embrace,
 For fuller gain of after bliss :

That out of distance might ensue
 Desire of nearness doubly sweet ;
 And unto meeting when we meet,
 Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,
 And every span of shade that steals,
 And every kiss of toothed wheels,
 And all the courses of the suns.

CXVIII.

Contemplate all this work of Time,
 The giant labouring in his youth ;
 Nor dream of human love and truth,
 As dying Nature's earth and lime ;

But trust that those we call the dead
 Are breathers of an ampler day
 For ever nobler ends. They say,
 The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,
 And grew to seeming-random forms,
 The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
 Till at the last arose the man ;

Who throve and branch'd from clime to
 clime,
 The herald of a higher race,
 And of himself in higher place,
 If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more ;
 Or, crown'd with attributes of woe
 Like glories, move his course, and
 show

That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,
 And heated hot with burning fears,
 And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
 And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly
 The reeling Faun, the sensual feast ;
 Move upward, working out the beast,
 And let the ape and tiger die.

CXIX.

Doors, where my heart was used to beat
 So quickly, not as one that weeps
 I come once more ; the city sleeps ;
 I smell the meadow in the street ;

I hear a chirp of birds ; I see
 Betwixt the black fronts long-
 withdrawn
 A light-blue lane of early dawn,
 And think of early days and thee,

And bless thee, for thy lips are bland
 And bright the friendship of thine eye ;
 And in my thoughts with scarce a sigh
 I take the pressure of thine hand.

CXX.

I trust I have not wasted breath :
 I think we are not wholly brain,
 Magnetic mockeries ; not in vain,
 Like Paul with beasts, I fought with
 Death ;

Not only cunning casts in clay :
 Let Science prove we are, and then
 What matters Science unto men,
 At least to me ? I would not stay.

Let him, the wiser man who springs
 Hereafter, up from childhood shape
 His action like the greater ape,
 But I was *born* to other things.

CXXI.

Sad Hesper o'er the buried sun
 And ready, thou, to die with him,
 Thou watchest all things ever dim
 And dimmer, and a glory done :

The team is loosen'd from the Wain,
 The boat is drawn upon the shore ;
 Thou listenest to the closing door,
 And life is darken'd in the brain.

Bright Phosphor, fresher for the night,
 By thee the world's great work is
 heard

Beginning, and the wakeful bird ;
 Behind thee comes the greater light :

The market boat is on the stream,
 And voices hail it from the brink ;
 Thou hear'st the village hammer clink,
 And see'st the moving of the team.

Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name
 For what is one, the first, the last,
 Thou, like my present and my past,
 Thy place is changed ; thou art the same.

CXXII.

Oh, wast thou with me, dearest, then,
 While I rose up against my doom,
 And yearn'd to burst the folded
 gloom,

To bare the eternal Heavens again,

To feel once more, in placid awe,
 The strong imagination roll
 A sphere of stars about my soul,
 In all her motion one with law ;

If thou wert with me, and the grave
 Divide us not, be with me now,
 And enter in at breast and brow,
 Till all my blood, a fuller wave,

Be quicken'd with a livelier breath,
 And like an inconsiderate boy,
 As in the former flash of joy,
 I slip the thoughts of life and death ;

And all the breeze of Fancy blows,
 And every dew-drop paints a bow,
 The wizard lightnings deeply glow,
 And every thought breaks out a rose.

CXXIII.

There rolls the deep where grew the tree.
 O earth, what changes hast thou
 seen !

There where the long street roars,
 hath been
 The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow
 From form to form, and nothing
 stands ;

They melt like mist, the solid lands,
 Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

But in my spirit will I dwell,
 And dream my dream, and hold it
 true ;
 For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,
 I cannot think the thing farewell.

CXXIV.

That which we dare invoke to bless ;
 Our dearest faith ; our ghastliest
 doubt ;

He, They, One, All ; within, with-
 out ;
 The Power in darkness whom we guess ;

I found Him not in world or sun,
Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye ;
Nor thro' the questions men may try,
The petty cobwebs we have spun :

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,
I heard a voice 'believe no more'
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the Godless deep ;

A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answer'd 'I have felt.'

No, like a child in doubt and fear :
But that blind clamour made me
wise ;

Then was I as a child that cries,
But, crying, knows his father near ;

And what I am beheld again
What is, and no man understands ;
And out of darkness came the hands
That reach thro' nature, moulding men.

CXXV.

Whatever I have said or sung,
Some bitter notes my harp would
give,

Yea, tho' there often seem'd to live
A contradiction on the tongue,

Yet Hope had never lost her youth ;
She did but look through dimmer
eyes ;

Or Love but play'd with gracious
lies,
Because he felt so fix'd in truth :

And if the song were full of care,
He breathed the spirit of the song ;
And if the words were sweet and
strong

He set his royal signet there ;

Abiding with me till I sail
To seek thee on the mystic deeps,
And this electric force, that keeps
A thousand pulses dancing, fail,

CXXVI.

Love is and was my Lord and King,
And in his presence I attend
To hear the tidings of my friend,
Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my King and Lord,
And will be, tho' as yet I keep
Within his court on earth, and
sleep

Encompass'd by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
Who moves about from place to
place,
And whispers to the worlds of space,
In the deep night, that all is well.

CXXVII.

And all is well, tho' faith and form
Be sunder'd in the night of fear ;
Well roars the storm to those that
hear

A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
And justice, ev'n tho' thrice again
The red fool-fury of the Seine
Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,
And him, the lazar, in his rags :
They tremble, the sustaining crags ;
The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood ;
The fortress crashes from on high,
The brute earth lightens to the sky,
And the great Æon sinks in blood,

And compass'd by the fires of Hell ;
 While thou, dear spirit, happy star,
 O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
 And smilest, knowing all is well.

CXXVIII.

The love that rose on stronger wings,
 Unpalsied when he met with Death,
 Is comrade of the lesser faith
 That sees the course of human things.

No doubt vast eddies in the flood
 Of onward time shall yet be made,
 And throned ~~ages~~ may degrade ;
 Yet O ye mysteries of good,

Wild Hours that fly with Hope and
 Fear,
 If all your office had to do
 With old results that look like new ;
 If this were all your mission here,

To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,
 To fool the crowd with glorious
 lies,
 To cleave a creed in sects and cries,
 To change the bearing of a word,

To shift an arbitrary power,
 To cramp the student at his desk,
 To make old bareness picturesque
 And tuft with grass a feudal tower ;

Why then my scorn might well descend
 On you and yours. I see in part
 That all, as in some piece of art,
 Is toil coöperant to an end.

CXXIX.

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,
 So far, so near in woe and weal ;
 O loved the most, when most I feel
 There is a lower and a higher ;

Known and unknown ; human, divine ;
 Sweet human hand and lips and eye ;
 Dear heavenly friend that canst not
 die,

Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine ;

Strange friend, past, present, and to be ;
 Loved deeper, darker understood ;
 Behold, I dream a dream of good,
 And mingle all the world with thee.

CXXX.

Thy voice is on the rolling air ;
 I hear thee where the waters run ;
 Thou standest in the rising sun,
 And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;
 But tho' I seem in star and flower
 To feel thee some diffusive power,
 I do not therefore love thee less :

My love involves the love before ;
 My love is vaster passion now ;
 Tho' mix'd with God and Nature
 thou,

I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;
 I have thee still, and I rejoice ;
 I prosper, circled with thy voice ;
 I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

CXXXI.

O living will that shalt endure
 When all that seems shall suffer
 shock,

Rise in the spiritual rock,
 Flow thro' our deeds and make them pure,

That we may lift from out of dust
 A voice as unto him that hears,
 A cry above the conquer'd years
 To one that with us works, and trust,

With faith that comes of self-control,
The truths that never can be proved
Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul.

O true and tried, so well and long,
Demand not thou a marriage lay ;
In that it is thy marriage day
Is music more than any song.

Nor have I felt so much of bliss
Since first he told me that he loved
A daughter of our house ; nor proved
Since that dark day a day like this ;

Tho' I since then have number'd o'er
Some thrice three years : they went
and came,
Remade the blood and changed the
frame,
And yet is love not less, but more ;

No longer caring to embalm
In dying songs a dead regret,
But like a statue solid-set,
And moulded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more
Than in the summers that are
flown,
For I myself with these have grown
To something greater than before ;

Which makes appear the songs I made
As echoes out of weaker times,
As half but idle brawling rhymes,
The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridal flower,
That must be made a wife ere
noon?
She enters, glowing like the moon
Of Eden on its bridal bower :

On me she bends her blissful eyes
And then on thee ; they meet thy
look
And brighten like the star that shook
Betwixt the palms of paradise.

O when her life was yet in bud,
He too foretold the perfect rose.
For thee she grew, for thee she grows
For ever, and as fair as good.

And thou art worthy ; full of power ;
As gentle ; liberal-minded, great,
Consistent ; wearing all that weight
Of learning lightly like a flower.

But now set out : the noon is near,
And I must give away the bride ;
She fears not, or with thee beside
And me behind her, will not fear :

For I that danced her on my knee,
That watch'd her on her nurse's arm,
That shielded all her life from harm
At last must part with her to thee ;

Now waiting to be made a wife,
Her feet, my darling, on the dead ;
Their pensive tablets round her head,
And the most living words of life

Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,
The ' wilt thou ' answer'd, and again
The ' wilt thou ' ask'd, till out of
twain

Her sweet ' I will ' has made you one.

Now sign your names, which shall be read,
Mute symbols of a joyful morn,
By village eyes as yet unborn ;
The names are sign'd, and overhead
Begins the clash and clang that tells
The joy to every wandering breeze ;
The blind wall rocks, and on the trees
The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours
 Await them. Many a merry face
 Salutes them—maidens of the place,
 That pelt us in the porch with flowers.

O happy hour, behold the bride
 With him to whom her hand I gave.
 They leave the porch, they pass the
 grave
 That has to-day its sunny side.

To-day the grave is bright for me,
 For them the light of life increased,
 Who stay to share the morning
 feast,
 Who rest to-night beside the sea.

Let all my genial spirits advance
 To meet and greet a whiter sun ;
 My drooping memory will not shun
 The foaming grape of eastern France.

It circles round, and fancy plays,
 And hearts are warm'd and faces
 bloom,
 As drinking health to bride and
 groom

We wish them store of happy days.

Nor count me all to blame if I
 Conjecture of a stiller guest,
 Perchance, perchance, among the
 rest,
 And, tho' in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,
 And those white-favour'd horses wait;
 They rise, but linger ; it is late ;
 Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark
 From little cloudlets on the grass,
 But sweeps away as out we pass
 To range the woods, to roam the park,

Discussing how their courtship grew,
 And talk of others that are wed,
 And how she look'd, and what he
 said,
 And back we come at fall of dew.

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,
 The shade of passing thought, the
 wealth
 Of words and wit, the double health,
 The crowning cup, the three-times-three,

And last the dance ;—till I retire :
 Dumb is that tower which spake so
 loud,
 And high in heaven the streaming
 cloud,
 And on the downs a rising fire :

And rise, O moon, from yonder down,
 Till over down and over dale
 All night the shining vapour sail
 And pass the silent-lighted town,

The white-faced halls, the glancing rills,
 And catch at every mountain head,
 And o'er the friths that branch and
 spread
 Their sleeping silver thro' the hills ;

And touch with shade the bridal doors,
 With tender gloom the roof, the wall ;
 And breaking let the splendour fall
 To spangle all the happy shores

By which they rest, and ocean sounds,
 And, star and system rolling past,
 A soul shall draw from out the vast
 And strike his being into bounds,

And, moved thro' life of lower phase,
 Result in man, be born and think,
 And act and love, a closer link
 Betwixt us and the crowning race

Of those that, eye to eye, shall look
On knowledge ; under whose command

Is Earth and Earth's, and in their hand
Is Nature like an open book ;

No longer half-akin to brute,
For all we thought and loved and did,
And hoped, and suffer'd, is but seed
Of what in them is flower and fruit ;

Whereof the man, that with me trod
This planet, was a noble type
Appearing ere the times were
ripe,

That friend of mine who lives in God,

That God, which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves,

MAUD; A MONODRAMA.

PART I.

I.

I HATE the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red heath,
The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror of blood,
And Echo there, whatever is ask'd her, answers 'Death.'

II.

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was found,
His who had given me life—O father ! O God ! was it well?—
Mangled, and flatten'd, and crush'd, and dinted into the ground :
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell.

III.

Did he fling himself down ? who knows ? for a vast speculation had fail'd,
And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd with despair,
And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken worldling wail'd,
And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro' the air.

IV.

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were stirr'd
By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a whisper'd fright,
And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart as I heard
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night.

V.

Villainy somewhere ! whose ? One says, we are villains all.
Not he : his honest fame should at least by me be maintained :
But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and the Hall,
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us flaccid and drain'd.

VI.

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace? we have made them a curse,
 Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not its own;
 And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better or worse
 Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his own hearthstone?

VII.

But these are the days of advance, the works of the men of mind,
 When who but a fool would have faith in a tradesman's ware or his word?
 Is it peace or war? Civil war, as I think, and that of a kind
 The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the sword.

VIII.

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print
 Of the golden age—why not? I have neither hope nor trust;
 May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as a flint,
 Cheat and be cheated, and die: who knows? we are ashes and dust.

IX.

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days gone by,
 When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together, each sex, like swine,
 When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men lie;
 Peace in her vineyard—yes!—but a company forges the wine.

X.

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's head,
 Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled wife,
 And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for bread,
 And the spirit of murder works in the very means of life,

XI.

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villainous centre-bits
 Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moonless nights,
 While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps, as he sits
 To pestle a poison'd poison behind his crimson lights.

XII.

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial fee,
 And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's bones,
 Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and by sea,
 War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones.

XIII.

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,
 And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out of the foam,
 That the smooth-faced snubnosed rogue would leap from his counter and till,
 And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yardwand, home. —

XIV.

What ! am I raging alone as my father raged in his mood ?
Must I too creep to the hollow and dash myself down and die
Rather than hold by the law that I made, nevermore to brood
On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched swindler's lie ?

XV.

Would there be sorrow for *me* ? there was *love* in the passionate shriek,
Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to the grave —
Wrapt in a cloak, as I saw him, and thought he would rise and speak
And rave at the lie and the liar, ah God, as he used to rave.

XVI.

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the moor and the main.
Why should I stay ? can a sweeter chance ever come to me here ?
O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves of pain,
Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit and the fear ?

XVII.

Workmen up at the Hall ! — they are coming back from abroad ;
The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a millionaire :
I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular beauty of Maud ;
I play'd with the girl when a child ; she promised then to be fair.

XVIII.

Maud with her venturous climbings and tumbles and childish escapes,
Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the Hall,
Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father dangled the grapes,
Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced darling of all, —

XIX.

What is she now ? My dreams are bad. She may bring me a curse.
No, there is fatter game on the moor ; she will let me alone.
Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman or man be the worse.
I will bury myself in myself, and the Devil may pipe to his own.

II.

Long have I sigh'd for a calm : God grant I may find it at last !
It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither savour nor salt,
But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her carriage past,
Perfectly beautiful : let it be granted her : where is the fault ?
All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to be seen)
Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,
Dead perfection, no more ; nothing more, if it had not been

For a chance of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect of the rose,
 Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too full,
 Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensitive nose,
 From which I escaped heart-free, with the least little touch of spleen.

III.

Cold and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly meek,
 Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was drown'd,
 Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the cheek,
 Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom profound ;
 Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient wrong
 Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale as before
 Growing and fading and growing upon me without a sound,
 Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the night long
 Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it no more,
 But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden ground,
 Listening now to the tide in its bread-flung shipwrecking roar,
 Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd down by the wave,
 Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and found
 The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.

IV.

I.

A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime
 In the little grove where I sit—ah, wherefore cannot I be
 Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful season bland,
 When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer clime,
 Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,
 The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land ?

II.

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet and small !
 And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and spite ;
 And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies as a Czar ;
 And here on the landward side, by a red rock, glimmers the Hall ;
 And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like a light ;
 But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading star !

III.

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled head of the race ?
 I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her brother I bow'd :

I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the moor ;
 But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beautiful face.
 O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being so proud ;
 Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am nameless and poor.

IV.

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander and steal ;
 I know it, and smile a hard-set smile, like a stoic, or like
 A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way :
 For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can heal ;
 The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow spear'd by the shriek,
 And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of plunder and prey.

V.

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair in her flower ;
 Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen hand at a game
 That pushes us off from the board, and others ever succeed ?
 Ah yet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an hour ;
 We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a brother's shame ;
 However we brave it out, we men are a little breed.

VI.

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,
 For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,
 And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.
 As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for his birth,
 So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man :
 He now is first, but is he the last ? is he not too base ?

VII.

The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and vain,
 An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and poor ;
 The passionate heart of the poet is whirl'd into folly and vice.
 I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate brain ;
 For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it, were more
 Than to walk all day like the sultan of old in a garden of spice.

VIII.

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the veil.
 Who knows the ways of the world, how God will bring them about ?
 Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world is wide.
 Shall I weep if a Poland fall ? shall I shriek if a Hungary fail ?
 Or an infant civilisation be ruled with rod or with knout ?
 I have not made the world, and He that made it will guide.

IX.

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland ways,
Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be my lot,
Far-off from the clamour of liars belied in the hubbub of lies ;
From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are ever hissing dispraise
Because their natures are little, and, whether he heed it or not,
Where each man walks with his head in a cloud of poisonous flies.

X.

And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness of love,
The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill.
Ah Maud, you milkwhite fawn, you are all unmeet for a wife.
Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in marble above ;
Your father is ever in London, you wander about at your will ;
You have but fed on the roses and lain in the lilies of life.

V.

I.

A voice by the cedar tree
In the meadow under the Hall !
She is singing an air that is known to me,
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
A martial song like a trumpet's call !
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and of May,
Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner and bugle and fife
To the death, for their native land.

II.

Maud with her exquisite face,
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny
sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English
green,
Maud in the light of her youth and her
grace,
Singing of Death, and of Honour that
cannot die,
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid
and mean,
And myself so languid and base.

III.

Silence, beautiful voice !
Be still, for you only trouble the mind
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
A glory I shall not find.
Still ! I will hear you no more,
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a
choice
But to move to the meadow and fall before
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice.

VI.

I.

Morning arises stormy and pale,
No sun, but a wannish glare
In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,
And the budded peaks of the wood are
bow'd
Caught and cuff'd by the gale :
I had fancied it would be fair.

II.

Whom but Maud should I meet
Last night, when the sunset burn'd
On the blossom'd gable-ends

At the head of the village street,
Whom but Maud should I meet?
And she touch'd my hand with a smile so
sweet,
She made me divine amends
For a courtesy not return'd.

III.

And thus a delicate spark
Of glowing and growing light
Thro' the livelong hours of the dark
Kept itself warm in the heart of my
dreams,

Ready to burst in a colour'd flame;
Till at last when the morning came
In a cloud, it faded, and seems
But an ashen-gray delight.

IV.

What if with her sunny hair,
And smile as sunny as cold,
She meant to weave me a snare
Of some coquettish deceit,
Cleopatra-like as of old
To entangle me when we met,
To have her lion roll in a silken net
And fawn at a victor's feet.

V.

Ah, what shall I be at fifty
Should Nature keep me alive,
If I find the world so bitter
When I am but twenty-five?
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile were all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

VI.

What if tho' her eye seem'd full
Of a kind intent to me,
What if that dandy-despot, he,
That jewel'd mass of millinery,
That oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull

Smelling of musk and of insolence,
Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,
Who wants the finer politic sense
To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,
With a glassy smile his brutal scorn—
What if he had told her yesternorn
How prettily for his own sweet sake
A face of tenderness might be feign'd,
And a moist mirage in desert eyes,
That so, when the rotten hustings shake
In another month to his brazen lies,
A wretched vote may be gain'd.

VII.

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,
Keep watch and ward, keep watch and
ward,
Or thou wilt prove their tool.
Vea, too, myself from myself I guard,
For often a man's own angry pride
Is cap and bells for a fool.

VIII.

Perhaps the smile and tender tone
Came out of her pitying womanhood,
For am I not, am I not, here alone
So many a summer since she died,
My mother, who was so gentle and good?
Living alone in an empty house,
Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,
Where I hear the dead at midday moan,
And the shrieking rush of the wainscot
mouse,
And my own sad name in corners cried,
When the shiver of dancing leaves is
thrown
About its echoing chambers wide,
Till a morbid hate and horror have grown
Of a world in which I have hardly mixt,
And a morbid eating lichen fixt
On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

IX.

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and caught
By that you swore to withstand?

For what was it else within me wrought
But, I fear, the new strong wine of love,
That made my tongue so stammer and
trip
When I saw the treasured splendour, her
hand,
Come sliding out of her sacred glove,
And the sunlight broke from her lip?

X.

I have play'd with her when a child ;
She remembers it now we meet.
Ah well, well, well, I *may* be beguiled
By some coquettish deceit.
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile had all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

VII.

I.

Did I hear it half in a doze
Long since, I know not where?
Did I dream it an hour ago,
When asleep in this arm-chair?

II.

Men were drinking together,
Drinking and talking of me ;
'Well, if it prove a girl, the boy
Will have plenty : so let it be.'

III.

Is it an echo of something
Read with a boy's delight,
Viziers nodding together
In some Arabian night?

IV.

Strange, that I hear two men,
Somewhere, talking of me ;
'Well, if it prove a girl, my boy
Will have plenty : so let it be.'

VIII.

She came to the village church,
And sat by a pillar alone ;
An angel watching an urn
Wept over her, carved in stone ;
And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,
And suddenly, sweetly, strangely blush'd
To find they were met by my own ;
And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat
stronger
And thicker, until I heard no longer
The snowy-banded, dilettante,
Delicate-handed priest intone ;
And thought, is it pride, and mused and
sigh'd
'No surely, now it cannot be pride.'

IX.

I was walking a mile,
More than a mile from the shore,
The sun look'd out with a smile
Betwixt the cloud and the moor,
And riding at set of day
Over the dark moor land,
Rapidly riding far away,
She waved to me with her hand.
There were two at her side,
Something flash'd in the sun,
Down by the hill I saw them ride,
In a moment they were gone :
Like a sudden spark
Struck vainly in the night,
Then returns the dark
With no more hope of light.

X.

I.

Sick, am I sick of a jealous dread?
Was not one of the two at her side
This new-made lord, whose splendour
plucks

The slavish hat from the villager's head ?
Whose old grandfather has lately died,
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom
Grimy nakedness dragging his trucks
And laying his trams in a poison'd gloom
Wrought, till he crept from a gutted
mine

Master of half a servile shire,
And left his coal all turn'd into gold
To a grandson, first of his noble line,
Rich in the grace all women desire,
Strong in the power that all men adore,
And simper and set their voices lower,
And soften as if to a girl, and hold
Awe-stricken breaths at a work divine,
Seeing his gewgaw castle shine,
New as his title, built last year,
There amid perky larches and pine,
And over the sullen-purple moor
(Look at it) pricking a cockney car.

II.

What, has he found my jewel out ?
For one of the two that rode at her side
Bound for the Hall, I am sure was he :
Bound for the Hall, and I think for a
bride.

Blithe would her brother's acceptance be.
Maud could be gracious too, no doubt
To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,
A bought commission, a waxen face,
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—
Bought ? what is it he cannot buy ?
And therefore splenetic, personal, base,
A wounded thing with a rancorous cry,
At war with myself and a wretched race,
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

III.

Last week came one to the county town,
To preach our poor little army down,
And play the game of the despot kings,
Tho' the state has done it and thrice as
well :

This broad-brimm'd hawker of holy
things,
Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton,
and rings
Even in dreams to the chink of his pence,
This huckster put down war ! can he tell
Whether war be a cause or a consequence ?
Put down the passions that make earth
Hell !

Down with ambition, avarice, pride,
Jealousy, down ! cut off from the mind
The bitter springs of anger and fear ;
Down too, down at your own fireside,
With the evil tongue and the evil ear,
For each is at war with mankind.

IV.

I wish I could hear again
The chivalrous battle-song
That she warbled alone in her joy !
I might persuade myself then
She would not do herself this great wrong,
To take a wanton dissolute boy
For a man and leader of men.

V.

Ah God, for a man with heart, head, hand,
Like some of the simple great ones gone
For ever and ever by,
One still strong man in a blatant land,
Whatever they call him, what care I,
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat—one
Who can rule and dare not lie.

VI.

And ah for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be !

XI.

I.

O let the solid ground
Not fail beneath my feet
Before my life has found
What some have found so sweet ;

Then let come what come may,
What matter if I go mad,
I shall have had my day.

II.

Let the sweet heavens endure,
Not close and darken above me
Before I am quite quite sure
That there is one to love me ;
Then let come what come may
To a life that has been so sad,
I shall have had my day.

XII.

I.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
When twilight was falling,
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
They were crying and calling.

II.

Where was Maud ? in our wood ;
And I, who else, was with her,
Gathering woodland lilies,
Myriads blow together.

III.

Birds in our wood sang
Ring'g thro' the valleys,
Maud is here, here, here
In among the lilies.

IV.

I kiss'd her slender hand,
She took the kiss sedately ;
Maud is not seventeen,
But she is tall and stately.

V.

I to cry out on pride
Who have won her favour !
O Maud were sure of Heaven
If lowliness could save her.

VI.

I know the way she went
Home with her maiden posy,
For her feet have touch'd the meadows
And left the daisies rosy.

VII.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
Were crying and calling to her,
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud,
One is come to woo her ?

VIII.

Look, a horse at the door,
And little King Charley snarling,
Go back, my lord, across the moor,
You are not her darling.

XIII.

I.

Scorn'd, to be scorn'd by one that I scorn,
Is that a matter to make me fret ?
That a calamity hard to be borne ?
Well, he may live to hate me yet.
Fool that I am to be vext with his pride !
I past him, I was crossing his lands ;
He stood on the path a little aside ;
His face, as I grant, in spite of spite,
Has a broad-blown comeliness, red and
white,
And six feet two, as I think, he stands ;
But his essences turn'd the live air sick,
And barbarous opulence jewel-thick
Sunn'd itself on his breast and his hands.

II.

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,
I long'd so heartily then and there
To give him the grasp of fellowship ;
But while I past he was humming an air,
Stopt, and then with a riding whip
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,

And curving a contumelious lip,
Gorgonised me from head to foot
With a stony British stare.

III.

Why sits he here in his father's chair?
That old man never comes to his place:
Shall I believe him ashamed to be seen?
For only once, in the village street,
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his
face,

A gray old wolf and a lean.
Scarcely, now, would I call him a cheat;
For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,
She might by a true descent be untrue;
And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet:
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due
To the sweeter blood by the other side;
Her mother has been a thing complete,
However she came to be so allied.
And fair without, faithful within,
Maud to him is nothing akin:
Some peculiar mystic grace
Made her only the child of her mother,
And heap'd the whole inherited sin
On that huge scapegoat of the race,
All, all upon the brother.

IV.

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be!
Has not his sister smiled on me?

XIV.

I.

Maud has a garden of roses
And lilies fair on a lawn;
There she walks in her state
And tends upon bed and bower,
And thither I climb'd at dawn
And stood by her garden-gate;
A lion ramps at the top,
He is clasp'd by a passion-flower.

II.

Maud's own little oak-room
(Which Maud, like a precious stone
Set in the heart of the carven gloom,
Lights with herself, when alone
She sits by her music and books
And her brother lingers late
With a roystering company) looks
Upon Maud's own garden-gate:
And I thought as I stood, if a hand, as
white
As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid
On the hasp of the window, and my
Delight
I had a sudden desire, like a glorious ghost,
to glide,
Like a beam of the seventh Heaven, down
to my side,
There were but a step to be made.

III.

The fancy flatter'd my mind,
And again seem'd overbold;
Now I thought that she cared for me,
Now I thought she was kind
Only because she was cold.

IV.

I heard no sound where I stood
But the rivulet on from the lawn
Running down to my own dark wood;
Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it
swell'd
Now and then in the dim-gray dawn;
But I look'd, and round, all round the
house I beheld
The death-white curtain drawn;
Felt a horror over me creep,
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,
Knew that the death-white curtain meant
but sleep,
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a fool
of the sleep of death.

XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,
 And I make myself such evil cheer,
 That if I be dear to some one else,
 Then some one else may have much to
 fear ;
 But if I be dear to some one else,
 Then I should be to myself more dear.
 Shall I not take care of all that I think,
 Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,
 If I be dear,
 If I be dear to some one else.

XVI.

I.

This lump of earth has left his estate
 The lighter by the loss of his weight ;
 And so that he find what he went to seek,
 And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and
 drown
 His heart in the gross mud-honey of town,
 He may stay for a year who has gone for
 a week :
 But this is the day when I must speak,
 And I see my Oread coming down,
 O this is the day !
 O beautiful creature, what am I
 That I dare to look her way ;
 Think I may hold dominion sweet,
 Lord of the pulse that is lord of her breast,
 And dream of her beauty with tender dread,
 From the delicate Arab arch of her feet
 To the grace that, bright and light as the
 crest
 Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,
 And she knows it not : O, if she knew it,
 To know her beauty might half undo it.
 I know it the one bright thing to save
 My yet young life in the wilds of Time,
 Perhaps from madness, perhaps from
 crime,
 Perhaps from a selfish grave.

II.

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool
 lord,
 Dare I bid her abide by her word ?
 Should I love her so well if she
 Had given her word to a thing so low ?
 Shall I love her as well if she
 Can break her word were it even for me ?
 I trust that it is not so.

III.

Catch not my breath, O clamorous heart,
 Let not my tongue be a thrall to my
 eye,
 For I must tell her before we part,
 I must tell her, or die.

XVII.

Go not, happy day,
 From the shining fields,
 Go not, happy day,
 Till the maiden yields.
 Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
 Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth
 When the happy Yes
 Falters from her lips,
 Pass and blush the news
 Over glowing ships ;
 Over blowing seas,
 Over seas at rest,
 Pass the happy news,
 Blush it thro' the West ;
 Till the red man dance
 By his red cedar-tree,
 And the red man's babe
 Leap, beyond the sea.
 Blush from West to East,
 Blush from East to West,
 Till the West is East,
 Blush it thro' the West.

Rosy is the West,
Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth.

XVIII.

I.

I have led her home, my love, my only
friend.

There is none like her, none.
And never yet so warmly ran my blood
And sweetly, on and on
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for end,
Full to the banks, close on the promised
good.

II.

None like her, none.
Just now the dry-tongued laurels' patter-
ing talk
Seem'd her light foot along the garden
walk,
And shook my heart to think she comes
once more;
But even then I heard her close the door,
The gates of Heaven are closed, and she is
gone.

III.

There is none like her, none.
Nor will be when our summers have de-
ceased.
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon
In the long breeze that streams to thy
delicious East,
Sighing for Lebanon,
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here in-
creased,
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,
And looking to the South, and fed
With honey'd rain and delicate air,
And haunted by the starry head
Of her whose gentle will has changed my
fate,
And made my life a perfumed altar-flame;

And over whom thy darkness must have
spread

With such delight as theirs of old, thy
great

Forefathers of the thornless garden, there
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from
whom she came.

IV.

Here will I lie, while these long branches
sway,

And you fair stars that crown a happy day
Go in and out as if at merry play,

Who am no more so all forlorn,
As when it seem'd far better to be born
To labour and the mattock-harden'd hand,
Than nursed at ease and brought to un-
derstand

A sad astrology, the boundless plan
That makes you tyrants in your iron skies,
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and
brand

His nothingness into man.

V.

But now shine on, and what care I,
Who in this stormy gulf have found a
pearl

The countercharm of space and hollow sky,
And do accept my madness, and would die
To save from some slight shame one
simple girl.

VI.

Would die; for sullen-seeming Death
may give

More life to Love than is or ever was
In our low world, where yet 'tis but to
live.

Let no one ask me how it came to pass;
It seems that I am happy, that to me
A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

VII.

Not die ; but live a life of truest breath,
And teach true life to fight with mortal
wrongs.

O, why should Love, like men in drinking-
songs,
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of
death ?

Make answer, Maud my bliss,
Maud made my Maud by that long lover's
kiss,

Life of my life, wilt thou not answer this ?
'The dusky strand of Death inwoven here
With dear Love's tie, makes Love himself
more dear.'

VIII.

Is that enchanted moan only the swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay ?
And hark the clock within, the silver
knell

Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal
white,

And died to live, long as my pulses play ;
But now by this my love has closed her
sight

And given false death her hand, and stol'n
away

To dreamful wastes where footless fancies
dwell

Among the fragments of the golden day.
May nothing there her maiden grace
affright !

Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy
spell.

My bride to be, my evermore delight,
My own heart's heart, my ownest own,
farewell ;

It is but for a little space I go :
And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell
Beat to the noiseless music of the night !
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the
glow

Of your soft splendours that you look so
bright ?

I have climb'd nearer out of lonely Hell.
Beat, happy stars, timing with things
below,

Beat with my heart more blest than heart
can tell,

Blest, but for some dark undercurrent woe
That seems to draw—but it shall not be so :
Let all be well, be well.

XIX.

I.

Her brother is coming back to-night,
Breaking up my dream of delight.

II.

My dream ? do I dream of bliss ?
I have walk'd awake with Truth.
O when did a morning seem
So rich in atonement as this
For my dark-dawning youth,
Darken'd watching a mother decline
And that dead man at her heart and mine :
For who was left to watch her but I ?
Yet so did I let my freshness die.

III.

I trust that I did not talk
To gentle Maud in our walk
(For often in lonely wanderings
I have cursed him even to lifeless things)
But I trust that I did not talk,
Not touch on her father's sin :
I am sure I did but speak
Of my mother's faded cheek
When it slowly grew so thin,
That I felt she was slowly dying
Vext with lawyers and harass'd with debt :
For how often I caught her with eyes all
wet,
Shaking her head at her son and sighing
A world of trouble within !

IV.

And Maud too, Maud was moved
To speak of the mother she loved
As one scarce less forlorn,
Dying abroad and it seems apart
From him who had ceased to share her
heart,

And ever mourning over the feud,
The household Fury sprinkled with blood
By which our houses are torn :

How strange was what she said,
When only Maud and the brother
Hung over her dying bed —
That Maud's dark father and mine
Had bound us one to the other,
Betrothed us over their wine,
On the day when Maud was born ;
Seal'd her mine from her first sweet
breath.

Mine, mine by a right, from birth till
death.

Mine, mine—our fathers have sworn.

V.

But the true blood spilt had in it a heat
To dissolve the precious seal on a bond,
That, if left uncancell'd, had been so
sweet :

And none of us thought of a something
beyond,

A desire that awoke in the heart of the
child,

As it were a duty done to the tomb,
To be friends for her sake, to be reconciled ;
And I was cursing them and my doom,
And letting a dangerous thought run wild
While often abroad in the fragrant gloom
Of foreign churches—I see her there,
Bright English lily, breathing a prayer
To be friends, to be reconciled !

VI.

But then what a flint is he !
Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,

I find whenever she touch'd on me
This brother had laugh'd her down,
And at last, when each came home,
He had darken'd into a frown,
Chid her, and forbid her to speak
To me, her friend of the years before ;
And this was what had reddend'd her
cheek

When I bow'd to her on the moor.

VII.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind
To the faults of his heart and mind,
I see she cannot but love him,
And says he is rough but kind,
And wishes me to approve him,
And tells me, when she lay
Sick once, with a fear of worse,
That he left his wine and horses and play,
Sat with her, read to her, night and day,
And tended her like a nurse.

VIII.

Kind ? but the deathbed desire
Spurn'd by this heir of the liar—
Rough but kind ? yet I know
He has plotted against me in this,
That he plots against me still.
Kind to Maud ? that were not amiss.
Well, rough but kind ; why let it be so :
For shall not Maud have her will ?

IX.

For, Maud, so tender and true,
As long as my life endures
I feel I shall owe you a debt,
That I never can hope to pay ;
And if ever I should forget
That I owe this debt to you
And for your sweet sake to you ;
O then, what then shall I say ?
If ever I *should* forget,
May God make me more wretched
Than ever I have been yet !

X.

So now I have sworn to bury
All this dead body of hate,
I feel so free and so clear
By the loss of that dead weight,
That I should grow light-headed, I fear,
Fantastically merry;
But that her brother comes, like a blight
On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-night.

XX.

I.

Strange, that I felt so gay,
Strange, that I tried to-day
To beguile her melancholy;
The Sultan, as we name him,—
She did not wish to blame him—
But he vexed her and perplexed her
With his worldly talk and folly:
Was it gentle to reprove her
For stealing out of view
From a little lazy lover
Who but claims her as his due?
Or for chilling his caresses
By the coldness of her manners,
Nay, the plainness of her dresses?
Now I know her but in two,
Nor can pronounce upon it
If one should ask me whether
The habit, hat, and feather,
Or the frock and gipsy bonnet
Be the neater and completer;
For nothing can be sweeter
Than maiden Maud in either.

II.

But to-morrow, if we live,
Our ponderous squire will give
A grand political dinner
To half the squirrels near;
And Maud will wear her jewels,
And the bird of prey will hover,

And the titmouse hope to win her
With his chirrup at her ear.

III.

A grand political dinner
To the men of many acres,
A gathering of the Tory,
A dinner and then a dance
For the maids and marriage-makers,
And every eye but mine will glance
At Maud in all her glory.

IV.

For I am not invited,
But, with the Sultan's pardon,
I am all as well delighted,
For I know her own rose-garden,
And mean to linger in it
Till the dancing will be over;
And then, oh then, come out to me
For a minute, but for a minute,
Come out to your own true lover,
That your true lover may see
Your glory also, and render
All homage to his own darling,
Queen Maud in all her splendour.

XXI.

Rivulet crossing my ground,
And bringing me down from the Hall
This garden-rose that I found,
Forgetful of Maud and me,
And lost in trouble and moving round
Here at the head of a tinkling fall,
And trying to pass to the sea;
O Rivulet, born at the Hall,
My Maud has sent it by thee
(If I read her sweet will right)
On a blushing mission to me,
Saying in odour and colour, 'Ah, be
Among the roses to-night.'

XXII.

I.

Come into the garden, Maud,
 For the black bat, night, has flown,
 Come into the garden, Maud,
 I am here at the gate alone ;
 And the woodbine spices are wafted
 abroad,
 And the musk of the rose is blown.

II.

For a breeze of morning moves,
 And the planet of Love is on high,
 Beginning to faint in the light that she
 loves
 On a bed of daffodil sky,
 To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
 To faint in his light, and to die.

III.

All night have the roses heard
 The flute, violin, bassoon ;
 All night has the casement jessamine
 stir'd
 To the dancers dancing in tune ;
 Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
 And a hush with the setting moon.

IV.

I said to the lily, 'There is but one
 With whom she has heart to be gay.
 When will the dancers leave her alone ?
 She is weary of dance and play.'
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,
 And half to the rising day ;
 Low on the sand and loud on the stone
 The last wheel echoes away.

V.

I said to the rose, 'The brief night goes
 In babble and revel and wine.
 O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
 For one that will never be thine ?
 But mine, but mine,' so I swar'd to the rose,
 'For ever and ever, mine.'

VI.

And the soul of the rose went into my
 blood,
 As the music clash'd in the hall ;
 And long by the garden lake I stood,
 For I heard your rivulet fall
 From the lake to the meadow and on to
 the wood,
 Our wood, that is dearer than all ;

VII.

From the meadow your walks have left
 so sweet
 That whenever a March-wind sighs
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet
 In violets blue as your eyes,
 To the woody hollows in which we meet
 And the valleys of Paradise.

VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake
 One long milk-bloom on the tree ;
 The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
 As the pimpernel dozed on the lee ;
 But the rose was awake all night for your
 sake,
 Knowing your promise to me ;
 The lilies and roses were all awake,
 They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of
 girls,
 Come hither, the dances are done,
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
 Queen lily and rose in one ;
 Shine out, little head, sunning over with
 curls,
 To the flowers, and be their sun.

X.

There has fallen a splendid tear
 From the passion-flower at the gate.
 She is coming, my dove, my dear ;
 She is coming, my life, my fate ;

The red rose cries, 'She is near, she is near ;'

And the white rose weeps, 'She is late ;'

The larkspur listens, 'I hear, I hear ;'

And the lily whispers, 'I wait.'

XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet ;

Were it ever so airy a tread,

My heart would hear her and beat,

Were it earth in an earthy bed ;

My dust would hear her and beat,

Had I lain for a century dead ;

Would start and tremble under her feet,

And blossom in purple and red.

PART II.

I.

I.

'THE fault was mine, the fault was mine'—

Why am I sitting here so stunn'd and still,
Plucking the harmless wild-flower on the
hull?—

It is this guilty hand!—

And there rises ever a passionate cry
From underneath in the darkening land—
What is it, that has been done?

O dawn of Eden bright over earth and sky,
The fires of Hell brake out of thy rising
sun,

The fires of Hell and of Hate ;

For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken a
word,

When her brother ran in his rage to the
gate,

He came with the babe-faced lord ;

Heap'd on her terms of disgrace,

And while she wept, and I strove to be
cool,

He fiercely gave me the lie,

Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,

And he struck me, madman, over the face,
Struck me before the languid fool,
Who was gaping and grinning by :
Struck for himself an evil stroke ;
Wrought for his house an irredeemable
woe ;

For front to front in an hour we stood,
And a million horrible bellowing echoes
broke

From the red-ribb'd hollow behind the
wood,

And thunder'd up into Heaven the Christ-
less code,

That must have life for a blow.

Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to grow.

Was it he lay there with a fading eye?

'The fault was mine,' he whisper'd, 'fly !'

Then glided out of the joyous wood

The ghastly Wraith of one that I know ;

And there rang on a sudden a passionate
cry,

A cry for a brother's blood :

It will ring in my heart and my ears, till

I die, till I die.

II.

Is it gone? my pulses beat—

What was it? a lying trick of the brain?

Yet I thought I saw her stand,

A shadow there at my feet,

High over the shadowy land.

It is gone; and the heavens fall in a
gentle rain,

When they should burst and drown with
deluging storms

The feeble vassals of wine and anger and
lust,

The little hearts that know not how to
forgive :

Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold

Thee just,

Strike dead the whole weak race of veno-
mous worms,

That sting each other here in the dust ;
We are not worthy to live.

II.

I.

See what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairly well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design !

II.

What is it ? a learned man
Could give it a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The beauty would be the same.

III.

The tiny cell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.
Did he stand at the diamond door
Of his house in a rainbow frill ?
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,
A golden foot or a fairy horn
Thro' his dim water-world ?

IV.

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap
Of my finger-nail on the sand,
Small, but a work divine,
Frail, but of force to withstand,
Year upon year, the shock
Of cataract seas that snap
The three-decker's oaken spine
Athwart the ledges of rock,
Here on the Breton strand !

V.

Breton, not Briton ; here
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast
Of ancient fable and fear—
Plagued with a flitting to and fro,

A disease, a hard mechanic ghost
That never came from on high
Nor ever arose from below,
But only moves with the moving eye,
Flying along the land and the main—
Why should it look like Maud ?
Am I to be overawed
By what I cannot but know
Is a juggle born of the brain ?

VI.

Back from the Breton coast,
Sick of a nameless fear,
Back to the dark sea-line
Looking, thinking of all I have lost ;
An old song vexes my ear ;
But that of Lamech is mine.

VII.

For years, a measureless ill,
For years, for ever, to part—
But she, she would love me still ;
And as long, O God, as she
Have a grain of love for me,
So long, no doubt, no doubt,
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,
However weary, a spark of will
Not to be trampled out.

VIII.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught
With a passion so intense
One would think that it well
Might drown all life in the eye,—
That it should, by being so overwrought,
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense
For a shell, or a flower, little things
Which else would have been past by !
And now I remember, I,
When he lay dying there,
I noticed one of his many rings
(For he had many, poor worm) and
thought
It is his mother's hair.

IX.

Who knows if he be dead ?
Whether I need have fled ?
Am I guilty of blood ?
However this may be,
Comfort her, comfort her, all things good,
While I am over the sea !
Let me and my passionate love go by,
But speak to her all things holy and high,
Whatever happen to me !
Me and my harmful love go by ;
But come to her waking, find her asleep,
Powers of the height, Powers of the deep,
And comfort her tho' I die.

III.

Courage, poor heart of stone :
I will not ask thee why
Thou canst not understand
That thou art left for ever alone :
Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—
Or if I ask thee why,
Care not thou to know :
She is but dead, and the time is at hand
When thou shalt more than die.

IV.

I.

O that 'twere possible
After long grief and pain
To find the arms of my true love
Round me once again !

II.

When I was wont to meet her
In the silent woody places
By the home that gave me birth.
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixt with kisses sweeter sweeter
Than anything on earth.

III.

A shadow flits before me,
Not thou, but like to thee :

Ah Christ, that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might tell
us
What and where they be.

IV.

It leads me forth at evening,
It lightly winds and steals
In a cold white robe before me,
When all my spirit reels
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,
And the roaring of the wheels.

V.

Half the night I waste in sighs,
Half in dreams I sorrow after
The delight of early skies ;
In a wakeful doze I sorrow
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,
For the meeting of the morrow,
The delight of happy laughter,
The delight of low replies.

VI.

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And a dewy splendour falls
On the little flower that clings
To the turrets and the walls ;
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And the light and shadow flee,
She is walking in the meadow,
And the woodland echo rings ;
In a moment we shall meet ;
She is singing in the meadow
And the rivulet at her feet
Ripples on in light and shadow
To the ballad that she sings.

VII.

Do I hear her sing as of old,
My bird with the shining head,
My own dove with the tender eye ?
But there rings on a sudden a passionate
cry,
There is some one dying or dead,

And a sullen thunder is roll'd ;
 For a tumult shakes the city,
 And I wake, my dream is fled ;
 In the shuddering dawn, behold,
 Without knowledge, without pity,
 By the curtains of my bed
 That abiding phantom cold,

VIII.

Get thee hence, nor come again,
 Mix not memory with doubt,
 Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,
 Pass and cease to move about !
 'Tis the blot upon the brain
 That *will* show itself without.

IX.

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,
 And the yellow vapours choke
 The great city sounding wide ;
 The day comes, a dull red ball
 Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke
 On the misty river-tide.

X.

Thro' the hubbub of the market
 I steal, a wasted frame,
 It crosses here, it crosses there,
 Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,
 The shadow still the same ;
 And on my heavy eyelids
 My anguish hangs like shame.

XI.

Alas for her that met me,
 That heard me softly call,
 Came glimmering thro' the laurels
 At the quiet evenfall,
 In the garden by the turrets
 Of the old manorial hall,

XII.

Would the happy spirit descend,
 From the realms of light and song,
 In the chamber or the street,
 As she looks among the blest,

Should I fear to greet my friend
 Or to say 'forgive the wrong,'
 Or to ask her, 'Take me, sweet,
 To the regions of thy rest ?'

XIII.

But the broad light glares and beats,
 And the shadow flits and fleets
 And will not let me be ;
 And I loathe the squares and streets,
 And the faces that one meets,
 Hearts with no love for me :
 Always I long to creep
 Into some still cavern deep,
 There to weep, and weep, and weep
 My whole soul out to thee.

V.

I.

Dead, long dead,
 Long dead !
 And my heart is a handful of dust,
 And the wheels go over my head,
 And my bones are shaken with pain,
 For into a shallow grave they are thrust,
 Only a yard beneath the street,
 And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,
 The hoofs of the horses beat,
 Beat into my scalp and my brain,
 With never an end to the stream of passing
 feet,

Driving, hurrying, marrying, burying,
 Clamour and rumble, and ringing and
 clatter,

And here beneath it is all as bad,
 For I thought the dead had peace, but it
 is not so ;

To have no peace in the grave, is that
 not sad ?

But up and down and to and fro,
 Ever about me the dead men go ;
 And then to hear a dead man chatter
 Is enough to drive one mad.

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II.
Wretchedest age, since Time began,
They cannot even bury a man ;
And tho' we paid our tithes in the days
that are gone,
Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was
read ;
It is that which makes us loud in the
world of the dead ;
There is none that does his work, not
one ;
A touch of their office might have sufficed,
But the churchmen fain would kill their
church,
As the churches have kill'd their Christ.

III.
See, there is one of us sobbing,
No limit to his distress ;
And another, a lord of all things, praying
To his own great self, as I guess ;
And another, a statesman there, betraying
His party-secret, fool, to the press ;
And yonder a vile physician, blabbing
The case of his patient—all for what ?
To tickle the maggot born in an empty
head,
And wheedle a world that loves him not,
For it is but a world of the dead.

IV.
Nothing but idiot gabble !
For the prophecy given of old
And then not understood,
Has come to pass as foretold ;
Not let any man think for the public good,
But babble, merely for babble.
For I never whisper'd a private affair
Within the hearing of cat or mouse,
No, not to myself in the closet alone,
But I heard it shouted at once from the
top of the house ;
Everything came to be known
Who told *him* we were there ?

V.
Not that gray old wolf, for he came not
back
From the wilderness, full of wolves, where
he used to lie ;
He has gather'd the bones for his o'er-
grown whelp to crack ;
Crack them now for yourself, and howl,
and die.

VI.
Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,
And curse me the British vermin, the rat ;
I know not whether he came in the
Hanover ship,
But I know that he lies and listens mute
In an ancient mansion's crannies and
holes :
Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,
Except that now we poison our babes,
poor souls !
It is all used up for that.

VII.
Tell him now : she is standing here at my
head ;
Not beautiful now, not even kind ;
He may take her now ; for she never
speaks her mind,
But is ever the one thing silent here.
She is not of us, as I divine ;
She comes from another stiller world of
the dead,
Stiller, not fairer than mine.

VIII.
But I know where a garden grows,
Fairer than aught in the world beside,
All made up of the lily and rose
That blow by night, when the season is
good,
To the sound of dancing music and flutes :
It is only flowers, they had no fruits,
And I almost fear they are not roses, but
blood ;

For the keeper was one, so full of pride,
He linkt a dead man there to a spectral
bride ;

For he, if he had not been a Sultan of
brutes,

Would he have that hole in his side ?

IX.

But what will the old man say ?

He laid a cruel snare in a pit

To catch a friend of mine one stormy
day ;

Yet now I could even weep to think of it ;

For what will the old man say

When he comes to the second corpse in
the pit ?

X.

Friend, to be struck by the public foe,

Then to strike him and lay him low,

That were a public merit, far,
Whatever the Quaker holds, from sin ;
But the red life spilt for a private blow—
I swear to you, lawful and lawless war
Are scarcely even akin.

XI.

O me, why have they not buried me deep
enough ?

Is it kind to have made me a grave so
rough,

Me, that was never a quiet sleeper ?

Maybe still I am but half-dead ;

Then I cannot be wholly dumb ;

I will cry to the steps above my head

And somebody, surely, some kind heart
will come

To bury me, bury me

Deeper, ever so little deeper.

PART III.

VI.

I.

My life has crept so long on a broken wing
Thro' cells of madness, haunts of horror and fear,
That I come to be grateful at last for a little thing ;
My mood is changed, for it fell at a time of year
When the face of night is fair on the dewy downs,
And the shining daffodil dies, and the Charioteer
And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns
Over Orion's grave low down in the west,
That like a silent lightning under the stars
She seem'd to divide in a dream from a band of the blest,
And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars—
'And in that hope, dear soul, let trouble have rest,
Knowing I tarry for thee,' and pointed to Mars
As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast.

II.

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded a dear delight
To have look'd, tho' but in a dream, upon eyes so fair,
That had been in a weary world my one thing bright ;
And it was but a dream, yet it lighten'd my despair
When I thought that a war would arise in defence of the right,
That an iron tyranny now should bend or cease,

The glory of manhood stand on his ancient height,
 Nor Britain's one sole God be the millionaire :
 No more shall commerce be all in all, and Peace
 Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid note,
 And watch her harvest ripen, her herd increase,
 Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a slothful shore,
 And the cobweb woven across the cannon's throat
 Shall shake its threaded tears in the wind no more.

III.

And as months ran on and rumour of battle grew,
 'It is time, it is time, O passionate heart,' said I
 (For I cleaved to a cause that I felt to be pure and true),
 'It is time, O passionate heart and morbid eye,
 That old hysterical mock-disease should die.'
 And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd my breath
 With a loyal people shouting a battle cry,
 Till I saw the dreary phantom arise and fly
 Far into the North, and battle, and seas of death.

IV.

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the higher aims
 Of a land that has lost for a little her lust of gold,
 And love of a peace that was full of wrongs and shames,
 Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be told ;
 And hail once more to the banner of battle unroll'd !
 Tho' many a light shall darken, and many shall weep
 For those that are crush'd in the clash of jarring claims,
 Yet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd on a giant liar ;
 And many a darkness into the light shall leap,
 And shine in the sudden making of splendid names,
 And noble thought be freer under the sun,
 And the heart of a people beat with one desire ;
 For the peace, that I deem'd no peace, is over and done,
 And now by the side of the Black and the Baltic deep,
 And deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress, flames
 The blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.

V.

Let it flame or fade, and the war roll down like a wind,
 We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are noble still,
 And myself have awaked, as it seems, to the better mind ;
 It is better to fight for the good than to rail at the ill ;
 I have felt with my native land, I am one with my kind
 I embrace the purpose of God, and the doom assign'd.

IDYLLS OF THE KING.

DEDICATION.

THESE to His Memory—since he held
them dear,
Perchance as finding there unconsciously
Some image of himself—I dedicate,
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears—
These Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me
Scarce other than my own ideal knight,
'Who revered his conscience as his
king ;
Whose glory was, redressing human wrong ;
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd
to it ;
Who loved one only and who clave to
her—'
Her—over all whose realms to their last
isle,
Commingled with the gloom of imminent
war,
The shadow of His loss drew like eclipse,
Darkening the world. We have lost
him : he is gone :
We know him now : all narrow jealousies
Are silent ; and we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd,
wise,
With what sublime repression of himself,
And in what limits, and how tenderly ;
Not swaying to this faction or to that ;
Not making his high place the lawless
perch
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-
ground
For pleasure ; but thro' all this tract of
years
Wearing the white flower of a blameless
life,

Before a thousand peering littlenesses,
In that fierce light which beats upon a
throne,
And blackens every blot : for where is he,
Who dares foreshadow for an only son
A lovelier life, a more unstain'd, than his ?
Or how should England dreaming of *his*
sons

Hope more for these than some inheritance
Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,
Laborious for her people and her poor—
Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler day—
Far-sighted summoner of War and Waste
To fruitful strifes and rivalries of peace—
Sweet nature gilded by the gracious gleam
Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,
Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince
indeed,
Beyond all titles, and a household name,
Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the
Good.

Break not, O woman's-heart, but still
endure ;
Break not, for thou art Royal, but endure,
Remembering all the beauty of that star
Which shone so close beside Thee, that
ye made
One light together, but has past and leaves
The Crown a lonely splendour.

May all love,
His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow Thee,
The love of all Thy sons encompass Thee,
The love of all Thy daughters cherish
Thee,
The love of all Thy people comfort Thee,
Till God's love set Thee at his side again !

THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

LEODOGRAN, the King of Cameliard,
Had one fair daughter, and none other
child ;

And she was fairest of all flesh on earth,
Guinevere, and in her his one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur came
Ruled in this isle, and ever waging war
Each upon other, wasted all the land ;
And still from time to time the heathen
host

Swarm'd overseas, and harried what was
left.

And so there grew great tracts of wilder-
ness,

Wherein the beast was ever more and
more,

But man was less and less, till Arthur
came.

For first Aurelius lived and fought and
died,

And after him King Uther fought and died,
But either fail'd to make the kingdom
one.

And after these King Arthur for a space,
And thro' the puissance of his Table
Round,

Drew all their petty princedom under
him,

Their king and head, and made a realm,
and reign'd.

And thus the land of Cameliard was
waste,

Thick with wet woods, and many a beast
therein,

And none or few to scare or chase the
beast ;

So that wild dog, and wolf and boar and
bear

Came night and day, and rooted in the
fields,

And wallow'd in the gardens of the King.
And ever and anon the wolf would steal
The children and devour, but now and
then,

Her own brood lost or dead, lent her
fierce teat

To human sucklings ; and the children,
housed

In her foul den, there at their meat would
growl,

And mock their foster-mother on four feet,
Till, straighten'd, they grew up to wolf-
like men,

Worse than the wolves. And King
Leodogran

Groan'd for the Roman legions here again,
And Caesar's eagle : then his brother king,
Urien, assail'd him : last a heathen horde,
Reddening the sun with smoke and earth
with blood,

And on the spike that split the mother's
heart

Spitting the child, brake on him, till,
amazed,

He knew not whither he should turn for aid.

But—for he heard of Arthur newly
crown'd,

Tho' not without an uproar made by those
Who cried, 'He is not Uther's son'—the
King

Sent to him, saying, 'Arise, and help us
thou !

For here between the man and beast we
die.'

And Arthur yet had done no deed of
arms,

But heard the call, and came : and
 Guinevere
 Stood by the castle walls to watch him
 pass ;
 But since he neither wore on helm or
 shield
 The golden symbol of his kinglihood,
 But rode a simple knight among his
 knights,
 And many of these in richer arms than he,
 She saw him not, or mark'd not, if she
 saw,
 One among many, tho' his face was bare.
 But Arthur, looking downward as he past,
 Felt the light of her eyes into his life
 Smite on the sudden, yet rode on, and
 pitch'd
 His tents beside the forest. Then he
 drave
 The heathen, after, slew the beast, and
 fell'd
 The forest, letting in the sun, and made
 Broad pathways for the hunter and the
 knight
 And so return'd.

For while he linger'd there,
 A doubt that ever smoulder'd in the hearts
 Of those great Lords and Barons of his
 realm
 Flash'd forth and into war : for most of
 these,
 Colleaguings with a score of petty kings,
 Made head against him, crying, 'Who
 is he
 That he should rule us ? who hath proven
 him
 King Uther's son ? for lo ! we look at
 him,
 And find nor face nor bearing, limbs nor
 voice,
 Are like to those of Uther whom we
 knew.

This is the son of Gorlois, not the King ;
 This is the son of Anton, not the King.'

And Arthur, passing thence to battle,
 felt
 Travail, and throes and agonies of the
 life,
 Desiring to be join'd with Guinevere ;
 And thinking as he rode, 'Her father said
 That there between the man and beast
 they die.
 Shall I not lift her from this land of beasts
 Up to my throne, and side by side with
 me ?
 What happiness to reign a lonely king,
 Vext—O ye stars that shudder over me,
 O earth that soundest hollow under me,
 Vext with waste dreams ? for saving I be
 join'd
 To her that is the fairest under heaven,
 I seem as nothing in the mighty world,
 And cannot will my will, nor work my
 work
 Wholly, nor make myself in mine own
 realm
 Victor and lord. But were I join'd with
 her,
 Then might we live together as one life,
 And reigning with one will in everything
 Have power on this dark land to lighten
 it,
 And power on this dead world to make it
 live.'

Thereafter—as he speaks who tells the
 tale—
 When Arthur reach'd a field-of-battle
 bright
 With pitch'd pavilions of his foe, the
 world
 Was all so clear about him, that he saw
 The smallest rock far on the faintest hill,
 And even in high day the morning star.

So when the King had set his banner
broad,
At once from either side, with trumpet-
blast,
And shouts, and clarions shrilling unto
blood,
The long-lanced battle let their horses
run.
And now the Barons and the kings pre-
vail'd,
And now the King, as here and there
that war
Went swaying; but the Powers who walk
the world
Made lightnings and great thunders over
him,
And dazed all eyes, till Arthur by main
might,
And mightier of his hands with every
blow,
And leading all his knighthood threw the
kings
Carádos, Urien, Cradlemon of Wales,
Claudias, and Clariance of Northumber-
land,
The King Brandagoras of Latangor,
With Anguisant of Erin, Morganore,
And Lot of Orkney. Then, before a voice
As dreadful as the shout of one who sees
To one who sins, and deems himself alone
And all the world asleep, they swerved
and brake
Flying, and Arthur call'd to stay the
brands
That hack'd among the flyers, 'Ho! they
yield!'
So like a painted battle the war stood
Silenced, the living quiet as the dead,
And in the heart of Arthur joy was lord.
He laugh'd upon his warrior whom he
loved
And honour'd most. 'Thou dost not
doubt me King,

So well thine arm hath wrought for me
to-day.'
'Sir and my liege,' he cried, 'the fire of
God
Descends upon thee in the battle-field:
I know thee for my King!' Whereat the
two,
For each had ward'd either in the fight,
Swore on the field of death a deathless
love.
And Arthur said, 'Man's word is God in
man:
Let chance what will, I trust thee to the
death.'

Then quickly from the foughthen field
he sent
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere,
His new-made knights, to King Leodo-
gran,
Saying, 'If I in aught have served thee
well,
Give me thy daughter Guinevere to wife.'

Whom when he heard, Leodogran in
heart
Debating—'How should I that am a
king,
However much he help me at my need,
Give my one daughter saving to a king,
And a king's son?'—lifted his voice, and
call'd
A hoary man, his chamberlain, to whom
He trusted all things, and of him required
His counsel: 'Knowest thou aught of
Arthur's birth?'

Then spake the hoary chamberlain and
said,
'Sir King, there be but two old men that
know:
And each is twice as old as I; and one
Is Merlin, the wise man that ever served

King Uther thro' his magic art ; and one
Is Merlin's master (so they call him) Bleys,
Who taught him magic ; but the scholar
ran

Before the master, and so far, that Bleys
Laid magic by, and sat him down, and
wrote

All things and whatsoever Merlin did
In one great annal-book, where after
years

Will learn the secret of our Arthur's
birth.'

To whom the King Leodogran replied,
'O friend, had I been holpen half as well
By this King Arthur as by thee to-day,
Then beast and man had had their share
of me :

But summon here before us yet once more
Ulfus, and Brastias, and Bedivere.'

Then, when they came before him, the
King said,

'I have seen the cuckoo chased by lesser
fowl,

And reason in the chase : but wherefore
now

Do these your lords stir up the heat of
war,

Some calling Arthur born of Gorlois,
Others of Anton? Tell me, ye your-
selves,

Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's son?'

And Ulfus and Brastias answer'd,
'Ay.'

Then Bedivere, the first of all his knights
Knighted by Arthur at his crowning,
spake—

For bold in heart and act and word was
he,

Whenever slander breathed against the
King—

'Sir, there be many rumours on this
head :

For there be those who hate him in their
hearts,

Call him baseborn, and since his ways
are sweet,

And theirs are bestial, hold him less than
man :

And there be those who deem him more
than man,

And dream he dropt from heaven : but
my belief

In all this matter—so ye care to learn—
Sir, for ye know that in King Uther's
time

The prince and warrior Gorlois, he that
held

Tintagil castle by the Cornish sea,
Was wedded with a winsome wife,
Ygerne :

And daughters had she borne him,—one
whereof,

Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Belli-
cent,

Had ever like a loyal sister cleaved
To Arthur,—but a son she had not borne.

And Uther cast upon her eyes of love :

But she, a stainless wife to Gorlois,
So loathed the bright dishonour of his
love,

That Gorlois and King Uther went to
war :

And overthrown was Gorlois and slain.

Then Uther in his wrath and heat besieged
Ygerne within Tintagil, where her men,

Seeing the mighty swarm about their
walls,

Left her and fled, and Uther enter'd in,
And there was none to call to but himself.

So, compass'd by the power of the King,
Enforced she was to wed him in her tears,

And with a shameful swiftness : after-
ward,

Not many moons, King Uther died himself,
 Moaning and wailing for an heir to rule
 After him, lest the realm should go to wrack.
 And that same night, the night of the new
 year,
 By reason of the bitterness and grief
 That vext his mother, all before his time
 Was Arthur born, and all as soon as born
 Deliver'd at a secret postern-gate
 To Merlin, to be holden far apart
 Until his hour should come ; because the
 lords
 Of that fierce day were as the lords of this,
 Wild beasts, and surely would have torn
 the child
 Piecemeal among them, had they known ;
 for each
 But sought to rule for his own self and
 hand,
 And many hated Uther for the sake
 Of Gorlois. Wherefore Merlin took the
 child,
 And gave him to Sir Anton, an old knight
 And ancient friend of Uther ; and his wife
 Nursed the young prince, and rear'd him
 with her own ;
 And no man knew. And ever since the
 lords
 Have foughten like wild beasts among
 themselves,
 So that the realm has gone to wrack :
 but now,
 This year, when Merlin (for his hour had
 come)
 Brought Arthur forth, and set him in the
 hall,
 Proclaiming, "Here is Uther's heir, your
 king,"
 A hundred voices cried, "Away with him!
 No king of ours ! a son of Gorlois he,
 Or else the child of Anton, and no king,

Or else baseborn." Yet Merlin thro' his
 craft,
 And while the people clamour'd for a
 king,
 Had Arthur crown'd ; but after, the great
 lords
 Banded, and so brake out in open war.'

Then while the King debated with
 himself
 If Arthur were the child of shameful-
 ness,
 Or born the son of Gorlois, after death,
 Or Uther's son, and born before his time,
 Or whether there were truth in anything
 Said by these three, there came to Came-
 liard,
 With Gawain and young Modred, her two
 sons,
 Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Belli-
 cent ;
 Whom as he could, not as he would, the
 King
 Made feast for, saying, as they sat at
 meat,

'A doubtful throne is ice on summer
 seas.
 Ye come from Arthur's court, Victor his
 men
 Report him ! Yea, but ye—think ye this
 king—
 So many those that hate him, and so
 strong,
 So few his knights, however brave they
 be—
 Hath body enow to hold his foemen
 down ?'

'O King,' she cried, 'and I will tell
 thee : few,
 Few, but all brave, all of one mind with
 him ;

For I was near him when the savage yells
Of Uther's peerage died, and Arthur sat
Crown'd on the dais, and his warriors cried,
"Be thou the king, and we will work thy
will

Who love thee." Then the King in low
deep tones,

And simple words of great authority,
Bound them by so strait vows to his own
self,

That when they rose, knighted from
kneeling, some

Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,
Some flush'd, and others dazed, as one
who wakes

Half-blinded at the coming of a light.

'But when he spake and cheer'd his
Table Round

With large divine and comfortable words
Beyond my tongue to tell thee—I beheld
From eye to eye thro' all their Order flash
A momentary likeness of the King :

And ere it left their faces, thro' the cross
And those around it and the Crucified,
Down from the casement over Arthur,
smote

Flame-colour, vert and azure, in three
rays,

One falling upon each of three fair queens,
Who stood in silence near his throne, the
friends

Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with bright
Sweet faces, who will help him at his
need.

'And there I saw mage Merlin, whose
vast wit
And hundred winters are but as the hands
Of loyal vassals toiling for their liege.

'And near him stood the Lady of the
Lake,

Who knows a subtler magic than his
own—

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful.

She gave the King his huge cross-hilted
sword,

Whereby to drive the heathen out: a mist
Of incense eurl'd about her, and her face
Wellnigh was hidden in the minster
gloom ;

But there was heard among the holy
hymns

A voice as of the waters, for she dwells
Down in a deep, calm, whatsoever storms
May shake the world, and when the
surface rolls,

He hath power to walk the waters like our
Lord.

'There likewise I beheld Excalibur
Before him at his crowning borne, the
sword

That rose from out the bosom of the lake,
And Arthur row'd across and took it—rich
With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,
Bewildering heart and eye—the blade so
bright

That men are blinded by it—on one side,
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this
world,

"Take me," but turn the blade and ye
shall see,

And written in the speech ye speak your-
self,

"Cast me away ! " And sad was Arthur's
face

Taking it, but old Merlin counsell'd him,
"Take thou and strike ! the time to cast
away

Is yet far-off." So this great brand the
king

Took, and by this will beat his foemen
down.'

Thereat Leodogran rejoiced, but
thought

To sift his doubtings to the last, and ask'd,
Fixing full eyes of question on her face,
'The swallow and the swift are near akin,
But thou art closer to this noble prince,
Being his own dear sister;' and she said,
'Daughter of Gorlois and Ygerne am I;'

'And therefore Arthur's sister?' ask'd
the King.

She answer'd, 'These be secret things,'
and sign'd

To those two sons to pass and let them be.
And Gawain went, and breaking into song
Sprang out, and follow'd by his flying hair
Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he saw :
But Modred laid his ear beside the doors,
And there half heard; the same that
afterward

Struck for the throne, and striking found
his doom.

And then the Queen made answer,
'What know I?

For dark my mother was in eyes and hair,
And dark in hair and eyes am I; and dark
Was Gorlois, yea and dark was Uther too,
Wellnigh to blackness; but this King is
fair

Beyond the race of Britons and of men.
Moreover, always in my mind I hear
A cry from out the dawning of my life,
A mother weeping, and I hear her say,
"O that ye had some brother, pretty one,
To guard thee on the rough ways of the
world."'

'Ay,' said the King, 'and hear ye
such a cry?
But when did Arthur chance upon thee
first?'

'O King!' she cried, 'and I will tell
thee true:

He found me first when yet a little maid :
Beaten I had been for a little fault
Whereof I was not guilty; and out I ran
And flung myself down on a bank of
heath,

And hated this fair world and all therein,
And wept, and wish'd that I were dead;
and he—

I know not whether of himself he came,
Or brought by Merlin, who, they say,
can walk

Unseen at pleasure—he was at my side
And spake sweet words, and comforted
my heart,

And dried my tears, being a child with me.
And many a time he came, and evermore
As I grew greater grew with me; and sad
At times he seem'd, and sad with him
was I,

Stern too at times, and then I loved him
not,

But sweet again, and then I loved him
well.

And now of late I see him less and less,
But those first days had golden hours for
me,

For then I surely thought he would be
king.

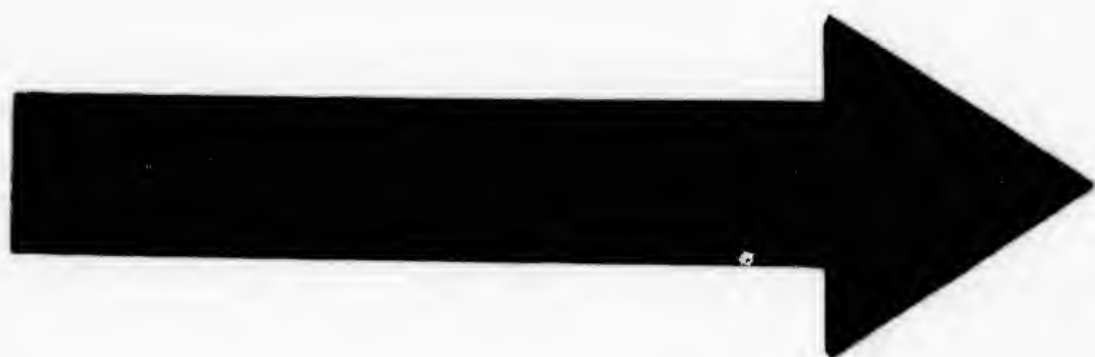
'But let me tell thee now another tale :
For Bleys, our Merlin's master, as they
say,

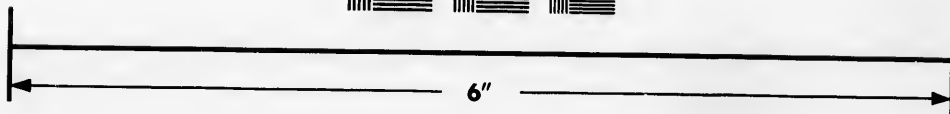
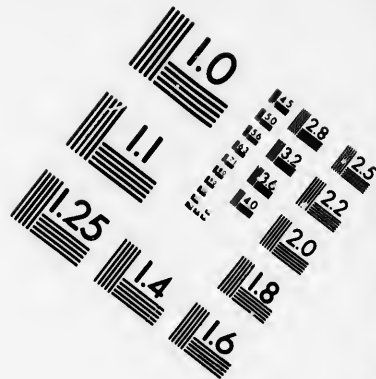
Died but of late, and sent his cry to me,
To hear him speak before he left his life.
Shrunk like a fairy changeling lay the
mage;

And when I enter'd told me that himself
And Merlin ever served about the King,
Uther, before he died; and on the night
When Uther in Tintagil past away
Moaning and waiting for an heir, the two
Left the still King, and passing forth to
breathe,

<p>Then from the castle gateway by the chasm Descending thro' the dismal night—a night In which the bounds of heaven and earth were lost— Beheld, so high upon the dreary deeps It seem'd in heaven, a ship, the shape thereof A dragon wing'd, and all from stem to stern Bright with a shining people on the decks, And gone as soon as seen. And then the two Dropt to the cove, and watch'd the great sea fall, Wave after wave, each mightier than the last, Till last, a ninth one, gathering half the deep And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged Roaring, and all the wave was in a flame: And down the wave and in the flame was borne A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's feet, Who stooped and caught the babe, and cried "The King! Here is an heir for Uther!" And the fringe Of that great breaker, sweeping up the strand, Lash'd at the wizard as he spake the word, And all at once all round him rose in fire, So that the child and he were clothed in fire. And presently thereafter follow'd calm, Free sky and stars: "And this same child," he said, "Is he who reigns; nor could I part in peace Till this were told." And saying this the seer Went thro' the strait and dreadful pass of death,</p>	<p>Not ever to be question'd any more Save on the further side; but when I met Merlin, and ask'd him if these things were truth— The shining dragon and the naked child Descending in the glory of the seas— He laugh'd as is his wont, and answer'd me In riddling triplets of old time, and said: "Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow in the sky! A young man will be wiser by and by; An old man's wit may wander ere he die. Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the lea! And truth is this to me, and that to thee; And truth or clothed or naked let it be. Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom blows: Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who knows? From the great deep to the great deep he goes." "So Merlin riddling anger'd me; but thou Fear not to give this King thine only child, Guinevere: so great bards of him will sing Hereafter; and dark sayings from of old Ranging and ringing thro' the minds of men, And echo'd by old folk beside their fires For comfort after their wage-work is done, Speak of the King; and Merlin in our time Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn Tho' men may wound him that he will not die, But pass, again to come; and then or now Utterly smite the heathen underfoot, Till these and all men hail him for their king."</p>
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<p>She spake and King Leodogran rejoiced, But musing 'Shall I answer yea or nay?' Doubted, and drowsed, nodded and slept, and saw, Dreaming, a slope of land that ever grew, Field after field, up to a height, the peak Haze-hidden, and thereon a phantom king, Now looming, and now lost; and on the slope The sword rose, the hind fell, the herd was driven, Fire glimpsed; and all the land from roof and rick, In drifts of smoke before a rolling wind, Stream'd to the peak, and mingled with the haze And made it thicker; while the phantom king Sent out at times a voice; and here or there Stood one who pointed toward the voice, the rest Slew on and burnt, crying, 'No king of ours, No son of Uther, and no king of ours;' Till with a wink his dream was changed, the haze Descended, and the solid earth became As nothing, but the King stood out in heaven, Crown'd. And Leodogran awoke, and sent Ulfus, and Brastias and Bedivere, Back to the court of Arthur answering yea.</p> <p>Then Arthur charged his warrior whom he loved And honour'd most, Sir Lancelot, to ride forth And bring the Queen;—and watch'd him from the gates:</p>	<p>And Lancelot past away among the flowers, (For then was latter April, and return'd Among the flowers, in May, with Guinevere. To whom arrived, by Dubric the high saint, Chief of the church in Britain, and before The stateliest of her altar-shrines, the King That morn was married, while in stainless white, The fair beginners of a nobler time, And glorying in their vows and him, his knights Stood round him, and rejoicing in his joy. Far shone the fields of May thro' open door, The sacred altar blossom'd white with May, The Sun of May descended on their King, They gazed on all earth's beauty in their Queen, Roll'd incense, and there past along the hymns A voice as of the waters, while the two Swore at the shrine of Christ a deathless love: And Arthur said, 'Behold, thy doom is mine. Let chance what will, I love thee to the death!' To whom the Queen replied with drooping eyes, 'King and my lord, I love thee to the death!' And holy Dubric spread his hands and spake, 'Reign ye, and live and love, and make the world Other, and may thy Queen be one with thee, And all this Order of thy Table Round Fulfil the boundless purpose of their King!</p>
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<p>So Dubric said ; but when they left the shrine Great Lords from Rome before the portal stood, In scornful stillness gazing as they past ; Then while they paced a city all on fire With sun and cloth of gold, the trumpets blew, And Arthur's knighthood sang before the King :—</p> <p>‘ Blow trumpet, for the world is white with May ; Blow trumpet, the long night hath roll'd away ! Blow thro’ the living world—“ Let the King reign.”</p> <p>‘ Shall Rome or Heathen rule in Arthur's realm ? Flash brand and lance, fall battleaxe upon helm, Fall battleaxe, and flash brand ! Let the King reign.</p> <p>‘ Strike for the King and live ! his knights have heard That God hath told the King a secret word. Fall battleaxe, and flash brand ! Let the King reign.</p> <p>‘ Blow trumpet ! he will lift us from the dust. Blow trumpet ! live the strength and die the lust ! Clang battleaxe, and clash brand ! Let the King reign.</p> <p>‘ Strike for the King and die ! and if thou diest,</p>	<p>The King is King, and ever wills the highest. Clang battleaxe, and clash brand ! Let the King reign.</p> <p>‘ Blow, for our Sun is mighty in his May ! Blow, for our Sun is mightier day by day ! Clang battleaxe, and clash brand ! Let the King reign.</p> <p>‘ The King will follow Christ, and we the King In whom high God hath breathed a secret thing. Fall battleaxe, and flash brand ! Let the King reign.’</p> <p>So sang the knighthood, moving to their hall. There at the banquet those great Lords from Rome, The slowly-fading mistress of the world, Strode in, and claim'd their tribute as of yore. But Arthur spake, ‘ Behold, for these have sworn To wage my wars, and worship me their King ; The old order changeth, yielding place to new ; And we that fight for our fair father Christ, Seeing that ye be grown too weak and old To drive the heathen from your Roman wall, No tribute will we pay :’ so those great lords Drew back in wrath, and Arthur strove with Rome.</p> <p>And Arthur and his knighthood for a space</p>
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Were all one will, and thro' that strength
the King
Drew in the petty princedoms under
him,

Fought, and in twelve great battles over-
came
The heathen hordes, and made a realm
and reign'd.

THE ROUND TABLE.

GARETH AND LYNETTE.
GERAINT AND ENID.
MERLIN AND VIVIEN.
LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

THE HOLY GRAIL.
PELLEAS AND ETARRE.
THE LAST TOURNAMENT.
GUINEVERE.

GARETH AND LYNETTE.

THE last tall son of Lot and Bellicent,
And tallest, Gareth, in a showerful spring
Stared at the spate. A slender-shafted
Pine

Lost footing, fell, and so was whirl'd
away.

'How he went down,' said Gareth, 'as
a false knight

Or evil king before my lance if lance
Were mine to use—O senseless cataract,
Bearing all down in thy precipitancy—
And yet thou art but swollen with cold
snows

And mine is living blood : thou dost His
will,

The Maker's, and not knowest, and I
that know,

Have strength and wit, in my good
mother's hall

Linger with vacillating obedience,
Prison'd, and kept and coax'd and
whistled to—

Since the good mother holds me still a
child !

Good mother is bad mother unto me !
A worse were better ; yet no worse
would I.

Heaven yield her for it, but in me put
force

To weary her ears with one continuous
prayer,

Until she let me fly disengaged to sweep
In ever-highering eagle-circles up
To the great Sun of Glory, and thence
swoop

Down upon all things base, and dash
them dead,

A knight of Arthur, working out his will,
To cleanse the world. Why, Gawain,
when he came

With Modred hither in the summertime,
Ask'd me to tilt with him, the proven
knight.

Modred for want of worthier was the
judge.

Then I so shook him in the saddle, he
said,

"Thou hast half prevail'd against me,"
said so—he—

Tho' Modred biting his thin lips was mute,
For he is always sullen : what care I ?

And Gareth went, and hovering round
her chair

Ask'd, 'Mother, tho' ye count me still
the child,

Sweet mother, do ye love the child ?'
She laugh'd,

'Thou art but a wild-goose to question
it.'

'Then, mother, an ye love the child,' he said,

'Being a goose and rather tame than wild,
Hear the child's story.' 'Yea, my well-beloved,

An 'twere but of the goose and golden eggs.'

And Gareth answer'd her with kindling eyes,

'Nay, nay, good mother, but this egg of mine

Was finer gold than any goose can lay ;
For this an Eagle, a royal Eagle, laid
Almost beyond eye-reach, on such a palm
As glitters gilded in thy Book of Hours.
And there was ever haunting round the palm

A lusty youth, but poor, who often saw
The splendour sparkling from aloft, and thought

"An I could climb and lay my hand upon it,
Then were I wealthier than a leash of kings."

But ever when he reach'd a hand to climb,
One, that had loved him from his childhood, caught

And stay'd him, "Climb not lest thou break thy neck,

I charge thee by my love," and so the boy,
Sweet mother, neither clomb, nor brake his neck,

But brake his very heart in pining for it,
And past away.'

To whom the mother said,

'True love, sweet son, had risk'd himself and climb'd,

And handed down the golden treasure to him.'

And Gareth answer'd her with kindling eyes,

'Gold ? said I gold ?—ay then, why he, or she,

Or whosoe'er it was, or half the world
Had ventured—*had* the thing I spake of been

Mere gold—but this was all of that true steel,

Whereof they forged the brand Excalibur,
And lightnings play'd about it in the storm,

And all the little fowl were flurried at it,
And there were cries and clashing in the nest,

That sent him from his senses : let me go.'

Then Bellicent bemoan'd herself and said,

'Hast thou no pity upon my loneliness ?
Lo, where thy father Lot beside the hearth

Lies like a log, and all but smoulder'd out !
For ever since when traitor to the King

He fought against him in the Barons' war,
And Arthur gave ' back his territory,

His age hath slow oopt, and now lies there

A yet-warm corpse, and yet unburiable,
No more ; nor sees, nor hears, nor speaks, nor knows.

And both thy brethren are in Arthur's hall,
Albeit neither loved with that full love

I feel for thee, nor worthy such a love :
Stay therefore thou ; red berries charm

the bird,
And thee, mine innocent, the jousts, the wars,

Who never knewest finger-ache, nor pang
Of wrench'd or broken limb—an often chance

In those brain-stunning shocks, and tourney-falls,

Frighs to my heart ; but stay : follow the deer

By these tall firs and our fast-falling burns ;

So make thy manhood mightier day by day;
 Sweet is the chase : and I will seek thee out
 Some comfortable bride and fair, to grace
 Thy climbing life, and cherish my prone year,
 Till falling into Lot's forgetfulness
 I know not thee, myself, nor anything.
 Stay, my best son ! ye are yet more boy
 than man.'

Then Gareth, 'An ye hold me yet for child,
 Hear yet once more the story of the child.
 For, mother, there was once a King, like ours
 The prince his heir, when tall and marriageable,
 Ask'd for a bride ; and thereupon the King
 Set two before him. One was fair, strong, arm'd—
 But to be won by force—and many men
 Desired her ; one, good lack, no man
 desired.
 And these were the conditions of the King :
 That save he won the first by force, he
 needs
 Must wed that other, whom no man
 desired,
 A red-faced bride who knew herself so
 vile,
 That evermore she long'd to hide herself,
 Nor fronted man or woman, eye to eye—
 Yea—some she cleaved to, but they died
 of her.
 And one—they call'd her Fame ; and
 one,—O Mother,
 How can ye keep me tether'd to you—
 Shame !
 Man am I grown, a man's work must I do.

Follow the deer? follow the Christ, the King,
 Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow
 the King—
 Else, wherefore born ?'

To whom the mother said,
 ' Sweet son, for there be many who deem
 him not,
 Or will not deem him, wholly proven
 King—
 Albeit in mine own heart I knew him
 King,
 When I was frequent with him in my
 youth,
 And heard him Kingly speak, and doubted
 him
 No more than he, himself ; but felt him
 mine,
 Of closest kin to me : yet—wilt thou leave
 Thine easeful biding here, and risk thine all,
 Life, limbs, for one that is not proven
 King ?
 Stay, till the cloud that settles round his
 birth
 Hath lifted but a little. Stay, sweet son.'

And Gareth answer'd quickly, ' Not
 an hour,
 So that ye yield me—I will walk thro' fire,
 Mother, to gain it—your full leave to go.
 Not proven, who swept the dust of ruin'd
 Rome
 From off the threshold of the realm, and
 crush'd
 The Idolaters, and made the people free ?
 Who should be King save him who
 makes us free ?'

So when the Queen, who long had
 sought in vain
 To break him from the intent to which he
 grew,

Found her son's will unwaveringly one,
She answer'd craftily, 'Will ye walk thro'
fire?

Who walks thro' fire will hardly heed the
smoke.

Ay, go then, an ye must : only one proof,
Before thou ask the King to make thee
knight,

Of thine obedience and thy love to me,
Thy mother,—I demand.'

And Gareth cried,
'A hard one, or a hundred, so I go.
Nay—quick! the proof to prove me to
the quick!'

But slowly spake the mother looking
at him,

'Prince, thou shalt go disguised to
Arthur's hall,

And hire thyself to serve for meats and
drinks

Among the scullions and the kitchen-
knaves,

And those that hand the dish across the
bar.

Nor shalt thou tell thy name to anyone.
And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth and
a day.'

For so the Queen believed that when
her son

Beheld his only way to glory lead

Low down thro' villain kitchen-vassalage,

Her own true Gareth was too princely-
proud

To pass thereby ; so should he rest with
her,

Closed in her castle from the sound of
arms.

Silent awhile was Gareth, then replied,
'The thrall in person may be free in soul,

And I shall see the jousts. Thy son am I,
And since thou art my mother, must obey.
I therefore yield me freely to thy will ;
For hence will I, disguised, and hire my-
self

To serve with scullions and with kitchen-
knaves ;

Nor tell my name to any—no, not the
King.'

Gareth awhile linger'd. The mother's
eye

Full of the wistful fear that he would go,
And turning toward him wheresoe'er he
turn'd,

Perplex his outward purpose, till an hour,
When waken'd by the wind which with
full voice

Swept bellowing thro' the darkness on to
dawn,

He rose, and out of slumber calling two
That still had tended on him from his
birth,

Before the wakeful mother heard him,
went.

The three were clad like tillers of the
soil.

Southward they set their faces. The birds
made

Melody on branch, and melody in mid air.

The damp hill-slopes were quicken'd into
green,

And the live green had kindled into
flowers,

For it was past the time of Easterday.

So, when their feet were planted on the
plain

That broaden'd toward the base of Came-
lot,

Far off they saw the silver-misty morn
Rolling her smoke about the Royal mount,

the jousts. Thy son am I,
 art my mother, must obey.
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nd the base of Came-

ilver-misty morn
 ut the Royal mount,

That rose between the forest and the field.
 At times the summit of the high city
 flash'd;

At times the spires and turrets half-way
 down

Prick'd thro' the mist; at times the great
 gate shone

Only, that open'd on the field below:
 Anon, the whole fair city had disappear'd.

Then those who went with Gareth were
 amazed,

One crying, 'Let us go no further, lord.
 Here is a city of Enchanters, built
 By fairy Kings.' The second echo'd him,

'Lord, we have heard from our wise man
 at home

To Northward, that this King is not the
 King,

But only changeling out of Fairyland,
 Who drove the heathen hence by sorcery
 And Merlin's glamour.' Then the first
 again,

'Lord, there is no such city anywhere,
 But all a vision.'

Gareth answer'd them

With laughter, swearing he had glamour
 enow

In his own blood, his princedom, youth
 and hopes,

To plunge old Merlin in the Arabian sea;
 So push'd them all unwilling toward the
 gate.

And there was no gate like it under
 heaven.

For barefoot on the keystone, which was
 lined

And rippled like an ever-fleeting wave,
 The Lady of the Lake stood: all her
 dress

Wept from her sides as water flowing
 away;

But like the cross her great and goodly
 arms

Stretch'd under all the cornice and
 upheld:

And drops of water fell from either hand;
 And down from one a sword was hung,
 from one

A censer, either worn with wind and
 storm;

And o'er her breast floated the sacred fish;
 And in the space to left of her, and right,

Were Arthur's wars in weird devices done,
 New things and old co-twisted, as if Time

Were nothing, so inveterately, that men
 Were giddy gazing there; and over all

High on the top were those three Queens,
 the friends

Of Arthur, who should help him at his
 need.

Then those with Gareth for so long a
 space

Stared at the figures, that at last it seem'd
 The dragon-boughts and elvish emblem-
 ings

Began to move, seethe, twine and curl:
 they call'd

To Gareth, 'Lord, the gateway is alive.'

And Gareth likewise on them fixt his
 eyes

So long, that ev'n to him they seem'd to
 move.

Out of the city a blast of music peal'd.
 Back from the gate started the three, to
 whom

From out thereunder came an ancient
 man,

Long-bearded, saying, 'Who be ye, my
 sons?'

Then Gareth, 'We be tillers of the soil,
 Who leaving share in furrow come to see

The glories of our King : but these, my
men,

(Your city moved so weirdly in the mist)
Doubt if the King be King at all, or come
From fairyland ; and whether this be built
By magic, and by fairy Kings and
Queens ;

Or whether there be any city at all,
Or all a vision : and this music now
Hath scared them both, but tell thou these
the truth.'

Then that old Seer made answer playing
on him

And saying, ' Son, I have seen the good
ship sail

Keel upward and mast downward in the
heavens,

And solid turrets topsy-turvy in air :
And here is truth ; but an it please thee
not,

Take thou the truth as thou hast told it
me.

For truly as thou sayest, a Fairy King
And Fairy Queens have built the city, son ;
They came from out a sacred mountain-
cleft

Toward the sunrise, each with harp in
hand,

And built it to the music of their harps.

And as thou sayest it is enchanted, son,
For there is nothing in it as it seems

Saving the King ; tho' some there be that
hold

The King a shadow, and the city real :

Yet take thou heed of him, for, so thou
pass

Beneath this archway, then wilt thou
become

A thrall to his enchantments, for the King

Will bind thee by such vows, as is a shame

A man should not be bound by, yet the
which

No man can keep ; but, so thou dread to
swear,

Pass not beneath this gateway, but abide

Without, among the cattle of the field.

For an ye heard a music, like enow

They are building still, seeing the city is
built

To music, therefore never built at all,

And therefore built for ever.'

Gareth spake

Anger'd, ' Old Master, reverence thine
own beard

That looks as white as utter truth, and
seems

Wellnigh as long as thou art statured tall !

Why mockest thou the stranger that hath
been

To thee fair-spoken ?'

But the Seer replied,

' Know ye not then the Riddling of the
Bards ?

" Confusion, and illusion, and relation,

Elusion, and occasion, and evasion " ?

I mock thee not but as thou mockest me,

And all that see thee, for thou art not who
Thou seemest, but I know thee who thou
art.

And now thou goest up to mock the King,
Who cannot brook the shadow of any lie.'

Unmockingly the mocker ending here

Turn'd to the right, and past along the
plain ;

Whom Gareth looking after said, ' My
men,

Our one white lie sits like a little ghost

Here on the threshold of our enterprise.

Let love be blamed for it, not she, nor I :

Well, we will make amends.'

With all good cheer

ep; but, so thou dread to

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uilt for ever.'

Gareth spake
Master, reverence thine
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e amends.'

With all good cheer

He spake and laugh'd, then enter'd with
his twain

Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces
And stately, rich in emblem and the work
Of ancient kings who did their days in
stone;

Which Merlin's hand, the Mage at
Arthur's court,

Knowing all arts, had touch'd, and every-
where

At Arthur's ordinance, tipt with lessening
peak

And pinnacle, and had made it spire to
heaven.

And ever and anon a knight would pass
Outward, or inward to the hall: his arms
Clash'd; and the sound was good to
Gareth's ear.

And out of bower and casement shyly
glanced

Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars of
love;

And all about a healthful people stept
As in the presence of a gracious king.

Then into hall Gareth ascending heard
A voice, the voice of Arthur, and beheld
Far over heads in that long-vaulted hall
The splendour of the presence of the King
Throned, and delivering doom — and
look'd no more —

But felt his young heart hammering in his
ears,

And thought, 'For this half-shadow of a
lie

The truthful King will doom me when I
speak.'

Yet pressing on, tho' all in fear to find
Sir Gawain or Sir Modred, saw nor one
Nor other, but in all the listening eyes
Of those tall knights, that ranged about
the throne,

Clear honour shining like the dewy star

Of dawn, and faith in their great King,
with pure

Affection, and the light of victory,
And glory gain'd, and evermore to gain.

Then came a widow crying to the King,
'A boon, Sir King! Thy father, Uther,
reft

From my dead lord a field with violence:
For howsoe'er at first he proffer'd gold,
Yet, for the field was pleasant in our eyes,
We yielded not; and then he reft us of it
Perforce, and left us neither gold nor field.'

Said Arthur, 'Whether would ye?
gold or field?'

To whom the woman weeping, 'Nay, my
lord,

The field was pleasant in my husband's
eye.'

And Arthur, 'Have thy pleasant field
again,

And thrice the gold for Uther's use
thereof,

According to the years. No boon is here,
But justice, so thy say be proven true.

Accursed, who from the wrongs his father
did

Would shape himself a right!'

And while she past,
Came yet another widow crying to him,
'A boon, Sir King! Thine enemy, King,
am I.

With thine own hand thou slowest my
dear lord,

A knight of Uther in the Barons' war,
When Lot and many another rose and
fought

Against thee, saying thou wert basely
born.

I held with these, and loathe to ask thee
aught.

Yet lo! my husband's brother had my
son
Thrall'd in his castle, and hath starved
him dead ;
And standeth seized of that inheritance
Which thou that slewest the sire hast left
the son.
So tho' I scarce can ask it thee for hate,
Grant me some knight to do the battle
for me,
Kill the foul thief, and wreak me for my
son.'

Then strode a good knight forward,
crying to him,
'A boon, Sir King ! I am her kinsman, I.
Give me to right her wrong, and slay the
man.'

Then came Sir Kay, the senceschal, and
cried,
'A boon, Sir King ! ev'n that thou grant
her none,
This railer, that hath mock'd thee in full
hall—
None ; or the wholesome boon of gyve
and gag.'

But Arthur, 'We sit King, to help the
wrong'd
Thro' all our realm. The woman loves
her lord.
Peace to thee, woman, with thy loves and
hates !
The kings of old had doom'd thee to the
flames,
Aurelius Emrys would have scourged thee
dead,
And Uther slit thy tongue ; but get thee
hence—
Lest that rough humour of the kings of
old
Return upon me ! Thou that art her kin,

Go likewise ; lay him low and slay him
not,
But bring him here, that I may judge the
right,
According to the justice of the King :
Then, be he guilty, by that deathless King
Who lived and died for men, the man
shall die.'

Then came in hall the messenger of
Mark,
A name of evil savour in the land,
The Cornish king. In either hand he
bore
What dazzled all, and shone far-off as
shines
A field of charlock in the sudden sun
Between two showers, a cloth of palest
gold,
Which down he laid before the throne,
and knelt,
Delivering, that his lord, the vassal king,
Was ev'n upon his way to Camelot ;
For having heard that Arthur of his grace
Had made his goodly cousin, Tristram,
knight,
And, for himself was of the greater state,
Being a king, he trusted his liege-lord
Would yield him this large honour all the
more ;
So pray'd him well to accept this cloth of
gold,
In token of true heart and fealty.

Then Arthur cried to rend the cloth, to
rend
In pieces, and so cast it on the hearth.
An oak-tree smoulder'd there. 'The
goodly knight !
What ! shall the shield of Mark stand
among these ?'
For, midway down the side of that long
hall

him low and slay him
 that I may judge the
 justice of the King :
 by that deathless King
 for men, the man
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 ield of Mark stand
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A stately pile,—whereof along the front,
 Some blazon'd, some but carven, and
 some blank,
 There ran a treble range of stony shields,—
 Rose, and high-arching overbrow'd the
 hearth.
 And under every shield a knight was
 named :
 For this was Arthur's custom in his hall ;
 When some good knight had done one
 noble deed,
 His arms were carven only ; but if twain
 His arms were blazon'd also ; but if none
 The shield was blank and bare without a
 sign
 Saving the name beneath ; and Gareth
 saw
 The shield of Gawain blazon'd rich and
 bright,
 And Modred's blank as death ; and Arthur
 cried
 To rend the cloth and cast it on the
 hearth.
 'More like are we to reave him of his
 crown
 Than make him knight because men call
 him king.
 The kings we found, ye know we stay'd
 their hands
 From war among themselves, but left
 them kings ;
 Of whom were any bounteous, merciful,
 Truth-speaking, brave, good livers, them
 we enroll'd
 Among us, and they sit within our hall.
 But Mark hath tarnish'd the great name
 of king,
 As Mark would sully the low state of churl :
 And, seeing he hath sent us cloth of gold,
 Return, and meet, and hold him from our
 eyes,
 Lest we should lap him up in cloth of lead,

Silenced for ever — craven — a man of
 plots,
 Craft, poisonous counsels, wayside am-
 bushings—
 No fault of thine : let Kay the seneschal
 Look to thy wants, and send thee satis-
 fied—
 Accursed, who strikes nor lets the hand
 be seen !'
 And many another suppliant crying
 came
 With noise of ravage wrought by beast
 and man,
 And evermore a knight would ride away.
 Last, Gareth leaning both hands heavily
 Down on the shoulders of the twain, his
 men,
 Approach'd between them toward the
 King, and ask'd,
 'A boon, Sir King (his voice was all
 ashamed),
 For see ye not how weak and hungerworn
 I seem—leaning on these? grant me to
 serve
 For meat and drink among thy kitchen-
 knaves
 A twelvemonth and a day, nor seek my
 name.
 Hereafter I will fight.'
 To him the King,
 'A goodly youth and worth a goodlier
 boon !
 But so thou wilt no goodlier, then must Kay,
 The master of the meats and drinks, be
 thine.'
 He rose and past ; then Kay, a man of
 mien
 Wan-sallow as the plant that feels itself
 Root-bitten by white lichen,

'Lo ye now !

This fellow hath broken from some Abbey,
where,
God wot, he had not beef and brewis enow,
Howe'er that might chance ! but an he
work,
Like any pigeon will I cram his crop,
And sleeker shall he shine than any hog.'

Then Lancelot standing near, 'Sir
Seneschal,
Sleuth-hound thou knowest, and gray,
and all the hounds ;
A horse thou knowest, a man thou dost
not know :
Broad brows and fair, a fluent hair and fine,
High nose, a nostril large and fine, and
hands
Large, fair and fine !—Some young lad's
mystery—
But, or from sheepcot or king's hall, the
boy
Is noble-natured. Treat him with all
grace,
Lest he should come to shame thy judging
of him.'

Then Kay, 'What murmurest thou of
mystery ?
Think ye this fellow will poison the
King's dish ?
Nay, for he spake too fool-like : mystery !
Tut, an the lad were noble, he had ask'd
For horse and armour : fair and fine,
forsooth !
Sir Fine-face, Sir Fair-hands ? but see thou
to it
That thine own fineness, Lancelot, some
fine day
Undo thee not—and leave my man to me.'

So Gareth all for glory underwent
The sooty yoke of kitchen-vassalage ;

Ate with young lads his portion by the
door,
And couch'd at night with grimy kitchen-
knaves.

And Lancelot ever spake him pleasantly,
But Kay the seneschal who loved him not
Would hustle and harry him, and labour
him

Beyond his comrade of the hearth, and set
To turn the broach, draw water, or hew
wood,

Or grosser tasks ; and Gareth bow'd
himself

With all obedience to the King, and
wrought

All kind of service with a noble ease
That graced the lowliest act in doing it.
And when the thralls had talk among
themselves,

And one would praise the love that linkt
the King

And Lancelot—how the King had saved
his life

In battle twice, and Lancelot once the
King's—

For Lancelot was the first in Tournament,
But Arthur mightiest on the battle-field—
Gareth was glad. Or if some other told,
How once the wandering forester at dawn,

Far over the blue tarns and hazy seas,
On Caer-Eryri's highest found the King,

A naked babe, of whom the Prophet spake,
'He passes to the Isle Avilion,

He passes and is heal'd and cannot die'—
Gareth was glad. But if their talk were
foul,

Then would he whistle rapid as any lark,
Or carol some old roundelay, and so loud
That first they mock'd, but, after, rever-
enced him.

Or Gareth telling some prodigious tale
Of knights, who sliced a red life-bubbling
way

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 d a red life-bubbling

Thro' twenty folds of twisted dragon, held
 All in a gap-mouth'd circle his good mates
 Lying or sitting round him, idle hands,
 Charm'd; till Sir Kay, the seneschal,
 would come

Blustering upon them, like a sudden wind
 Among dead leaves, and drive them all
 apart.

Or when the thralls had sport among
 themselves,

So there were any trial of mastery,
 He, by two yards in casting bar or stone
 Was counted best; and if there chanced
 a joust,

So that Sir Kay nodded him leave to go,
 Would hurry thither, and when he saw the
 knights

Clash like the coming and retiring wave,
 And the spear spring, and good horse
 reel, the boy

Was half beyond himself for ecstacy.

So for a month he wrought among the
 thralls;

But in the weeks that follow'd, the good
 Queen,

Repentant of the word she made him
 swear,

And saddening in her childless castle,
 sent,

Between the inrescent and decrecent
 moon,

Arms for her son, and loosed him from
 his vow.

This, Gareth hearing from a squire of
 Lot

With whom he used to play at tourney
 once,

When both were children, and in lonely
 haunts

Would scratch a ragged oval on the sand,
 And each at either dash from either end—

Shame never made girl redder than Gareth
 joy.

He laugh'd; he sprang. 'Out of the
 smoke, at once

I leap from Satan's foot to Peter's knee—
 These news be mine, none other's—nay,
 the King's—

Descend into the city: 'whereon he sought
 The King alone, and found, and told him
 all.

I have stagger'd thy strong Gawain in
 a tilt

For pastime; yea, he said it: joust can I.
 Make me thy knight—in secret! let my
 name

Be hidd'n, and give me the first quest, I
 spring

Like flame from ashes.'

Here the King's calm eye
 Fell on, and check'd, and made him flush,
 and bow

Lowly, to kiss his hand, who answer'd
 him,

'Son, the good mother let me know thee
 here,

And sent her wish that I would yield thee
 thine.

Make thee my knight? my knights are
 sworn to vows

Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,
 And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,
 And uttermost obedience to the King.'

Then Gareth, lightly springing from
 his knees,

'My King, for hardihood I can promise
 thee.

For uttermost obedience make demand
 Of whom ye gave me to, the Seneschal,
 No mellow master of the meats and
 drinks!

And as for love, God wot, I love not yet,
But love I shall, God willing.'

And the King—
'Make thee my knight in secret? yea, but
he,
Our noblest brother, and our truest man,
And one with me in all, he needs must
know.'

'Let Lancelot know, my King, let
Lancelot know,
Thy noblest and thy truest!'

And the King—
'But wherefore would ye men should
wonder at you?
Nay, rather for the sake of me, their King,
And the deed's sake my knighthood do
the deed,
Than to be noised of.'

Merrily Gareth ask'd,
'Have I not earn'd my cake in baking of
it?

Let be my name until I make my name!
My deeds will speak: it is but for a day.'
So with a kindly hand on Gareth's arm
Smiled the great King, and half-unwill-
ingly

Loving his lusty youthhood yielded to him.
Then, after summoning Lancelot privily,
'I have given him the first quest: he is
not proven.

Look therefore when he calls for this in
hall,

Then get to horse and follow him far away.
Cover the lions on thy shield, and see
Far as thou mayest, he be nor ta'en nor
slain.'

Then that same day there past into the
hall

A damsel of high lineage, and a brow
May-blossom, and a cheek of apple-
blossom,

Hawk-eyes; and lightly was her slender
nose
Tip-tilted like the petal of a flower;
She into hall past with her page and
cried,

'O King, for thou hast driven the foe
without,
See to the foe within! bridge, ford, beset
By bandits, everyone that owns a tower
The Lord for half a league. Why sit ye
there?

Rest would I not, Sir King, an I were
king,
Till ev'n the lonest hold were all as free
From cursed bloodshed, as thine altar-
cloth

From that blest blood it is a sin to spill.'

'Comfort thyself,' said Arthur, 'I nor
mine

Rest: so my knighthood keep the vows
they swore,

The wastest moorland of our realm shall
be

Safe, damsel, as the centre of this hall.
What is thy name? thy need?'

'My name?' she said—
'Lynette my name; noble; my need, a
knight

To combat for my sister, Lyonors,
A lady of high lineage, of great lands,
And comely, yea, and comelier than
myself.

She lives in Castle Perilous: a river
Runs in three loops about her living-
place;

And o'er it are three passings, and three
knights

Defend the passings, brethren, and a
fourth
And of that four the mightiest, holds her
stay'd
In her own castle, and so besieges her
To break her will, and make her wed with
him :

And but delays his purport till thou send
To do the battle with him, thy chief man
Sir Lancelot whom he trusts to overthrow,
Then wed, with glory : but she will not
wed
Save whom she loveth, or a holy life.
Now therefore have I come for Lancelot.'

Then Arthur mindful of Sir Gareth ask'd,
'Damsel, ye know this Order lives to
crush
All wrongers of the Realm. But say, these
four,
Who be they? What the fashion of the
men?'

'They be of foolish fashion, O Sir King,
The fashion of that old knight-errantry
Who ride abroad and do but what they
will ;

Courteous or bestial from the moment,
such

As have nor law nor king ; and three of
these

Proud in their fantasy call themselves the
Day,

Morning-Star, and Noon-Sun, and Even-
ing-Star,

Being strong fools ; and never a whit more
wise

The fourth, who alway rideth arm'd in
black,

A huge man-beast of boundless savagery.
He names himself the Night and oftener

Death,
And wears a helmet mounted with a skull,

And bears a skeleton figured on his arms,
To show that who may slay or scape the
three
Slain by himself shall enter endless night.
And all these four be fools, but mighty men,
And therefore am I come for Lancelot.'

Hereat Sir Gareth call'd from where he
rose,
A head with kindling eyes above the
throng,

'Lion, Sir King—this quest !' then—
for he mark'd

Kay near him groaning like a wounded
bull—

'Yea, King, thou knowest thy kitchen-
knave am I,

And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks
am I,

And I can topple over a hundred such.
Thy promise, King,' and Arthur glancing

at him,
Brought down a momentary brow.

'Rough, sudden,
And pardonable, worthy to be knight—
Go therefore,' and all hearers were amazed.

But on the damsel's forehead shame,
pride, wrath

Slew the May-white : she lifted either arm,
'Fie on thee, King ! I ask'd for thy chief

knight,
And thou hast given me but a kitchen-
knave.'

Then ere a man in hall could stay her,
turn'd,

Fled down the lane of access to the King,
Took horse, descended the slope street,

and past
The weird white gato, and paused without,
beside

The field of tourney, murmuring 'kitchen-
knave.'

<p>Now two great entries open'd from the hall, At one end one, that gave upon a range Of level pavement where the King would pace At sunrise, gazing over plain and wood ; And down from this a lordly stairway sloped Till lost in blowing trees and tops of towers ; And out by this main doorway past the King. But one was counter to the hearth, and rose High that the highest-crested helm could ride Therethro' nor graze : and by this entry fled The damsel in her wrath, and on to this Sir Gareth strode, and saw without the door King Arthur's gift, the worth of half a town, A warhorse of the best, and near it stood The two that out of north had follow'd him : This bare a maiden shield, a casque ; that held The horse, the spear ; whereat Sir Gareth loosed A cloak that dropt from collar-bone to heel, A cloth of roughest web, and cast it down, And from it like a fuel-smother'd fire, That lookt half-dead, brake bright, and flash'd as those Dull-coated things, that making slide apart Their dusk wing-cases, all beneath there burns A jewell'd harness, ere they pass and fly. So Gareth ere he parted flash'd in arms. Then as he donn'd the helm, and took the shield</p>	<p>And mounted horse and graspt a spear, of grain Storm-strengthen'd on a windy site, and tipt With trenchant steel, around him slowly prest The people, while from out of kitchen came The thralls in throng, and seeing who had work'd Lustier than any, and whom they could but love, Mounted in arms, threw up their caps and cried, 'God bless the King, and all his fellow- ship !' And on thro' lanes of shouting Gareth rode Down the slope street, and past without the gate. So Gareth past with joy ; but as the cur Pluckt from the cur he fights with, ere his cause Be cool'd by fighting, follows, being named, His owner, but remembers all, and growls Remembering, so Sir Kay beside the door Mutter'd in scorn of Gareth whom he used To harry and hustle. 'Bound upon a quest With horse and arms—the King hath past his time— My scullion knave ! Thralls to your work again, For an your fire be low ye kindle mine ! Will there be dawn in West and eve in East ? Begone !—my knave !—belike and like enow Some old head-blow not heeded in his youth So shook his wits they wander in his prime—</p>
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 —the King hath past
 Thralls to your work
 ow ye kindle mine!
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 not heeded in his
 hey wander in his

Crazed! How the villain lifted up his voice,
 Nor shamed to bawl himself a kitchen-
 knave.

Tut: he was tame and meek enow with me,
 Till peacock'd up with Lancelot's noticing.
 Well—I will after my loud knave, and learn
 Whether he know me for his master yet.
 Out of the smoke he came, and so my lance
 Hold, by God's grace, he shall into the
 mire—

Thence, if the King awoken from his craze,
 Into the smoke again.'

But Lancelot said,

'Kay, wherefore wilt thou go against the
 King,

For that did never he whereon ye rail,
 But ever meekly served the King in thee?
 Abide: take counsel; for this lad is great
 And lusty, and knowing both of lance and
 sword.'

'Tut, tell not me,' said Kay, 'ye are
 overfine

To mar stout knaves with foolish courtesies.'

Then mounted, on thro' silent faces rode
 Down the slope city, and out beyond the
 gate.

But by the field of tourney lingering yet
 Mutter'd the damsel, 'Wherefore did the
 King

Scorn me? for, were Sir Lancelot lackt,
 at least

He might have yielded to me one of those
 Who tilt for lady's love and glory here,
 Rather than—O sweet heaven! O fie
 upon him—
 His kitchen-knave.'

To whom Sir Gareth drew
 (And there were none but few goodlier
 than he)

Shining in arms, 'Damsel, the quest is
 mine.

Lead, and I follow.' She thereat, as one
 That smells a foul-flesh'd agaric in the holt,
 And deems it carrion of some woodland
 thing,

Or shrew, or weasel, nipt her slender nose
 With petulant thumb and finger, shrilling,
 'Hence!

Avoid, thou smellst all of kitchen-grease.
 And look who comes behind,' for there
 was Kay.

'Knowest thou not me? thy master? I
 am Kay.

We lack thee by the hearth.'

And Gareth to him,

'Master no more! too well I know thee,
 ay—

The most ungente knight in Arthur's hall.'
 'Have at thee then,' said Kay: they
 shock'd, and Kay

Fell shoulder-slipt, and Gareth cried again,
 'Lead, and I follow,' and fast away she
 fled.

But after sod and shingle ceased to fly
 Behind her, and the heart of her good horse
 Was nigh to burst with violence of the
 beat,

Perforce she stay'd, and overtaken spoke.

'What doest thou, scullion, in my fellow-
 ship?

Deem'st thou that I accept thee aught the
 more

Or love thee better, that by some device
 Full cowardly, or by mere unhappiness,
 Thou hast overthrown and slain thy master
 —thou!—

Dish-washer and broach-turner, loon!—
 to me

Thou smellst all of kitchen as before.'

'Damsel,' Sir Gareth answer'd gently,
'say
Whate'er ye will, but whatsoe'er ye say,
I leave not till I finish this fair quest,
Or die therefore.'

'Ay, wilt thou finish it?
Sweet lord, how like a noble knight he
talks!

The listening rogue hath caught the man-
ner of it.

But, knave, anon thou shalt be met with,
knave,

And then by such a one that thou for all
The kitchen brewis that was ever supt
Shalt not once dare to look him in the face.'

'I shall assay,' said Gareth with a smile
That madden'd her, and away she flash'd
again

Down the long avenues of a boundless
wood,

And Gareth following was again beknaved.

'Sir Kitchen-knave, I have miss'd the
only way

Where Arthur's men are set along the
wood;

The wood is nigh as full of thieves as
leaves:

If both be slain, I am rid of thee; but yet,
Sir Scullion, canst thou use that spit of
thine?

'Nigh, an thou canst: I have miss'd the
only way.'

So till the dusk that follow'd evensong
Rode on the two, reviler and reviled;

Then after one long slope was mounted,
saw,

Bowl-shaped, thro' tops of many thousand
pines

A gloomy-gladed hollow slowly sink

To westward—in the deeps whereof a
mere,

Round as the red eye of an Eagle-owl,
Under the half-dead sunset glared; and
shouts

Ascended, and there brake a servingman
Flying from out of the black wood, and
crying,

'They have bound my lord to cast him in
the mere.'

Then Gareth, 'Bound am I to right the
wrong'd,

But straitlier bound am I to bide with
thee.'

And when the damsel spake contempt-
uously,

'Lead, and I follow,' Gareth cried again,
'Follow, I lead!' so down among the
pines

He plunged; and there, blackshadow'd
nigh the mere,

And mid-thigh-deep in bulrushes and reed,
Saw six tall men haling a seventh along,

A stone about his neck to drown him in it.
Three with good blows he quieted, but
three

Fled thro' the pines; and Gareth loosed
the stone

From off his neck, then in the mere beside
Tumbled it; oilily bubbled up the mere.

Last, Gareth loosed his bonds and on free
feet

Set him, a stalwart Baron, Arthur's friend.

'Well that ye came, or else these caitiff
rogues

Had wreak'd themselves on me; good
cause is theirs

To hate me, for my wont hath ever been
To catch my thief, and then like vermin
here

Drown him, and with a stone about his
neck;

the deeps whereof a
 eye of an Eagle-owl,
 and sunset glared; and
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 my lord to cast him in
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And under this wan water many of them
 Lie rotting, but at night let go the stone,
 And rise, and flickering in a grimly light
 Dance on the mere. Good now, ye have
 saved a life

Worth somewhat as the cleanser of this
 wood.

And fain would I reward thee worship-
 fully.

What guerdon will ye?'

Gareth sharply spake,

'None! for the deed's sake have I done
 the deed,

In uttermost obedience to the King.

But wilt thou yield this damsel harbour-
 age?'

Whereat the Baron saying, 'I well
 believe

You be of Arthur's Table,' a light laugh
 Broke from Lynette, 'Ay, truly of a truth,
 And in a sort, being Arthur's kitchen-
 knave!—

But deem not I accept thee aught the more,
 Scullion, for running sharply with thy spit
 Down on a rout of craven foresters.

A thresher with his flail had scatter'd them.
 Nay—for thou smellest of the kitchen
 still.

But an this lord will yield us harbourage,
 Well.'

So she spake. A league beyond the
 wood,

All in a full-fair manor and a rich,
 His towers where that day a feast had been
 Held in high hall, and many a viand left,
 And many a costly cate, received the three.
 And there they placed a peacock in his
 pride

Before the damsel, and the Baron set
 Gareth beside her, but at once she rose.

'Meseems, that here is much dis-
 courtesy,

Setting this knave, Lord Baron, at my
 side.

Hear me—this morn I stood in Arthur's
 hall,

And pray'd the King would grant me
 Lancelot

To fight the brotherhood of Day and
 Night—

The last a monster unsubduable

Of any save of him for whom I call'd—
 Suddenly bawls this frontless kitchen-
 knave,

"The quest is mine; thy kitchen-knave
 am I,

And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks
 am I."

Then Arthur all at once gone mad replies,
 "Go therefore," and so gives the quest to
 him—

Him—here—a villain fitter to stick swine
 Than ride abroad redressing women's
 wrong,

Or sit beside a noble gentlewoman.'

Then half-ashamed and part-amazed,
 the lord

Now look'd at one and now at other, left
 The damsel by the peacock in his pride,
 And, seating Gareth at another board,
 Sat down beside him, ate and then began.

'Friend, whether thou be kitchen-
 knave, or not,

Or whether it be the maiden's fantasy,
 And whether she be mad, or else the
 King,

Or both or neither, or thyself be mad,
 I ask not; but thou strikest a strong stroke,
 For strong thou art and goodly there-
 withal,

And saver of my life; and therefore now,

For here be mighty men to joust with,
weigh

Whether thou wilt not with thy damsel
back

To crave again Sir Lancelot of the King.
Thy pardon ; I but speak for thine avail,
The saver of my life.'

And Gareth said,
'Full pardon, but I follow up the quest,
Despite of Day and Night and Death and
Hell.

So when, next morn, the lord whose
life he saved

Had, some brief space, convey'd them on
their way

And left them with God-speed, Sir Gareth
spake,

'Lead, and I follow.' Haughtily she
replied,

'I fly no more : I allow thee for an hour.
Lion and stoat have isled together, knave,
In time of flood. Nay, furthermore,
methinks

Some ruth is mine for thee. Back wilt
thou, fool ?

For hard by here is one will overthrow
And slay thee : then will I to court again,
And shame the King for only yielding me
My champion from the ashes of his hearth.'

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd cour-
teously,

'Say thou thy say, and I will do my deed.
Allow me for mine hour, and thou wilt find
My fortunes all as fair as hers who lay
Among the ashes and wedded the King's
son.'

Then to the shore of one of those long
loops

Wherethro' the serpent river coil'd, they
came.

Rough-thicketed were the banks and
steep ; the stream

Full, narrow ; this a bridge of single arc
Took at a leap ; and on the further side
Arose a silk pavilion, gay with gold
In streaks and rays, and all Lent-lily in
hue,

Save that the dome was purple, and above,
Crimson, a slender banneret fluttering.
And therefore the lawless warrior paced
Unarm'd, and calling, 'Damsel, is this he,
The champion thou hast brought from
Arthur's hall ?

For whom we let thee pass.' 'Nay, nay,'
she said,

'Sir Morning-Star. The King in utter
scorn

Of thee and thy much folly hath sent thee
here

His kitchen-knave : and look thou to
thyself :

See that he fall not on thee suddenly,
And slay thee unarm'd : he is not knight
but knave.'

Then at his call, 'O daughters of the
Dawn,

And servants of the Morning-Star, ap-
proach,

Arm me,' from out the silken curtain-folds
Bare-footed and bare-headed three fair
girls

In gilt and rosy raiment came : their feet
In dewy grasses glisten'd ; and the hair
All over glanced with dewdrop or with
gem

Like sparkles in the stone Avanturine.
These arm'd him in blue arms, and gave
a shield

Blue also, and thereon the morning star.
And Gareth silent gazed upon the knight,

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on the morning star.
ized upon the knight,

Who stood a moment, ere his horse was
brought,
Glorying; and in the stream beneath him,
shone
Immingled with Heaven's azure waver-
ingly,
The gay pavilion and the naked feet,
His arms, the rosy raiment, and the star.

Then she that watch'd him, 'Wherefore
stare ye so?
Thou shakest in thy fear: there yet is time:
Flee down the valley before he get to
horse.
Who will cry shame? Thou art not
knight but knave.'

Said Gareth, 'Damsel, whether knave
or knight,
Far liefer had I fight a score of times
Than hear thee so missay me and revile.
Fair words were best for him who fights
for thee;
But truly foul are better, for they send
That strength of anger thro' mine arms,
I know
That I shall overthrow him.'

And he that bore
The star, being mounted, cried from o'er
the bridge,
'A kitchen-knave, and sent in scorn of me!
Such fight not I, but answer scorn with
scorn.
For this were shame to do him further
wrong
Than set him on his feet, and take his
horse
And arms, and so return him to the King.
Come, therefore, leave thy lady lightly,
knave.
Avoid: for it beseemeth not a knave
To ride with such a lady.'

'Dog, thou liest.
I spring from loftier lineage than thine
own.'

He spake; and all at fiery speed the two
Shock'd on the central bridge, and either
spear

Bent but not brake, and either knight at
once,

Hurl'd as a stone from out of a catapult
Beyond his horse's crupper and the bridge,
Fell, as if dead; but quickly rose and
drew,

And Gareth lash'd so fiercely with his
brand

He drave his enemy backward down the
bridge,

The damsel crying, 'Well-stricken,
kitchen-knave!'

Till Gareth's shield was cloven; but one
stroke

Laid him that clove it grovelling on the
ground.

Then cried the fall'n, 'Take not my
life: I yield.'

And Gareth, 'So this damsel ask it of me
Good—I accord it easily as a grace.'
She reddening, 'Insolent scullion: I of
thee?

I bound to thee for any favour ask'd!
'Then shall he die.' And Gareth there
unlaced

His helmet as to slay him, but she shriek'd,
'Be not so hardy, scullion, as to slay
One nobler than thyself.' 'Damsel, thy
charge

Is an abounding pleasure to me. Knight,
Thy life is thine at her command. Arise
And quickly pass to Arthur's hall, and say
His kitchen-knave hath sent thee. See
thou crave

His pardon for thy breaking of his laws.
Myself, when I return, will plead for thee.

Thy shield is mine—farewell ; and,
damsel, thou,
Lead, and I follow.'

And fast away she fled.
Then when he came upon her, spake,
'Methought,
Knave, when I watch'd thee striking on
the bridge

The savour of thy kitchen came upon me
A little faintlier : but the wind hath
changed :

I scent it twenty-fold.' And then she sang,
"O morning star" (not that tall felon
there

Whom thou by sorcery or unhappiness
Or some device, hast foully overthrown),
"O morning star that smilest in the blue,
O star, my morning dream hath proven
true,

Smile sweetly, thou ! my love hath smiled
on me."

'But thou begone, take counsel, and
away,
For hard by here is one that guards a
ford—

The second brother in their fool's parable—
Will pay thee all thy wages, and to boot.
Care not for shame : thou art not knight
but knave.'

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd, laugh-
ingly,
'Parables ? Hear a parable of the knave.
When I was kitchen-knave among the rest
Pierce was the hearth, and one of my
co-mates

Own'd a rough dog, to whom he cast his
coat,
"Guard it," and there was none to meddle
with it.

And such a coat art thou, and thee the
King

Gave me to guard, and such a dog am I,
To worry, and not to flee—and—knight
or knave—

The knave that doth thee service as full
knight

Is all as good, meseems, as any knight
Toward thy sister's freeing.'

'Ay, Sir Knave !
Ay, knave, because thou strikest as a
knight,
Being but knave, I hate thee all the more.'

'Fair damsel, you should worship me
the more,
That, being but knave, I throw thine
enemies.'

'Ay, ay,' she said, 'but thou shalt meet
thy match.'

So when they touch'd the second river-
loop,
Huge on a huge red horse, and all in mail
Burnish'd to blinding, shone the Noonday
Sun

Beyond a raging shallow. As if the flower,
That blows a globe of after arrowlets,
Ten thousand-fold had grown, flash'd the
fierce shield,

All sun ; and Gareth's eyes had flying
blots
Before them when he turn'd from watch-
ing him.

He from beyond the roaring shallow
roar'd,

'What doest thou, brother, in my marches
here?'

And she athwart the shallow shrill'd
again,

'Here is a kitchen-knave from Arthur's
hall

Hath overthrown thy brother, and hath
his arms.'

rd, and such a dog am I,
not to flee—and—knight
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my brother, and hath

'Ugh!' cried the Sun, and vizoring up a
red

And cipher face of rounded foolishness,
Push'd horse across the foamings of the
ford,

Whom Gareth met midstream: no room
was there

For lance or tourney-skill: four strokes
they struck

With sword, and these were mighty; the
new knight

Had fear he might be shamed; but as the
Sun

Heaved up a ponderous arm to strike the
fifth,

The hoof of his horse slipt in the stream,
the stream

Descended, and the Sun was wash'd away.

Then Gareth laid his lance athwart the
ford;

So drew him home; but he that fought
no more,

As being all bone-batter'd on the rock,
Yielded; and Gareth sent him to the
King.

'Myself when I return will plead for thee.'
'Lead, and I follow.' Quietly she led.

'Hath not the good wind, damsel, changed
again?'

'Nay, not a point: nor art thou victor
here.

There lies a ridge of slate across the ford;
His horse thereon stumbled—ay, for I

saw it.

"O Sun" (not this strong fool whom
thou, Sir Knave,

Hast overthrown thro' mere unhappiness),
"O Sun, that wakenest all to bliss or pain,

O moon, that layest all to sleep again,
Shine sweetly: twice my love hath smiled

on me."

'What knowest thou of lovesong or of
love?

Nay, nay, God wot, so thou wert nobly
born,

Thou hast a pleasant presence. Yea,
perchance,—

"O dewy flowers that open to the sun,
O dewy flowers that close when day is
done,

Blow sweetly: twice my love hath smiled
on me."

'What knowest thou of flowers, except,
belike,

To garnish meats with? hath not our
good King

Who lent me thee, the flower of kitchen-
dom,

A foolish love for flowers? what stick ye
round

The pasty? wherewithal deck the boar's
head?

Flowers? nay, the boar hath rosemaries
and bay.

"O birds, that warble to the morning
sky,

O birds that warble as the day goes by,
Sing sweetly: twice my love hath smiled

on me."

'What knowest thou of birds, lark,
mavis, merle,

Linnet? what dream ye when they utter
forth

May-music growing with the growing
light,

Their sweet sun-worship? these be for the
snare

(So runs thy fancy) these be for the spit,
Lard: and basting. See thou have not

now

Larded thy last, except thou turn and fly.
There stands the third fool of their
allegory.'

For there beyond a bridge of treble
bow,
All in a rose-red from the west, and all
Naked it seem'd, and glowing in the broad
Deep-dimpled current underneath, the
knight,
That named himself the Star of Evening,
stood,

And Gareth, 'Wherefore waits the
madman there
Naked in open dayshine?' 'Nay,' she
cried,
'Not naked, only wrapt in harden'd skins
That fit him like his own; and so ye cleave
His armour off him, these will turn the
blade.'

Then the third brother shouted o'er the
bridge,
'O brother-star, why shine ye here so low?
Thy ward is higher up: but have ye slain
The damsel's champion?' and the damsel
cried,

'Nostar of thine, but shot from Arthur's
heaven
With all disaster unto thine and thee!
For both thy younger brethren have gone
down
Before this youth; and so wilt thou, Sir
Star;
Art thou not old?'

'Old, damsel, old and hard,
Old, with the might and breath of twenty
boys.'
Said Gareth, 'Old, and over-bold in
brag!

But that same strength which threw the
Morning Star
Can throw the Evening.'

Then that other blew
A hard and deadly note upon the horn.
'Approach and arm me!' With slow
steps from out
An old storm-beaten, russet, many-stain'd
Pavilion, forth a grizzled damsel came,
And arm'd him in old arms, and brought
a helm

With but a drying evergreen for crest,
And gave a shield whereon the Star of
Even

Half-tarnish'd and half-bright, his em-
blem, shone,

But when it glitter'd o'er the saddle-bow,
They madly hurl'd together on the bridge;
And Gareth overthrew him, lighted, drew,
There met him drawn, and overthrew him
again,

But up like fire he started: and as oft
As Gareth brought him grovelling on his
knees,

So many a time he vaulted up again;
Till Gareth panted hard, and his great
heart,

Foredooming all his trouble was in vain,
Labour'd within him, for he seem'd as one
That all in later, sadder age begins

To war against ill uses of a life,
But these from all his life arise, and cry,
'Thou hast made us lords, and canst not
put us down!'

He half-despairs; so Gareth seem'd to
strike

Vainly, the damsel clamouring all the
while,

'Well done, knave-knight, well stricken,
O good knight-knave—

O knave, as noble as any of all the
knights—

strength which threw the
Star
Evening.'

Then that other blew
dly note upon the horn,
arm me !' With slow
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-knight, well stricken,
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Shame me not, shame me not. I have
prophesied—

Strike, thou art worthy of the Table
Round—

His arms are old, he trusts the harden'd
skin—

Strike—strike—the wind will never
change again.'

And Gareth hearing ever stronglier smote,
And hew'd great pieces of his armour off
him,

But lash'd in vain against the harden'd skin,
And could not wholly bring him under,
more

Than loud Southwesterns, rolling ridge
on ridge,

The buoy that rides at sea, and dips and
springs

For ever ; till at length Sir Gareth's brand
Clash'd his, and brake it utterly to the
hilt.

'I have thee now ;' but forth that other
sprang,

And, all unknightlike, writhed his wiry
arms

Around him, till he felt, despite his mail,
Strangled, but straining ev'n his uttermost
Cast, and so hurl'd him headlong o'er the
bridge

Down to the river, sink or swim, and
cried,

'Lead, and I follow.'

But the damsel said,

'I lead no longer ; ride thou at my side ;
Thou art the kingliest of all kitchen-
knaves.

"O trefoil, sparkling on the rainy
plain,

O rainbow with three colours after rain,
Shine sweetly : thrice my love hath smiled
on me."

'Sir,—and, good faith, I fain had
added—Knight,

But that I heard thee call thyself a
knave,—

Shamed am I that I so rebuked, reviled,
Missaid thee ; noble I am ; and thought
the King

Scorn'd me and mine ; and now thy
pardon, friend,

For thou hast ever answer'd courteously,
And wholly bold thou art, and meek
withal

As any of Arthur's best, but, being knave,
Hast mazed my wit : I marvel what thou
art.'

'Damsel,' he said, 'you be not all to
blame,

Saving that you mistrusted our good King
Would handle scorn, or yield you, asking,
one

Not fit to cope your quest. You said
your say ;

Mine answer was my deed. Good sooth !
I hold

He scarce is knight, yea but half-man,
nor meet

To fight for gentle damsel, he, who lets
His heart be stirr'd with any foolish heat

At any gentle damsel's waywardness.

Shamed ? care not I thy foul sayings
fought for me :

And seeing now thy words are fair,
methinks

There rides no knight, not Lancelot, his
great self,

Hath force to quell me.'

Nigh upon that hour

When the lone horn forgets his melan-
choly,

Lets down his other leg, and stretching,
dreams

Of goodly supper in the distant pool,
Then turn'd the noble damsel smiling at
him,
And told him of a cavern hard at hand,
Where bread and baken meats and good
red wine
Of Southland, which the Lady Lyonors
Had sent her coming champion, waited
him.

Anon they past a narrow comb wherein
Were slabs of rock with figures, knights
on horse
Sculptured, and deckt in slowly-waning
hues.

'Sir Knave, my knight, a hermit once
was here,

Whose holy hand hath fashion'd on the
rock

The war of Time against the soul of
man.

And yon four fools have suck'd their alle-
gory

From these damp walls, and taken but
the form.

Know ye not these?' and Gareth lookt
and read—

In letters like to those the vexillary
Hath left crag-carven o'er the streaming
Gelt—

'PHOSPHORUS,' then 'MERIDIES'—
'HESPERUS'—

'Nox'—'MORS,' beneath five figures,
armed men,

Seven after slab, their faces forward all,
And a long down, the Soul, a Shape that
led

With beauteous wings, torn vibrant and loose
hair.

For help and shelter to the hermit's
cave.

'Follow the faces, and we find it. Look.
Who comes behind?'

For one—delay'd at first
Thro' helping back the dislocated Kay
To Camelot, then by what thereafter
chanced,
The damsel's headlong error thro' the
wood—

Sir Lancelot, having swum the river-
loops—

His blue shield-lions cover'd—softly drew
Behind the twain, and when he saw the
star

Gleam, on Sir Gareth's turning to him,
cried,

'Stay, felon knight, I avenge me for my
friend.'

And Gareth crying prick'd against the cry;
But when they closed—in a moment—at
one touch

Of that skill'd spear, the wonder of the
world—

Went sliding down so easily, and fell,
That when he found the grass within his
hands

He laugh'd; the laughter jarr'd upon
Lynette:

Harshly she ask'd him, 'Shamed and
overthrown,

And tumbled back into the kitchen-knave,
Why laugh ye? that ye blow your boast
in vain?'

'Nay, noble damsel, but that I, the son
Of old King Lot and good Queen Belli-
cent,

And victor of the bridges and the ford,
And knight of Arthur, here lie thrown by
whom

I know not, all thro' mere unhappiness—
Device and serecery and unhappiness—

Out, sword; we are thrown!' And
Lancelot answer'd, 'Prince,

O Gareth—thro' the mere unhappiness
Of one who came to help thee, not to
harm,

Lancelot, and all as glad to find thee
whole,

As on the day when Arthur knighted him.'

Then Gareth, 'Thou—Lancelot!—
thine the hand

That threw me? An some chance to mar
the boast

Thy brethren of thee make—which could
not chance—

Had sent thee down before a lesser spear,
Shamed had I been, and sad—O Lancelot
—thou !'

Whereat the maiden, petulant, 'Lance-
lot,

Why came ye not, when call'd? and
wherefore now

Come ye, not call'd? I gloried in my
knave,

Who being still rebuked, would answer
still

Courteous as any knight—but now, if
knight,

The marvel dies, and leaves me fool'd
and trick'd,

And only wondering wherefore play'd
upon :

And doubtful whether I and mine be
scorn'd.

Where should be truth if not in Arthur's
hall,

In Arthur's presence? Knight, knave,
prince and fool,

I hate thee and for ever.'

And Lancelot said,

'Blessed be thou, Sir Gareth! knight
art thou

To the King's best wish. O damsel, be
you wise

To call him shamed, who is but over-
thrown ?

Thrown have I been, nor once, but many
a time,

Victor from vanquish'd issues at the last,
And overthrower from being overthrown.
With sword we have not striven; and thy
good horse

And thou art weary; yet not less I felt
Thy manhood thro' that wearied lance of
thine.

Well hast thou done; for all the stream
is freed,

And thou hast wreak'd his justice on his
foes,

And when reviled, hast answer'd graci-
ously,

And makest merry when overthrown.
Prince, Knight,

Hail, Knight and Prince, and of our
Table Round !'

And then when turning to Lynette he
told

The tale of Gareth, petulantly she said,
'Ay well—ay well—for worse than being
fool'd

Of others, is to fool one's self. A cave,
Sir Lancelot, is hard by, with meats and
drinks

And forage for the horse, and flint for fire.
But all about it flies a honeysuckle.

Seek, till we find.' And when they
sought and found,

Sir Gareth drank and ate, and all his life
Past into sleep; on whom the maiden
gazed.

'Sound sleep be 'hine! sound cause to
sleep hast thou.

Wake lusty! Seem I not as tender to him
As any mother? Ay, but such a one

As all day long lath rated at her child,
And vex'd his day, but blesses him asleep—

Good lord, how sweetly smells the honey-
suckle

In the hush'd night, as if the world were
one
Of utter peace, and love, and gentleness !
O Lancelot, Lancelot !—and she clapt her
hands—

'Full merry am I to find my goodly knave
Is knight and noble. See now, sworn
have I,

Else yon black felon had not let me pass,
To bring thee back to do the battle with
him.

Thus an thou goest, he will fight thee first ;
Who doubts thee victor ? so will my
knight-knave

Miss the full flower of this accomplish-
ment.'

Said Lancelot, 'Peradventure he, you
name,
May know my shield. Let Gareth, an
he will,

Change his for mine, and take my charger,
fresh,

Not to be spurr'd, loving the battle as well
As he that rides him.' 'Lancelot-like,'
she said,

'Courteous in this, Lord Lancelot, as in
all.'

And Gareth, wakening, fiercely clutch'd
the shield ;

'Ramp ye lance-splintering lions, on
whom all spears

Are rotten sticks ! ye seem agape to roar !
Yea, ramp and roar at leaving of your
lord !—

Care not, good beasts, so well I care for you.
O noble Lancelot, from my hold on these
Streams virtue—fire—thro' one that will

not shame
Even the shadow of Lancelot under
shield.
Hence : let us go.'

Silent the silent field
They traversed. Arthur's harp tho'
summer-wan,

In counter motion to the clouds, allured
The glance of Gareth dreaming on his
liege.

A star shot : 'Lo,' said Gareth ; 'the foe
falls !'

An owl whoopt : 'Hark the victor peal-
ing there !'

Suddenly she that rode upon his left
Clung to the shield that Lancelot lent
him, crying,

'Yield, yield him this again : 'tis he must
fight :

I curse the tongue that all thro' yesterday
Reveled thee, and hath wrought on
Lancelot now

To lend thee horse and shield : wonders
ye have done ;

Miracles ye cannot : here is glory enow
In having flung the three : I see thee
maim'd,

Mangled : I swear thou canst not fling
the fourth.'

'And wherefore, damsel ? tell me all
ye know.

You cannot scare me ; nor rough face, or
voice,

Brute bulk of limb, or boundless savagery
Appal me from the quest.'

'Nay, Prince,' she cried,
'God wot, I never look'd upon the face,
Seeing he never rides abroad by day ;
But watch'd him have I like a phantom
pass

Chilling the night : nor have I heard the
voice.

Always he made his mouthpiece of a page
Who came and went, and still reported
him

Silent the silent field
 Arthur's harp tho'
 ran,
 n to the clouds, allured
 Gareth dreaming on his
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 nt, and still reported

As closing in himself the strength of ten,
 And when his anger tare him, massacring
 Man, woman, lad and girl—yea, the soft
 babe!
 Some hold that he hath swallow'd infant
 flesh,
 Monster! O Prince, I went for Lancelot
 first,
 The quest is Lancelot's: give him back
 the shield.'

Said Gareth laughing, 'An he fight for
 this,
 Belike he wins it as the better man:
 Thus—and not else!'

But Lancelot on him urged
 All the devisings of their chivalry
 When one might meet a mightier than
 himself;
 How best to manage horse, lance, sword
 and shield,
 And so fill up the gap where force might
 fail
 With skill and fineness. Instant were
 his words.

Then Gareth, 'Here be rules. I know
 but one—
 To dash against mine enemy and to win.
 Yet have I watch'd thee victor in the joust,
 And seen thy way.' 'Heaven help thee,'
 sigh'd Lynette.

Then for a space, and under cloud that
 grew
 To thunder-gloom palling all stars, they
 rode
 In converse till she made her palfrey halt,
 Lifted an arm, and softly whisper'd,
 'There.'
 And all the three were silent seeing,
 pitch'd

Beside the Castle Perilous on flat field,
 A huge pavilion like a mountain peak
 Sunder the glooming crimson on the
 marge,
 Black, with black banner, and a long
 black horn
 Beside it hanging; which Sir Gareth
 graspt,
 And so, before the two could hinder him,
 Sent all his heart and breath thro' all the
 horn.
 Echo'd the walls; a light twinkled; anon
 Came lights and lights, and once again
 he blew;
 Whereon were hollow tramlings up and
 down
 And muffled voices heard, and shadows
 past;
 Till high above him, circled with her
 maids,
 The Lady Lyonors at a window stood,
 Beautiful among lights, and waving to him
 White hands, and courtesy; but when
 the Prince
 Three times had blown—after long hush
 —at last—
 The huge pavilion slowly yielded up,
 Thro' those black foldings, that which
 housed therein.
 High on a night-black horse, in night-black
 arms,
 With white breast-bone, and barren ribs
 of Death,
 And crown'd with fleshless laughter—
 some ten steps—
 In the half-light—thro' the dim dawn—
 advanced
 The monster, and then paused, and spake
 no word.

But Gareth spake and all indignantly,
 'Fool, for thou hast, men say, the
 strength of ten,

<p>Canst thou not trust the limbs thy God hath given, But must, to make the terror of thee more, Trick thyself out in ghastly imageries Of that which Life hath done with, and the clod, Less dull than thou, will hide with mantling flowers As if for pity?' But he spake no word; Which set the horror higher: a maiden swoon'd; 'The Lady Lyonors wrung her hands and wept, As doom'd to be the bride of Night and Death; Sir Gareth's head prickled beneath his helm; And ev'n Sir Lancelot thro' his warm blood felt Ice strike, and all that mark'd him were aghast.</p> <p>At once Sir Lancelot's charger fiercely neigh'd, And Death's dark war-horse bounded forward with him. Then those that did not blink the terror, saw That Death was cast to ground, and slowly rose. But with one stroke Sir Gareth split the skull. Half fell to right and half to left and lay. Then with a stronger buffet he clove the helm As thoroughly as the skull; and out from this Issued the bright face of a blooming boy Fresh as a flower new-born, and crying, 'Knight, Slay me not: my three brethren bad me do it, To make a horror all about the house,</p>	<p>And stay the world from Lady Lyonors. They never dream'd the passes would be past.' Answer'd Sir Gareth graciously to one Not many a moon his younger, 'My fair child, What madness made thee challenge the chief knight Of Arthur's hall?' 'Fair Sir, they bad me do it. They hate the King, and Lancelot, the King's friend, They hoped to slay him somewhere on the stream, They never dream'd the passes could be past.'</p> <p>Then sprang the happier day from underground; And Lady Lyonors and her house, with dance And revel and song, made merry over Death, As being after all their foolish fears And horrors only proven a blooming boy. So large mirth lived and Gareth won the quest.</p> <p>And he that told the tale in older times Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyonors, But he, that told it later, says Lynette.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>GERAINT AND ENID.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">I.</p> <p>THE brave Geraint, a knight of Arthur's court, A tributary prince of Devon, one Of that great Order of the Table Round, Had married Enid, Yniol's only child, And loved her, as he loved the light of Heaven. And as the light of Heaven varies, now</p>
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At sunrise, now at sunset, now by night
With moon and trembling stars, so loved
Geraint

To make her beauty vary day by day,
In crimsons and in purples and in gems.
And Enid, but to please her husband's
eye,

Who first had found and loved her in a
state

Of broken fortunes, daily fronted him
In some fresh splendour ; and the Queen
herself,

Grateful to Prince Geraint for service
done,

Loved her, and often with her own white
hands

Array'd and deck'd her, as the loveliest,
Next after her own self, in all the court.
And Enid loved the Queen, and with true
heart

Adored her, as the stateliest and the best
And loveliest of all women upon earth.
And seeing them so tender and so close,
Long in their common love rejoiced
Geraint.

But when a rumour rose about the Queen,
Touching her guilty love for Lancelot,
Tho' yet there lived no proof, nor yet was
heard

The world's loud whisper breaking into
storm,

Not less Geraint believed it ; and there
fell

A horror on him, lest his gentle wife,
Thro' that great tenderness for Guinevere,
Had suffer'd, or should suffer any taint
In nature : wherefore going to the King,
He made this pretext, that his principedom
lay

Close on the borders of a territory,
Wherein were bandit earls, and caiff
knights,

Assassins, and all flyers from the hand

Of Justice, and whatever loathes a law :
And therefore, till the King himself
should please

To cleanse this common sewer of all his
realm,

He craved a fair permission to depart,
And there defend his marches ; and the
King

Mused for a little on his plea, but, last,
Allowing it, the Prince and Enid rode,
And fifty knights rode with them, to the
shores

Of Severn, and they past to their own
land ;

Where, thinking, that if ever yet was
wife

True to her lord, mine shall be so to me,
He compass'd her with sweet observances
And worship, never leaving her, and grew
Forgetful of his promise to the King,
Forgetful of the falcon and the hunt,
Forgetful of the tilt and tournament,
Forgetful of his glory and his name,
Forgetful of his principedom and its cares.
And this forgetfulness was hateful to her.

And by and by the people, when they met
In twos and threes, or fuller companies,
Began to scoff and jeer and babble of him
As of a prince whose manhood was all
gone,

And molten down in mere uxoriousness.
And this she gather'd from the people's
eyes :

This too the women who attired her head,
To please her, dwelling on his boundless
love,

Told Enid, and they sadden'd her the
more :

And day by day she thought to tell Geraint,
But could not out of bashful delicacy ;
While he that watch'd her sadden, was
the more

Suspicious that her nature had a taint.

<p>At last, it chanced that on a summer morn (They sleeping each by either) the new sun Beat thro' the blindless casement of the room, And heated the strong warrior in his dreams; Who, moving, cast the coverlet aside, And bared the knotted column of his throat, The massive square of his heroic breast, And arms on which the standing muscle sloped, As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone, Running too vehemently to break upon it. And Enid woke and sat beside the couch, Admiring him, and thought within herself, Was ever man so grandly made as he? Then, like a shadow, past the people's talk And accusation of uxoriousness Across her mind, and bowing over him, Low to her own heart piteously she said:</p> <p>'O noble breast and all-puissant arms, Am I the cause, I the poor cause that men Reproach you, saying all your force is gone? I <i>am</i> the cause, because I dare not speak And tell him what I think and what they say. And yet I hate that he should linger here; I cannot love my lord and not his name. Far liefer had I gird his harness on him, And ride with him to battle and stand by, And watch his mightful hand striking great blows At caitiffs and at wrongers of the world. Far better were I laid in the dark earth, Not hearing any more his noble voice, Not to be folded more in these dear arms, And darken'd from the high light in his eyes,</p>	<p>Than that my lord thro' me should suffer shame. Am I so bold, and could I so stand by, And see my dear lord wounded in the strife, Or maybe pierced to death before mine eyes, And yet not dare to tell him what I think, And how men slur him, saying all his force Is melted into mere effeminacy? O me, I fear that I am no true wife.'</p> <p>Half inwardly, half audibly she spoke, And the strong passion in her made her weep True tears upon his broad and naked breast, And these awoke him, and by great mischance He heard but fragments of her later words, And that she fear'd she was not a true wife. And then he thought, 'In spite of all my care, For all my pains, poor man, for all my pains, She is not faithful to me, and I see her Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur's hall.' Then tho' he loved and revered her too much To dream she could be guilty of foul act, Right thro' his manful breast darted the pang That makes a man, in the sweet face of her Whom he loves most, lonely and miserable. At this he hurl'd his huge limbs out of bed, And shook his drowsy squire awake and cried, 'My charger and her palfrey;' then to her, 'I will ride forth into the wilderness; For tho' it seems my spurs are yet to win, I have not fall'n so low as some would wish.</p>
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And thou, put on thy worst and meanest
dress

And ride with me.' And Enid ask'd,
amazed,

'If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault.'

But he, 'I charge thee, ask not, but obey.'

Then she bethought her of a faded silk,

A faded mantle and a faded veil,

And moving toward a cedarn cabinet,

Wherein she kept them folded reverently

With sprigs of summer laid between the
folds,

She took them, and array'd herself therein,

Remembering when first he came on her

Drest in that dress, and how he loved her
in it,

And all her foolish fears about the dress,

And all his journey to her, as himself

Had told her, and their coming to the
court.

For Arthur on the Whitsuntide before
Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk.

There on a day, he sitting high in hall,

Before him came a forester of Deau,

Wet from the woods, with notice of a hart

Taller than all his fellows, milky-white,

First seen that day: these things he told
the King.

Then the good King gave order to let blow

His horns for hunting on the morrow morn.

And when the Queen petition'd for his
leave

To see the hunt, allow'd it easily.

So with the morning all the court were
gone.

But Guinevere lay late into the morn,

Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming of her
love

For Lancelot, and forgetful of the hunt;

But rose at last, a single maiden with her,

Took horse, and forded Usk, and gain'd
the wood;

There, on a little knoll beside it, stay'd
Waiting to hear the hounds; but heard
instead

A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince
Geraint,

Late also, wearing neither hunting-dress

Nor weapon, save a golden-hilted brand,

Came quickly flashing thro' the shallow
ford

Behind them, and so gallop'd up the knoll.

A purple scarf, at either end whereof

There swung an apple of the purest gold,

Sway'd round about him, as he gallop'd up

To join them, glancing like a dragon-fly

In summer suit and silks of holiday.

Low bow'd the tributary Prince, and she,

Sweetly and statelily, and with all grace

Of womanhood and queenhood, answer'd
him:

'Late, late, Sir Prince,' she said, 'later
than we!'

'Yea, noble Queen,' he answer'd, 'and
so late

That I but come like you to see the
hunt,

Not join it.' 'Therefore wait with me,'
she said;

'For on this little knoll, if anywhere,

There is good chance that we shall hear
the hounds:

Here often they break covert at our feet.'

And while they listen'd for the distant
hunt,

And chiefly for the baying of Cavall,
King Arthur's hound of deepest mouth,

there rode

Full slowly by a knight, lady, and dwarf;

Whereof the dwarf lagg'd latest, and the
knight

Had vizor up, and show'd a youthful face,

Imperious, and of haughtiest lineaments,

And Guinevere, not mindful of his face

<p>In the King's hall, desired his name, and sent Her maiden to demand it of the dwarf; Who being vicious, old and irritable, And doubling all his master's vice of pride, Made answer sharply that she should not know. 'Then will I ask it of himself,' she said. 'Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not,' cried the dwarf; 'Thou art not worthy ev'n to speak of him;' And when she put her horse toward the knight, Struck at her with his whip, and she return'd Indignant to the Queen; whereat Geraint Exclaiming, 'Surely I will learn the name,' Made sharply to the dwarf, and ask'd it of him, Who answer'd as before; and when the Prince Had put his horse in motion toward the knight, Struck at him with his whip, and cut his cheek. The Prince's blood spirted upon the scarf, Dyeing it; and his quick, instinctive hand Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him: But he, from his exceeding manfulness And pure nobility of temperament, Wroth to be wroth at such a worm, refrain'd From ev'n a word, and so returning said:</p> <p>'I will avenge this insult, noble Queen, Done in your maiden's person to yourself: And I will track this vermin to their earths: For tho' I ride unarm'd, I do not doubt To find, at some place I shall come at, arms On loan, or else for pledge; and, being found,</p>	<p>Then will I fight him, and will break his pride, And on the third day will again be here, So that I be not fall'n in fight. Farewell.'</p> <p>'Farewell, fair Prince,' answer'd the stately Queen. 'Be prosperous in this journey, as in all; And may you light on all things that you love, And live to wed with her whom first you love: But ere you wed with any, bring your bride, And I, were she the daughter of a king, Yea, tho' she were a beggar from the hedge, Will clothe her for her bridals like the sun.'</p> <p>And Prince Geraint, now thinking that he heard The noble hart at bay, now the far horn, A little vext at losing of the hunt, A little at the vile occasion, rode, By ups and downs, thro' many a grassy glade And valley, with fixt eye following the three. At last they issued from the world of wood, And climb'd upon a fair and even ridge, And show'd themselves against the sky, and sank. And thither came Geraint, and underneath Beheld the long street of a little town In a long valley, on one side whereof, White from the mason's hand, a fortress rose; And on one side a castle in decay, Beyond a bridge that spann'd a dry ravine:</p>
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And out of town and valley came a noise
As of a broad brook o'er a shingly bed
Brawling, or like a clamour of the rooks
At distance, ere they settle for the night.

And onward to the fortress rode the
three,
And enter'd, and were lost behind the
walls.

'So,' thought Geraint, 'I have track'd
him to his earth.'

And down the long street riding wearily,
Found every hostel full, and everywhere
Was hammer laid to hoof, and the hot
hiss

And bustling whistle of the youth who
scur'd

His master's armour; and of such a one
He ask'd, 'What means the tumult in the
town?'

Who told him, scouring still, 'The
sparrow-hawk!'

Then riding close behind an ancient churl,
Who, smitten by the dusty sloping beam,
Went sweating underneath a sack of corn,
Ask'd yet once more what meant the
hubbub here?

Who answer'd gruffly, 'Ugh! the
sparrow-hawk.'

Then riding further past an armourer's,
Who, with back turn'd, and bow'd above
his work,

Sat riveting a helmet on his knee,
He put the self-same query, but the man
Not turning round, nor looking at him,
said:

'Friend, he that labours for the sparrow-
hawk

Has little time for idle questioners.'

Whereat Geraint flash'd into sudden
spleen:

'A thousand pips eat up your sparrow-
hawk!

Tits, wrens, and all wing'd nothings peck
him dead!

Ye think the rustic cackle of your bourg
The murmur of the world! What is it
to me?

O wretched set of sparrows, one and all,
Who pipe of nothing but of sparrow-
hawks!

Speak, if ye be not like the rest, hawk-
mad,

Where can I get me harbourage for the
night?

And arms, arms, arms to fight my enemy?
Speak!

Whereat the armourer turning all amazed
And seeing one so gay in purple silks,
Came forward with the helmet yet in hand
And answer'd, 'Pardon me, O stranger
knight;

We hold a tourney here to-morrow morn,
And there is scanty time for half the work.
Arms? truth! I know not: all are
wanted here.

Harbourage? truth, good truth, I know
not, save,

It may be, at Earl Yniol's, o'er the bridge
Yonder.' He spoke and fell to work
again.

Then rode Geraint, a little spleenful yet,
Across the bridge that spann'd the dry
ravine.

There musing sat the hoary-headed Earl,
(His dress a suit of fray'd magnificence,
Once fit for feasts of ceremony) and said:
'Whither, fair son?' to whom Geraint
replied,

'O friend, I seek a harbourage for the
night.'

Then Yniol, 'Enter therefore and partake
The slender entertainment of a house
Once rich, now poor, but ever open-
door'd.'

'Thanks, venerable friend,' replied
Geraint ;

'So that ye do not serve me sparrow-
hawks

For supper, I will enter, I will eat
With all the passion of a twelve hours' fast,

Then sigh'd and smiled the hoary-headed
Earl,

And answer'd, 'Graver cause than yours
is mine

To curse this hedgerow thief, the spar-
row-hawk :

But in, go in ; for save yourself desire it,
We will not touch upon him, ev'n in jest.'

Then rode Geraint into the castle court,
His charger trampling many a prickly
star

Of sprouted thistle on the broken stones.
He look'd and saw that all was ruinous.

Here stood a shatter'd archway plumed
with fern ;

And here had fall'n a great part of a
tower,

Whole, like a crag that tumbles from the
cliff,

And like a crag was gay with wilding
flowers ;

And high above a piece of turret stair,
Worn by the feet that now were silent,
wound

Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-stems
Claspt the gray walls with hairy-fibred
arms,

And suck'd the joining of the stones, and
look'd

A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a grove.

And while he waited in the castle
court,

The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter, rang
Clear thro' the open casement of the hall,

Singing ; and as the sweet voice of a bird,
Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,
Moves him to think what kind of bird it is
That sings so delicately clear, and make
Conjecture of the plumage and the form ;
So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint ;
And made him like a man abroad at morn
When first the liquid note beloved of men
Comes flying over many a windy wave
To Britain, and in April suddenly
Breaks from a coppice gemm'd with green
and red,

And he suspends his converse with a
friend,

Or it may be the labour of his hands,
To think or say, 'There is the nightin-
gale ;'

So fared it with Geraint, who thought
and said,

'Here, by God's grace, is the one voice
for me.'

It chanced the song that Enid sang was
one

Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid
sang :

'Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and
lower the proud ;

Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine, storm,
and cloud ;

Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor
hate.

'Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with
smile or frown ;

With that wild wheel we go not up or
down ;

Our hoard is little, but our hearts are
great.

'Smile and we smile, the lords of many
lands ;

Frown and we smile, the lords of our own
hands ;

For man is man and master of his fate.

'Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring
crowd ;

Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the
cloud ;

Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor
hate.'

'Hark, by the bird's song ye may learn
the nest,'

Said Yniol ; 'enter quickly.' Entering
then,

Right o'er a mount of newly-fallen stones,
The dusky-rafter'd many-cobweb'd hall,
He found an ancient dame in d. n bro-
cade ;

And near her, like a blossom vermeil-
white,

That lightly breaks a faded flower-sheath,
Moved the fair Enid, all in faded silk,
Her daughter. In a moment thought
Geraint,

'Here by God's rood is the one maid for
me.'

But none spake word except the hoary
Earl :

'Enid, the good knight's horse stands in
the court ;

Take him to stall, and give him corn, and
then

Go to the town and buy us flesh and
wine ;

And we will make us merry as we may.
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are
great.'

He spake : the Prince, as Enid past
him, fain

To follow, strode a stride, but Yniol
caught

His purple scarf, and held, and said,
'Forbear !

Rest ! the good house, tho' ruin'd, O
my son,

Endures not that her guest should serve
himself.'

And reverencing the custom of the house
Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Enid took his charger to the stall ;
And after went her way across the bridge,
And reach'd the town, and while the
Prince and Earl

Yet spoke together, came again with one,
A youth, that following with a costrel bore
The means of goodly welcome, flesh and
wine.

And Enid brought sweet cakes to make
them cheer,

And in her veil enfolded, manchet bread.
And then, because their hall must also
serve

For kitchen, boil'd the flesh, and spread
the board,

And stood behind, and waited on the three.
And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,
Geraint had longing in him evermore
To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,
That crost the trencher as she laid it
down :

But after all had eaten, then Geraint,
For now the wine made summer in his
veins,

Let his eye rove in following, or rest
On Enid at her lowly handmaid-work,
Now here, now there, about the dusky
hall ;

Then suddenly address the hoary Earl :

'Fair Host and Earl, I pray your
courtesy ;

This spar.ow-hawk, what is he? tell me
of him.

<p>His name? but no, good faith, I will not have it :</p> <p>For if he be the knight whom late I saw Ride into that new fortress by your town, White from the mason's hand, then have I sworn</p> <p>From his own lips to have it—I am Geraint</p> <p>Of Devon—for this morning when the Queen</p> <p>Sent her own maiden to demand the name, His dwarf, a vicious under-shapen thing, Struck at her with his whip, and she re- turn'd</p> <p>Indignant to the Queen ; and then I swore That I would track this caitiff to his hold, And fight and break his pride, and have it of him,</p> <p>And all unarm'd I rode, and thought to find</p> <p>Arms in your town, where all the men are mad ;</p> <p>They take the rustic murmur of their bourg</p> <p>For the great wave that echoes round the world ;</p> <p>They would not hear me speak : but if ye know</p> <p>Where I can light on arms, or if yourself Should have them, tell me, seeing I have sworn</p> <p>That I will break his pride and learn his name,</p> <p>Avenging this great insult done the Queen.'</p> <p>Then cried Earl Yniol, 'Art thou he indeed,</p> <p>Geraint, a name far-sounded among men For noble deeds? and truly I, when first I saw you moving by me on the bridge, Felt ye were somewhat, yea, and by your state</p>	<p>And presence might have guess'd you one of those</p> <p>That eat in Arthur's hall at Camelot, Nor speak I now from foolish flattery ; For this dear child hath often heard me praise</p> <p>Your feats of arms, and often when I paused</p> <p>Hath ask'd again, and ever loved to hear ; So grateful is the noise of noble deeds To noble hearts who see but acts of wrong : O never yet had woman such a pair Of suitors as this maiden ; first Limours, A creature wholly given to brawls and wine, Drunk even when he woo'd ; and be he dead</p> <p>I know not, but he past to the wild land. The second was your foe, the sparrow- hawk,</p> <p>My curse, my nephew—I will not let his name</p> <p>Slip from my lips if I can help it—he, When I that knew him fierce and turbu- lent</p> <p>Refused her to him, then his pride awoke ; And since the proud man often is the mean,</p> <p>He sow'd a slander in the common ear, Affirming that his father left him gold, And in my charge, which was not ren- der'd to him ;</p> <p>Bribed with large promises the men who served</p> <p>About my person, the more easily Because my means were somewhat broken into</p> <p>Thro' open doors and hospitality ; Raised my own town against me in the night</p> <p>Before my Enid's birthday, sack'd my house ;</p> <p>From mine own earldom foully ousted me ;</p>
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Built that new fort to overawe my friends,
For truly there are those who love me
yet ;

And keeps me in this ruinous castle here,
Where doubtless he would put me soon
to death,

But that his pride too much despises me :
And I myself sometimes despise myself ;
For I have let men be, and have their
way ;

'Am much too gentle, have not used my
power :

Nor know I whether I be very base
Or very manful, whether very wise
Or very foolish ; only this I know,
That whatsoever evil happen to me,
I seem to suffer nothing heart or limb,
But can endure it all most patiently.'

'Well said, true heart,' replied Geraint,
'but arms,
That if the sparrow-hawk, this nephew,
fight
In next day's tourney I may break his
pride.'

And Yniol answer'd, 'Arms, indeed,
but old
And rusty, old and rusty, Prince Geraint,
Are mine, and therefore at thine asking,
thine.

But in this tournament can no man tilt,
Except the lady he loves best be there.
Two forks are fixt into the meadow
ground,

And over these is placed a silver wand,
And over that a golden sparrow-hawk,
The prize of beauty for the fairest there.
And this, what knight soever be in field
Lays claim to for the lady at his side,
And tilts with my good nephew there—
upon,

Who being apt at arms and big of bone

Has ever won it for the lady with him,
And toppling over all antagonism
Has earn'd himself the name of sparrow-
hawk.

But thou, that hast no lady, canst not
fight.'

To whom Geraint with eyes all bright
replied,

Leaning a little toward him, 'Thy leave !
Let *me* lay lance in rest, O noble host,
For this dear child, because I never saw,
Tho' having seen all beauties of our time,
Nor can see elsewhere, anything so fair.
And if I fall her name will yet remain
Untarnish'd as before ; but if I live,
So aid me Heaven when at mine utter-
most,

As I will make her truly my true wife.'

Then, howsoever patient, Yniol's heart
Danced in his bosom, seeing better days.
And looking round he saw not Enid there,
(Who hearing her own name had slipt
away)

But that old dame, to whom full tenderly
And fondling all her hand in his he said,
'Mother, a maiden is a tender thing,
And best by her that bore her understood.
Go thou to rest, but ere thou go to rest
Tell her, and prove her heart toward the
Prince.'

So spake the kindly-hearted Earl, and
she

With frequent smile and nod departing
found,

Half disarray'd as to her rest, the girl ;
Whom first she kiss'd on either cheek,
and then

On either shining shoulder laid a hand,
And kept her off and gazed upon her face,
And told her all their converse in the hall,
D D

Proving her heart : but never light and shade	Spake to the lady with him and proclaim'd,
Coursed one another more on open ground	'Advance and take as fairest of the fair,
Beneath a troubled heaven, than red and pale	For I these two years past have won it for thee,
Across the face of Enid hearing her ;	The prize of beauty.' Loudly spake the Prince,
While slowly falling as a scale that falls,	'Forbear : there is a worthier,' and the knight
When weight is added only grain by grain,	With some surprise and thrice as much disdain
Sank her sweet head upon her gentle breast ;	Turn'd, and beheld the four, and all his face
Nor did she lift an eye nor speak a word,	Glow'd like the heart of a great fire at Yule,
Rapt in the fear and in the wonder of it ;	So burnt he was with passion, crying out,
So moving without answer to her rest	'Do battle for it then,' no more ; and thrice
She found no rest, and ever fail'd to draw	They clash'd together, and thrice they brake their spears.
The quiet night into her blood, but lay	Then each, dishorsed and drawing, lash'd at each
Contemplating her own unworthiness ;	So often and with such blows, that all the crowd
And when the pale and bloodless east began	Wonder'd, and now and then from distant walls
To quicken to the sun, arose, and raised	There came a clapping as of phantom hands.
Her mother too, and hand in hand they moved	So twice they fought, and twice they breathed, and still
Down to the meadow where the jousts were held,	The dew of their great labour, and the blood
And waited there for Yniol and Geraint.	Of their strong bodies, flowing, drain'd their force.
And thither came the twain, and when Geraint	But either's force was match'd till Yniol's cry,
Beheld her first in field, awaiting him,	'Remember that great insult done the Queen,'
He felt, were she the prize of bodily force,	Increased Geraint's, who heaved his blade aloft,
Himself beyond the rest pushing could move	And crack'd the helmet thro', and bit the bone,
The chair of Idris. Yniol's rusted arms	And fell'd him, and set foot upon his breast,
Were on his princely person, but thro' these	
Princelike his bearing shone ; and errant knights	
And ladies came, and by and by the town	
Flow'd in, and settling circled all the lists.	
And there they fixt the forks into the ground,	
And over these they placed the silver wand,	
And over that the golden sparrow-hawk.	
Then Ymol's nephew, after trumpet blown,	

<p>And said, 'Thy name?' To whom the fallen man Made answer, groaning, 'Edyrn, son of Nudd! Ashamed am I that I should tell it thee. My pride is broken: men have seen my fall.' 'Then, Edyrn, son of Nudd,' replied Geraint, 'These two things shalt thou do, or else thou diest. First, thou thyself, with damsel and with dwarf, Shalt ride to Arthur's court, and coming there, Crave pardon for that insult done the Queen, And shalt abide her judgment on it; next, Thou shalt give back their earldom to thy kin. These two things shalt thou do, or thou shalt die.' And Edyrn answer'd, 'These things will I do, For I have never yet been overthrown, And thou hast overthrown me, and my pride Is broken down, for Enid sees my fall!' And rising up, he rode to Arthur's court, And there the Queen forgave him easily. And being young, he changed and came to loathe His crime of traitor, slowly drew himself Bright from his old dark life, and fell at last In the great battle fighting for the King.</p> <p>But when the third day from the hunting-morn Made a low splendour in the world, and wings Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she lay With her fair head in the dim-yellow light,</p>	<p>Among the dancing shadows of the birds, Woke and bethought her of her promise given No later than last eve to Prince Geraint— So bent he seem'd on going the third day, He would not leave her, till her promise given— To ride with him this morning to the court, And there be made known to the stately Queen, And there be wedded with all ceremony. At this she cast her eyes upon her dress, And thought it never yet had look'd so mean. For as a leaf in mid-November is To what it was in mid-October, seem'd The dress that now she look'd on to the dress She look'd on ere the coming of Geraint. And still she look'd, and still the terror grew Of that strange bright and dreadful thing, a court, All staring at her in her faded silk: And softly to her own sweet heart she said: 'This noble prince who won our earldom back, So splendid in his acts and his attire, So sweet heaven, how much I shall discredit him! Would he could tarry with us here awhile, But being so beholden to the Prince, It were but little grace in any of us, Bent as he seem'd on going this third day, To seek a second favour at his hands. Yet if he could but tarry a day or two, Myself would work eye dim, and finger lame, Far liefer than so much discredit him.'</p> <p>And Enid fell in longing for a dress</p>
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<p>All branch'd and flower'd with gold, a costly gift Of her good mother, given her on the night Before her birthday, three sad years ago, That night of fire, when Edyrn sack'd their house, And scatter'd all they had to all the winds : For while the mother show'd it, and the two Were turning and admiring it, the work To both appear'd so costly, rose a cry That Edyrn's men were on them, and they fled With little save the jewels they had on, Which being sold and sold had bought them bread : And Edyrn's men had caught them in their flight, And placed them in this ruin ; and she wish'd The Prince had found her in her ancient home ; Then let her fancy flit across the past, And roam the goodly places that she knew ; And last bethought her how she used to watch, Near that old home, a pool of golden carp ; And one was patch'd and blurr'd and lustreless Among his burnish'd brethren of the pool ; And half asleep she made comparison Of that and these to her own faded self And the gay court, and fell asleep again ; And dreamt herself was such a faded form Among her burnish'd sisters of the pool ; But this was in the garden of a king ; And tho' she lay dark in the pool, she knew That all was bright ; that all about were birds Of sunny plume in gilded trellis-work ;</p>	<p>That all the turf was rich in plots that look'd Each like a garnet or a turkis in it ; And lords and ladies of the high court went In silver tissue talking things of state ; And children of the King in cloth of gold Glanced at the doors or gambol'd down the walks ; And while she thought ' They will not see me,' came A stately queen whose name was Guinevere, And all the children in their cloth of gold Ran to her, crying, ' If we have fish at all Let them be gold ; and charge the gardeners now To pick the faded creature from the pool, And cast it on the mixen that it die.' And therewithal one came and seized on her, And Enid started waking, with her heart All overshadow'd by the foolish dream, And lo ! it was her mother grasping her To get her well awake ; and in her hand A suit of bright apparel, which she laid Flat on the couch, and spoke exultingly : ' See here, my child, how fresh the colours look, How fast they hold like colours of a shell That keeps the wear and polish of the wave. Why not ? It never yet was worn, I trow : Look on it, child, and tell me if ye know it.' And Enid look'd, but all confused at first, Could scarce divide it from her foolish dream : Then suddenly she knew it and rejoiced,</p>
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And answer'd, 'Yea, I know it ; your
good gift,

So sadly lost on that unhappy night ;
Your own good gift !' 'Yea, surely,' said
the dame,

'And gladly given again this happy
morn.

For when the jousts were ended yesterday,
Went Yniol thro' the town, and every-
where

He found the sack and plunder of our
house

All scatter'd thro' the houses of the town ;
And gave command that all which once
was ours

Should now be ours again : and yester-eve,
While ye were talking sweetly with your
Prince,

Came one with this and laid it in my hand,
For love or fear, or seeking favour of us,
Because we have our earldom back again.
And yester-eve I would not tell you of it,
But kept it for a sweet surprise at morn.
Yea, truly is it not a sweet surprise ?
For I myself unwillingly have worn

My faded suit, as you, my child, have
yours,

And howsoever patient, Yniol his.

Ah, dear, he took me from a goodly house,
With store of rich apparel, sumptuous fare,
And page, and maid, and squire, and
seneschal,

And pastime both of hawk and hound, and
all

That appertains to noble maintenance.

Yea, and he brought me to a goodly house ;
But since our fortune slipt from sun to
shade,

And all thro' that young traitor, cruel need
Constrain'd us, but a better time has
come ;

So clothe yourself in this, that better fits
Ourmended fortunes and a Prince's bride :

For tho' ye won the prize of fairest fair,
And tho' I heard him call you fairest fair,
Let never maiden think, however fair,
She is not fairer in new clothes than old.
And should some great court-lady say, the
Prince

Hath pick'd a ragged-robin from the
hedge,

And like a madman brought her to the
court,

Then were ye shamed, and, worse, might
shame the Prince

To whom we are beholden ; but I know,
When my dear child is set forth at her best,
That neither court nor country, tho' they
sought

Thro' all the provinces like those of old
That lighted on Queen Esther, has her
match.'

Here ceased the kindly mother out of
breath ;

And Enid listen'd brightening as she lay ;
Then, as the white and glittering star of
morn

Parts from a bank of snow, and by and by
Slips into golden cloud, the maiden rose,
And left her maiden couch, and robed
herself,

Help'd by the mother's careful hand and
eye,

Without a mirror, in the gorgeous gown ;
Who, after, turn'd her daughter round,
and said,

She never yet had seen her half so fair ;
And call'd her like that maiden in the tale,
Whom Gwydion made by glamour out of
flowers,

And sweeter than the bride of Cassivelaun,
Flur, for whose love the Roman Cæsar
first

Invaded Britain, 'But we beat him back,
As this great Prince invaded us, and we,

Not beat him back, but welcomed him
with joy.

And I can scarcely ride with you to court,
For old am I, and rough the ways and
wild ;

But Yniol goes, and I full oft shall dream
I see my princess as I see her now,
Clothed with my gift, and gay among the
gay.'

But while the women thus rejoiced,
Geraint

Woke where he slept in the high hall, and
call'd

For Enid, and when Yniol made report
Of that good mother making Enid gay
In such apparel as might well besem
His princess, or indeed the stately Queen,
He answer'd : ' Earl, entreat her by my
love,

Albeit I give no reason but my wish,
That she ride with me in her faded silk,'
Yniol with that hard message went ; it fell
Like flaws in summer laying lusty corn :
For Enid, all abash'd she knew not why,
Dared not to glance at her good mother's
face,

But silently, in all obedience,
Her mother silent too, nor helping her,
Laid from her limbs the costly-broider'd
gift,

And robed them in her ancient suit again,
And so descended. Never man rejoiced
More than Geraint to greet her thus
attired ;

And glancing all at once as keenly at her
As careful robins eye the delver's toil,
Made her cheek burn and either eyelid
fall,

But rested with her sweet face satisfied ;
Then seeing cloud upon the mother's brow,
Her by both hands he caught, and sweetly
said,

'O my new mother, be not wroth or
grieved

At thy new son, for my petition to her.
When late I left Caerleon, our great
Queen,

In words whose echo lasts, they were so
sweet,
Made promise, that whatever bride I
brought,

Herself would clothe her like the sun in
Heaven.

Thereafter, when I reach'd this ruin'd hall,
Beholding one so bright in dark estate,
I vow'd that could I gain her, our fair
Queen,

No hand but hers, should make your Enid
burst

Sunlike from cloud—and likewise thought
perhaps,

That service done so graciously would
bind

The two together ; fain I would the two
Should love each other : how can Enid
find

A nobler friend ? Another thought was
mine ;

I came among you here so suddenly,
That tho' her gentle presence at the lists
Might well have served for proof that I
was loved,

I doubted whether daughter's tenderness,
Or easy nature, might not let itself
Be moulded by your wishes for her weal ;
Or whether some false sense in her own
self

Of my contrasting brightness, overbore
Her fancy dwelling in this dusky hall ;
And such a sense might make her long for
court

And all its perilous glories : and I
thought,

That could I somehow prove such force
in her

Link'd with such love for me, that at a word

(No reason given her) she could cast aside
A splendour dear to women, new to her,
And therefore dearer; or if not so new,
Yet therefore tenfold dearer by the power
Of intermitted usage; then I felt

That I could rest, a rock in ebbs and flows,

Fixt on her faith. Now, therefore, I do rest,

A prophet certain of my prophecy,
That never shadow of mistrust can cross
Between us. Grant me pardon for my thoughts:

And for my strange petition I will make
Amends hereafter by some gaudy-day,
When your fair child shall wear your costly gift

Beside your own warm hearth, with, on her knees,

Who knows? another gift of the high God,
Which, maybe, shall have learn'd to lisp
you thanks.'

He spoke: the mother smiled, but half in tears,

Then brought a mantle down and wrapt her in it,

And claspt and kiss'd her, and they rode away.

Now thrice that morning Guinevere had climb'd

The giant tower, from whose high crest, they say,

Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,
And white sails flying on the yellow sea;
But not to goodly hill or yellow sea

Look'd the fair Queen, but up the vale of Usk,

By the flat meadow, till she saw them come;

And then descending met them at the gates,

Embraced her with all welcome as a friend,

And did her honour as the Prince's bride,
And clothed her for her bridals like the sun;

And all that week was old Caerleon gay,
For by the bays of Dubric, the high saint,

They twain were wedded with all ceremony.

And this was on the last year's Whitsuntide.

But Enid ever kept the faded silk,
Remembering how first he came on her,
Drest in that dress, and how he loved her in it,

And all her foolish fears about the dress,
And all his journey toward her, as himself

Had told her, and their coming to the court.

And now this morning when he said to her,

'Put on your worst and meanest dress,' she found

And took it, and array'd herself therein.

II.

O purblind race of miserable men,
How many among us at this very hour
Do forge a life-long trouble for ourselves,
By taking true for false, or false for true;
Here, thro' the feeble twilight of this world
Groping, how many, until we pass and reach

That other, where we see as we are seen!

So fared it with Geraint, who issuing forth

<p>That morning, when they both had got to horse, Perhaps because he loved her passion- ately, And felt that tempest brooding round his heart, Which, if he spoke at all, would break perforce Upon a head so dear in thunder, said : 'Not at my side. I charge thee ride before, Ever a good way on before ; and this I charge thee, on thy duty as a wife, Whatever happens, not to speak to me, No, not a word !' and Enid was aghast ; And forth they rode, but scarce three paces on, When crying out, 'Effeminate as I am, I will not fight my way with gilded arms, All shall be iron ;' he loosed a mighty purse, Hung at his belt, and hurl'd it toward the squire. So the last sight that Enid had of home Was all the marble threshold flashing, strown With gold and scatter'd coinage, and the squire Chafing his shoulder : then he cried again, 'To the wilds !' and Enid leading down the tracks Thro' which he bade her lead him on, they past The marches, and by bandit-haunted holds, Gray swamps and pools, waste places of the hern, And wildernesses, perilous paths, they rode : Round was their pace at first, but slacken'd soon : A stranger meeting them had surely thought</p>	<p>They rode so slowly and they look'd so pale, That each had suffer'd some exceeding wrong. For he was ever saying to himself, 'O I that wasted time to tend upon her, To compass her with sweet observances, To dress her beautifully and keep her true'— And there he broke the sentence in his heart Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue May break it, when his passion masters him. And she was ever praying the sweet heavens To save her dear lord whole from any wound. And ever in her mind she cast about For that unnoticed failing in herself, Which made him look so cloudy and so cold ; Till the great plover's human whistle amazed Her heart, and glancing round the waste she fear'd In every wavering brake an ambuscade. Then thought again, 'If there be such in me, I might amend it by the grace of Heaven, If he would only speak and tell me of it. But when the fourth part of the day was gone, Then Enid was aware of three tall knights On horschack, wholly arm'd, behind a rock In shadow, waiting for them, caitiffs all ; And heard one crying to his fellow, 'Look, Here comes a laggard hanging down his head, Who seems no bolder than a beaten hound ;</p>
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Come, we will slay him and will have his
horse
And armour, and his damsel shall be
ours.'

Then Enid ponder'd in her heart, and
said :

'I will go back a little to my lord,
And I will tell him all their caitiff talk ;
For, be he wroth even to slaying me,
Far liefer by his dear hand had I die,
Than that my lord should suffer loss or
shame.'

Then she went back some paces of
return,

Met his full frown timidly firm, and said ;
'My lord, I saw three bandits by the rock
Waiting to fall on you, and heard them
boast

That they would slay you, and possess
your horse
And armour, and your damsel should be
theirs.'

He made a wrathful answer : 'Did I
wish

Your warning or your silence? one com-
mand

I laid upon you, not to speak to me,
And thus ye keep it ! Well then, look
—for now,

Whether ye wish me victory or defeat,
Long for my life, or hunger for my death,
Yourself shall see my vigour is not lost.'

Then Enid waited pale and sorrowful,
And down upon him bare the bandit
three.

And at the midst charging, Prince
Geraint

Drave the long spear a cubit thro' his
breast

And out beyond ; and then against his
brace
Of comrades, each of whom had broken
on him

A lance that splinter'd like an icicle,
Swung from his brand a windy buffet out
Once, twice, to right, to left, and stunn'd
the twain

Or slew them, and dismounting like a man
That skins the wild beast after slaying
him,

Stript from the three dead wolves of
woman born

The three gay suits of armour which they
wore,

And let the bodies lie, but bound the suits
Of armour on their horses, each on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her, 'Drive them
on

Before you ;' and she drove them thro'
the waste.

He follow'd nearer : ruth began to work
Against his anger in him, while he watch'd
The being he loved best in all the world,
With difficulty in mild obedience
Driving them on : he fain had spoken to
her,

And loosed in words of sudden fire the
wrath
And smoulder'd wrong that burnt him all
within ;

But evermore it seem'd an easier thing
At once without remorse to strike her
dead,

Than to cry 'Halt,' and to her own
bright face

Accuse her of the least immodesty :
And thus tongue-tied, it made him wroth
the mere

That she *could* speak whom his own ear
had heard

Call herself false : and suffering thus he made

Minutes an age : but in scarce longer time
Than at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,
Before he turn to fall seaward again,
Pauses, did Enid, keeping watch, behold
In the first shallow shade of a deep wood,
Before a gloom of stubborn-shafted oaks,
Three other horsemen waiting, wholly
arm'd,

Whereof one seem'd far larger than her
lord,

And shook her pulses, crying, 'Look, a
prize !

Three horses and three goodly suits of
arms,

And all in charge of whom ? a girl : set
on.'

'Nay,' said the second, 'yonder comes a
knight.'

The third, 'A craven ; how he hangs his
head.'

The giant answer'd merrily, 'Yea, but
one ?

Wait here, and when he passes fall upon
him.'

And Enid ponder'd in her heart and
said,

'I will abide the coming of my lord,
And I will tell him all their villainy.
My lord is weary with the fight before,
And they will fall upon him unawares.
I needs must disobey him for his good ;
How should I dare obey him to his harm ?
Needs must I speak, and tho' he kill me
for it,
I save a life dearer to me than mine.'

And she abode his coming, and said to
him

With timid firmness, 'Have I leave to
speak ?'

He said, 'Ye take it, speaking,' and she
spoke.

'There lurk three villains yonder in the
wood,

And each of them is wholly arm'd, and
one

Is larger-limb'd than you are, and they say
That they will fall upon you while ye
pass.'

To which he slung a wrathful answer
back :

'And if there were an hundred in the
wood,

And every man were larger-limb'd than I,
And all at once should sally out upon me,

I swear it would not ruffle me so much
As you that not obey me. Stand aside,

And if I fall, cleave to the better man.'

And Enid stood aside to wait the event,

Not dare to watch the combat, only
breathe

Short fits of prayer, at every stroke a
breath.

And he, she dreaded most, bare down
upon him.

Aim'd at the helm, his lance err'd ; but
Geraint's,

A little in the late encounter strain'd,
Struck thro' the bulky bandit's corselet
home,

And then brake short, and down his
enemy roll'd,

And there lay still ; as he that tells the
tale

Saw once a great piece of a promontory,
That had a sapling growing on it, slide

From the long shore-cliff's windy walls
to the beach,

And there lie still, and yet the sapling
grew :

So lay the man transfixt. His craven pair
Of comrades, making slower at the
Prince,

When now they saw their bulwark fallen,
stood ;

On whom the victor, to confound them
more,

Spurr'd with his terrible war-cry ; for as
one,

That listens near a torrent mountain-
brook,

All thro' the crash of the near cataract
hears

The drumming thunder of the huger fall
At distance, were the soldiers wont to hear

His voice in battle, and be kindled by it,
And foemen scared, like that false pair
who turn'd

Flying, but, overtaken, died the death
Themselves had wrought on many an
innocent.

Thereon Geraint, dismounting, pick'd
the lance

That pleased him best, and drew from
those dead wolves

Their three gay suits of armour, each from
each,

And bound them on their horses, each on
each,

And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her, 'Drive them on
Before you,' and she drove them thro' the
wood.

He follow'd nearer still : the pain she
had

To keep them in the wild ways of the wood,
Two sets of three laden with jingling

arms,

Together, served a little to disedge

The sharpness of that pain about her
heart :

And they themselves, like creatures gently
born

But into bad hands fall'n, and now so long
By bandits groom'd, prick'd their light
ears, and felt

Her low firm voice and tender government.

So thro' the green gloom of the wood
they past,

And issuing under open heavens beheld
A little town with towers, upon a rock,
And close beneath, a meadow gemlike
chased

In the brown wild, and mowers mowing
in it :

And down a rocky pathway from the place
There came a fair-hair'd youth, that in
his hand

Bare victual for the mowers : and Geraint
Had ruth again on Enid looking pale :

Then, moving downward to the meadow
ground,

He, when the fair-hair'd youth came by
him, said,

'Friend, let her eat ; the damsel is so
faint.'

'Yea, willingly,' replied the youth ; 'and
thou,

My lord, eat also, tho' the fare is coarse,
And only meet for mowers ;' then set
down

His basket, and dismounting on the sward
They let the horses graze, and ate them-
selves.

And Enid took a little delicately,
Less having stomach for it than desire

To close with her lord's pleasure ; but
Geraint

Ate all the mowers' victual unawares,
And when he found all empty, was
amazed ;

And 'Boy,' said he, 'I have eaten all,
but take

A horse and arms for guerdon ; choose
 the best.
 He, reddening in extremity of delight,
 'My lord, you overpay me fifty-fold,'
 'Ye will be all the wealthier,' cried the
 Prince.
 'I take it as free gift, then,' said the boy,
 'Not guerdon ; for myself can easily,
 While your good damsel rests, return,
 and fetch
 Fresh victual for these mowers of our
 Earl ;
 For these are his, and all the field is his,
 And I myself am his ; and I will tell
 him
 How great a man thou art : he loves to
 know
 When men of mark are in his territory :
 And he will have thee to his palace here,
 And serve thee costlier than with mowers'
 fare.'
 Then said Geraint, 'I wish no better
 fare :
 I never ate with angrier appetite
 Than when I left you. mowers dinnerless.
 And into no Earl's palace will I go.
 I know, God knows, too much of
 palaces !
 And if he want me, let him come to me.
 But hire us some fair chamber for the
 night,
 And stalling for the horses, and return
 With victual for these men, and let us
 know.'
 'Yea, my kind lord,' said the glad
 youth, and went,
 Held his head high, and thought himself
 a knight,
 And up the rocky pathway disappear'd,
 Leading the horse, and they were left
 alone.
 But when the Prince had brought his
 errant eyes
 Home from the rock, sideways he let
 them glance
 At Enid, where she droopt : his own
 false doom,
 That shadow of mistrust should never
 cross
 Betwixt them, came upon him, and he
 sigh'd ;
 Then, with another humorous ruth
 remark'd
 The lusty mowers labouring dinnerless,
 And watch'd the sun blaze on the turn-
 ing scythe,
 And after nodded sleepily in the heat.
 But she, remembering her old ruin'd hall,
 And all the windy clamour of the daws
 About her hollow turret, pluck'd the
 grass
 There growing longest by the meadow's
 edge,
 And into many a listless annulet,
 Now over, now beneath her marriage
 ring,
 Wove and unwove it, till the boy return'd
 And told them of a chamber, and they
 went ;
 Where, after saying to her, 'If ye will,
 Call for the woman of the house,' to which
 She answer'd, 'Thanks, my lord ;' the
 two remain'd
 Apart by all the chamber's width, and
 mute
 As creatures voiceless thro' the fault of
 birth,
 Or two wild men supporters of a shield,
 Painted, who stare at open space, nor
 glance
 The one at other, parted by the shield.
 On a sudden, many a voice along the
 street,

And heel against the pavement echoing,
burst
Their drowse; and either started while
the door,
Push'd from without, drave backward to
the wall,
And midmost of a rout of roisterers,
Femininely fair and dissolutely pale,
Her suitor in old years before Geraint,
Enter'd, the wild lord of the place,
Limours.
He moving up with pliant courtliness,
Greeted Geraint full face, but stealthily,
In the mid-warmth of welcome and graspt
hand,
Found Enid with the corner of his eye,
And knew her sitting sad and solitary.
Then cried Geraint for wine and goodly
cheer
To feed the sudden guest, and sumptuously
According to his fashion, bad the host
Call in what men soever were his friends,
And feast with these in honour of their
Earl;
'And care not for the cost; the cost is
mine.'

And wine and food were brought, and
Earl Limours
Drank till he jested with all ease, and told
Free tales, and took the word and play'd
upon it,
And made it of two colours; for his talk,
When wine and free companions kindled
him,
Was wont to glance and sparkle like a gem
Of fifty facets; thus he moved the Prince
To laughter and his comrades to applause.
Then, when the Prince was merry, ask'd
Limours,
'Your leave, my lord, to cross the room,
and speak

To your good damsel there who sits apart,
And seems so lonely?' 'My free leave,'
he said;
'Get her to speak: she doth not speak to
me.'
Then rose Limours, and looking at his
feet,
Like him who tries the bridge he fears
may fail,
Crost and came near, lifted adoring eyes,
Bow'd at her side and utter'd whisper-
ingly:
'Enid, the pilot star of my lone life,
Enid, my early and my only love,
Enid, the loss of whom hath turn'd me
wild—
What chance is this? how is it I see you
here?
Ye are in my power at last, are in my
power.
Yet fear me not: I call mine own self
wild,
But keep a touch of sweet civility
Here in the heart of waste and wilderness.
I thought, but that your father came
between,
In former days you saw me favourably.
And if it were so do not keep it back:
Make me a little happier: let me know it:
Owe you me nothing for a life half-lost?
Yea, yea, the whole dear debt of all you
are.
And, Enid, you and he, I see with joy,
Ye sit apart, you do not speak to him,
You come with no attendance, page or
maid,
To serve you—doth he love you as of old?
For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I know
Tho' men may bicker with the things they
love,
They would not make them laughable in
all eyes,

<p>Not while they loved them; and your wretched dress, A wretched insult on you, dumbly speaks Your story, that this man loves you no more. Your beauty is no beauty to him now; A common chance—right well I know it —pall'd— For I know men: nor will ye win him back, For the man's love once gone never returns. But here is one who loves you as of old; With more exceeding passion than of old; Good, speak the word: my followers ring him round: He sits unarm'd; I hold a finger up; They understand: nay; I do not mean blood: Nor need ye look so scared at what I say: My malice is no deeper than a moat, No stronger than a wall: there is the keep; He shall not cross us more; speak but the word: Or speak it not; but then by Him that made me The one true lover whom you ever own'd, I will make use of all the power I have. O pardon me! the madness of that hour, When first I parted from thee, moves me yet.'</p> <p>At this the tender sound of his own voice And sweet self-pity, or the fancy of it, Made his eye moist; but Enid fear'd his eyes, Moist as they were, wine-heated from the feast; And answer'd with such craft as women use, Guilty or guiltless, to stave off a chance</p>	<p>That breaks upon them perilously, and said: 'Earl, if you love me as in former years, And do not practise on me, come with morn, And snatch me from him as by violence; Leave me to-night: I am weary to the death.'</p> <p>Low at leave-taking, with his brandish'd plume Brushing his instep, bow'd the all- amorous Earl, And the stout Prince bad him a loud good-night. He moving homeward babbled to his men, How Enid never loved a man but him, Nor cared a broken egg-shell for her lord.</p> <p>But Enid left alone with Prince Geraint, Debating his command of silence given, And that she now perforce must violate it, Heid commune with herself, and while she held He fell asleep, and Enid had no heart To wake him, but hung o'er him, wholly pleased To find him yet unwounded after fight, And hear him breathing low and equally. Anon she rose, and stepping lightly, heap'd The pieces of his armour in one place, All to be there against a sudden need; Then dozed awhile herself, but overtoil'd By that day's grief and travel, evermore Seem'd catching at a rootless thorn, and then Went slipping down horrible precipices, And strongly striking out her limbs awoke; Then thought she heard the wild Earl at the door,</p>
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With all his rout of random followers,
Sound on a dreadful trumpet, summoning
her ;

Which was the red cock shouting to the
light,

As the gray dawn stole o'er the dewy
world,

And glimmer'd on his armour in the room.
And once again she rose to look at it,

But touch'd it unawares : jangling, the
casque

Fell, and he started up and stared at her.
Then breaking his command of silence

given,
She told him all that Earl Limours had
said,

Except the passage that he loved her not ;
Nor left untold the craft herself had used ;

But ended with apology so sweet,
Low-spoken, and of so few words, and

seem'd
So justified by that necessity,

That tho' he thought 'was it for him she
wept

In Devon ?' he but gave a wrathful groan,
Saying, 'Your sweet faces make good
fellows fools

And traitors. Call the host and bid him
bring

Charger and palfrey.' So she glided out
Among the heavy breathings of the house,

And like a household Spirit at the walls
Beat, till she woke the sleepers, and

return'd :
Then tending her rough lord, tho' all
unask'd,

In silence, did him service as a squire ;
Till issuing arm'd he found the host and

cried,
'Thy reckoning, friend ?' and ere he
learnt it, 'Take

Five horses and their armours ;' and the
host,

Suddenly honest, answer'd in amaze,
'My lord, I scarce have spent the worth
of one !'

'Ye will be all the wealthier,' said the
Prince,

And then to Enid, 'Forward ! and to-
day

I charge you, Enid, more especially,
What thing soever ye may hear, or see,

Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use
To charge you) that ye speak not but

obey.'

And Enid answer'd, 'Yea, my lord,
I know

Your wish, and would obey ; but riding
first,

I hear the violent threats you do not hear,
I see the danger which you cannot see ;

Then not to give you warning, that seems
hard ;

Almost beyond me : yet I would obey.'

'Yea so,' said he, 'do it : be not too
wise ;

Seeing that ye are wedded to a man,
Not all mismated with a yawning clown,

But one with arms to guard his head and
yours,

With eyes to find you out however far,
And ears to hear you even in his dreams.'

With that he turn'd and look'd as
keenly at her

As careful robins eye the delver's toil ;
And that within her, which a wanton fool,

Or hasty judger would have call'd her
guilt,

Made her cheek burn and either eyelid fall.
And Geraint look'd and was not satisfied.

Then forward by a way which, beaten
broad,

Led from the territory of false Limours
 To the waste earldom of another earl,
 Doorm, whom his shaking vassals call'd
 the Bull,
 Went Enid with her sullen follower on.
 Once she look'd back, and when she saw
 him ride
 More near by many a rood than yester-
 morn,
 It wellnigh made her cheerful; till
 Geraint
 Waving an angry hand as who should
 say
 'Ye watch me,' sadden'd all her heart
 again.
 But while the sun yet beat a dewy blade,
 The sound of many a heavily-galloping
 hoof
 Smote on her ear, and turning round she
 saw
 Dust, and the points of lances bicker in it.
 Then not to disobey her lord's behest,
 And yet to give him warning, for he rode
 As if he heard not, moving back she held
 Her finger up, and pointed to the dust.
 At which the warrior in his obstinacy,
 Because she kept the letter of his word,
 Was in a manner pleased, and turning,
 stood.
 And in the moment after, wild Limours,
 Borne on a black horse, like a thunder-
 cloud
 Whose skirts are loosen'd by the breaking
 storm,
 Half ridden off with by the thing he rode,
 And all in passion uttering a dry shriek,
 Dash'd on Geraint, who closed with him,
 and bore
 Down by the length of lance and arm
 beyond
 The crupper, and so left him stunn'd or
 dead,
 And overthrew the next that follow'd him,
 And blindly rush'd on all the rout behind.
 But at the flash and motion of the man
 They vanish'd panic-stricken, like a shoal
 Of darting fish, that on a summer morn
 Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot
 Come slipping o'er their shadows on the
 sand,
 But if a man who stands upon the brink
 But lift a shivering hand against the sun,
 There is not left the twinkle of a fin
 Betwixt the cressy islets white in flower;
 So, scared but at the motion of the man,
 Fled all the boon companions of the Earl,
 And left him lying in the public way;
 So vanish friendships only made in wine.
 Then like a stormy sunlight smiled
 Geraint,
 Who saw the chargers of the two that
 fell
 Start from their fallen lords, and wildly fly,
 Mixt with the flyers. 'Horse and man,'
 he said,
 'All of one mind and all right-honest
 friends!
 Not a hoof left: and I methinks till now
 Was honest—paid with horses and with
 arms;
 I cannot steal or plunder, nor nor beg:
 And so what say ye, shall we strip him
 there
 Your lover? has your palfrey heart enough
 To bear his armour? shall we fast, or
 dine?
 No?—then do thou, being right honest,
 pray
 That we may meet the horsemen of Earl
 Doorm,
 I too would still be honest.' Thus he
 said:
 And sadly gazing on her bridle-reins,
 And answering not one word, she led the
 way.

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But as a man to whom a dreadful loss
 Falls in a far land and he knows it not,
 But coming back he learns it, and the loss
 So pains him that he sickens nigh to
 death;

So fared it with Geraint, who being prick'd
 In combat with the follower of Limours,
 Bled underneath his armour secretly,
 And so rode on, nor told his gentle wife
 What ail'd him, hardly knowing it himself,
 Till his eye darken'd and his helmet
 wagg'd;

And at a sudden swerving of the road,
 Tho' happily down on a bank of grass,
 The Prince, without a word, from his
 horse fell.

And Enid heard the clashing of his fall,
 Suddenly came, and at his side all pale
 Dismounting, loosed the fastenings of his
 arms,

Nor let her true hand falter, nor blue eye
 Moisten, till she had lighted on his wound,
 And tearing off her veil of faded silk
 Had bared her forehead to the blistering
 sun,

And swathed the hurt that drain'd her
 dear lord's life.

Then after all was done that hand could do,
 She rested, and her desolation came
 Upon her, and she wept beside the way.

And many past, but none regarded her,
 For in that realm of lawless turbulence,
 A woman weeping for her murder'd mate
 Was cared as much for as a summer shower:
 One took him for a victim of Earl Doorm,
 Nor dared to waste a perilous pity on him:
 Another hurrying past, a man-at-arms,
 Rode on a mission to the bandit Earl;
 Half whistling and half singing a coarse
 song,

He drove the dust against her veilless eyes:

Another, flying from the wrath of Doorm
 Before an ever-fancied arrow, made
 The long way smoke beneath him in his
 fear;

At which her palfrey whinnying lifted heel,
 And scour'd into the coppices and was lost,
 While the great charger stood, grieved
 like a man.

But at the point of noon the huge Earl
 Doorm,
 Broad-faced with under-fringe of russet
 beard,

Bound on a foray, rolling eyes of prey,
 Came riding with a hundred lances up;
 But ere he came, like one that hails a ship,
 Cried out with a big voice, 'What, is he
 dead?'

'No, no, not dead!' she answer'd in all
 haste.

'Would some of your kind people take
 him up,

And bear him hence out of this cruel sun?
 Most sure am I, quite sure, he is not dead.'

Then said Earl Doorm: 'Well, if he be
 not dead,

Why wail ye for him thus? ye seem a child.
 And be he dead, I count you for a fool;
 Your wailing will not quicken him: dead
 or not,

Ye mar a comely face with idiot tears.
 Yet, since the face is comely—some of you,
 Here, take him up, and bear him to our
 hall:

An if he live, we will have him of our
 band;

And if he die, why earth has earth enough
 To hide him. See ye take the charger too,
 A noble one.'

He spake, and past away,
 But left two brawny spearmen, who
 advanced,

Each growling like a dog, when his good bone

Seems to be pluck'd at by the village boys
Who love to vex him eating, and he fears
To lose his bone, and lays his foot upon it,
Gnawing and growling : so the ruffians
growl'd,

Fearing to lose, and all for a dead man,
Their chance of booty from the morning's
raid,

Yet raised and laid him on a litter-bier,
Such as they brought upon their forays out
For those that might be wounded ; laid
him on it

All in the hollow of his shield, and took
And bore him to the naked hall of Doorm,
(His gentle charger following him unled)
And cast him and the bier in which he lay
Down on an oaken settle in the hall,
And then departed, hot in haste to join
Their luckier mates, but growling as
before,

And cursing their lost time, and the dead
man,

And their own Earl, and their own souls,
and her.

They might as well have blest her : she
was deaf

To blessing or to cursing save from one.

So for long hours sat Enid by her lord,
There in the naked hall, propping his
head,

And chafing his pale hands, and calling to
him.

Till at the last he waken'd from his swoon,
And found his own dear bride propping
his head,

And chafing his faint hands, and calling
to him ;

And felt the warm tears falling on his face ;
And said to his own heart, 'She weeps
for me :'

And yet lay still, and feign'd himself as
dead,

That he might prove her to the utter-
most,

And say to his own heart, 'She weeps
for me.'

But in the falling afternoon return'd
The huge Earl Doorm with plunder to the
hall.

His lusty spearmen follow'd him with
noise :

Each hurling down a heap of things that
rang

Against the pavement, cast his lance
aside,

And doff'd his helm : and then there
flutter'd in,

Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated eyes,
A tribe of women, dress'd in many hues,

And mingled with the spearmen : and
Earl Doorm

Struck with a knife's haft hard against the
board,

And call'd for flesh and wine to feed his
spears.

And men brought in whole hogs and
quarter beeves,

And all the hall was dim with steam of
flesh :

And none spake word, but all sat down
at once,

And ate with tumult in the naked hall,
Feeding like horses when you hear them
feed ;

Till Enid shrink'd far back into herself,
To shun the wild ways of the lawless
tribe.

But when Earl Doorm had eaten all he
would,

He roll'd his eyes about the hall, and
found

A damsel drooping in a corner of it.

Then he remember'd her, and how she
wept ;
And out of her there came a power upon
him ;

And rising on the sudden he said, 'Eat !
I never yet beheld a thing so pale.

God's curse, it makes me mad to see you
weep.

Eat ! Look yourself. Good luck had
your good man,

For were I dead who is it would weep
for me ?

Sweet lady, never since I first drew breath
Have I beheld a lily like yourself.

And so there lived some colour in your
cheek,

There is not one among my gentlewomen
Were fit to wear your slipper for a glove.

But listen to me, and by me be ruled,
And I will do the thing I have not done,

For yeshall share my earldom with me, girl,
And we will live like two birds in one
nest,

And I will fetch you forage from all fields,
For I compel all creatures to my will.'

He spoke : the brawny spearman let
his cheek

Bulge with the unswallow'd piece, and
turning stared ;

While some, whose souls the old serpent
long had drawn

Down, as the worm draws in the wither'd
leaf

And makes it earth, hiss'd each at other's
ear

What shall not be recorded—women they,
Women, or what had been those gracious
things,

But now desired the humbling of their
best,

Yea, would have help'd him to it : and
all at once

They hated her, who took no thought of
them,

But answer'd in low voice, her meek head
yet

Drooping, 'I pray you of your courtesy,
He being as he is, to let me be.'

She spake so low he hardly heard her
speak,

But like a mighty patron, satisfied
With what himself had done so graciously,

Assumed that she had thank'd him, add-
ing, 'Yea,

Eat and be glad, for I account you mine.'

She answer'd meekly, 'How should I
be glad

Henceforth in all the world at anything,
Until my lord arise and look upon me ?'

Here the huge Earl cried out upon her
talk,

As all but empty heart and weariness
And sickly nothing ; suddenly seized on
her,

And bare her by main violence to the
board,

And thrust the dish before her, crying,
'Eat.'

'No, no,' said Enid, vext, 'I will not
eat

Till yonder man upon the bier arise,
And eat with me.' 'Drink, then,' he

answer'd. 'Here!'

(And fill'd a horn with wine and held it
to her,)

'Lo ! I, myself, when flush'd with fight,
or hot,

God's curse, with anger—often I my-
self,

Before I well have drunken, scarce can
eat :

Drink therefore and the wine will change
your will.'

'Not so,' she cried, 'by Heaven, I will
not drink
Till my dear lord arise and bid me do it,
And drink with me; and if he rise no
more,
I will not look at wine until I die.'

At this he turn'd all red and paced his
hall,
Now gnaw'd his under, now his upper
lip,
And coming up close to her, said at last :
'Girl, for I see ye scorn my courtesies,
Take warning : yonder man is surely
dead ;

And I compel all creatures to my will.
Not eat nor drink ? And wherefore wail
for one,

Who put your beauty to this flout and
scorn

By dressing it in rags ? Amazed am I,
Beholding how ye butt against my wish,
That I forbear you thus : cross me no
more.

At least put off to please me this poor
gown,

This silken rag, this beggar-woman's
weed :

I love that beauty should go beautifully :
For see ye not my gentlewomen here,
How gay, how suited to the house of one
Who loves that beauty should go beauti-
fully ?

Rise therefore ; robe yourself in this :
obey.'

He spoke, and one among his gentle-
women

Display'd a splendid silk of foreign loom,
Where like a shoaling sea the lovely blue

Play'd into green, and thicker down the
front

With jewels than the sward with drops of
dew,

When all night long a cloud clings to the
hill,

And with the dawn ascending lets the
day

Strike where it clung : so thickly shone
the gems.

But Enid answer'd, harder to be moved
Than hardest tyrants in their day of power,
With life-long injuries burning unavenged,
And now their hour has come ; and Enid
said :

'In this poor gown my dear lord found
me first,

And loved me serving in my father's hall :
In this poor gown I rode with him to
court,

And there the Queen array'd me like the
sun :

In this poor gown he bade me clothe
myself,

When now we rode upon this fatal quest
Of honour, where no honour can be gain'd :

And this poor gown I will not cast aside
Until himself arise a living man,

And bid me cast it. I have griefs enough :
Pray you be gentle, pray you let me be :

I never loved, can never love but him :
Yea, God, I pray you of your gentleness,
He being as he is, to let me be.'

Then strode the brute Earl up and down
his hall,

And took his russet beard between his
teeth ;

Last, coming up quite close, and in his
mood

Crying, 'I count it of no more avail,

Dame, to be gentle than ungentle with
you ;
Take my salute,' unknighly with flat
hand,
However lightly, smote her on the cheek.

Then Enid, in her utter helplessness,
And since she thought, 'He had not dared
to do it,

Except he surely knew my lord was
dead,'

Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter cry,
As of a wild thing taken in the trap,
Which some trapper coming thro' the
wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at his
sword,

(It lay beside him in the hollow shield),
Made but a single bound, and with a
sweep of it

Shore thro' the swarthy neck, and like a
ball

The russet-bearded head roll'd on the
floor.

So died Earl Doorm by him he counted
dead.

And all the men and women in the hall
Rose when they saw the dead man rise,
and fled

Yelling as from a spectre, and the two
Were left alone together, and he said :

'Enid, I have used you worse than that
dead man ;

Done you more wrong : we both have
undergone

That trouble which has left me thrice
your own :

Henceforward I will rather die than doubt.

And here I lay this penance on myself,
Not, tho' mine own ears heard you yester-
morn—

You thought me sleeping, but I heard you
say,

I heard you say, that you were no true
wife :

I swear I will not ask your meaning in it :
I do believe yourself against yourself,
And will henceforward rather die than
doubt.'

And Enid could not say one tender word,
She felt so blunt and stupid at the heart :
She only pray'd him, 'Fly, they will return
And slay you ; fly, your charger is without,
My palfrey lost.' 'Then, Enid, shall you
ride

Behind me.' 'Yea,' said Enid, 'let us go.'
And moving out they found the stately
horse,

Who now no more a vassal to the thief,
But free to stretch his limbs in lawful fight,
Neigh'd with all gladness as they came,
and stoop'd

With a low whinny toward the pair : and
she

Kiss'd the white star upon his noble front,
Glad also ; then Geraint upon the horse
Mounted, and reach'd a hand, and on his
foot

She set her own and climb'd ; he turn'd
his face

And kiss'd her climbing, and she cast her
arms

About him, and at once they rode away.

And never yet, since high in Paradise
O'er the four rivers the first roses blew,
Came purer pleasure unto mortal kind
Than lived thro' her, who in that perilous
hour

Put hand to hand beneath her husband's
heart,

And felt him hers again : she did not weep,
But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist

Like that which kept the heart of Eden
green

Before the useful trouble of the rain :
Yet not so misty were her meek blue eyes
As not to see before them on the path,
Right in the gateway of the bandit hold,
A knight of Arthur's court, who laid his
lance

In rest, and made as if to fall upon him.
Then, fearing for his hurt and loss of blood,
She, with her mind all full of what had
chanced,

Shriek'd to the stranger 'Slay not a dead
man !'

'The voice of Enid,' said the knight ; but
she,

Beholding it was Edyrn son of Nudd,
Was moved so much the more, and
shriek'd again,

'O cousin, slay not him who gave you life.'

And Edyrn moving frankly forward spake :

'My lord Geraint, I greet you with all
love ;

I took you for a bandit knight of Doorm ;
And fear not, Enid, I should fall upon him,
Who love you, Prince, with something of
the love

Wherewith we love the Heaven that
chastens us.

For once, when I was up so high in pride
That I was halfway down the slope to
Hell,

By overthrowing me you threw me higher.
Now, made a knight of Arthur's Table
Round,

And since I knew this Earl, when I myself
Was half a bandit in my lawless hour,
I come the mouthpiece of our King to
Doorm

(The King is close behind me) bidding him
Disband himself, and scatter all his powers,
Submit, and hear the judgment of the
King.'

'He hears the judgment of the King of
kings,'

Cried the wan Prince ; 'and lo, the
powers of Doorm

Are scatter'd,' and he pointed to the field,
Where, huddled here and there on mound
and knoll,

Were men and women staring and aghast,
While some yet fled ; and then he plainlier
told

How the huge Earl lay slain within his
hall.

But when the knight besought him,
'Follow me,

Prince, to the camp, and in the King's
own ear

Speak what has chanced ; ye surely have
endured

Strange chances here alone ;' that other
flush'd,

And hung his head, and halted in reply,
Fearing the mild face of the blameless
King,

And after madness acted question ask'd :
Till Edyrn crying, 'If ye will not go

To Arthur, 'then will Arthur come to you,'
'Enough,' he said, 'I follow,' and they
went.

But Enid in their going had two fears,
One from the bandit scatter'd in the field,
And one from Edyrn. Every now and
then,

When Edyrn rein'd his charger at her side,
She shrank a little. In a hollow land,
From which old fires have broken, men
may fear

Fresh fire and ruin. He, perceiving, said :

'Fair and dear cousin, you that most
had cause

To fear me, fear no longer, I am changed.
Yourself were first the blameless cause to
make

judgment of the King of
 Prince; 'and lo, the
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 he pointed to the field,
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My nature's prideful sparkle in the blood
 Break into furious flame; being repulsed
 By Yniol and yourself, I schemed and
 wrought
 Until I overturn'd him; then set up
 (With one main purpose ever at my heart)
 My haughty jousts, and took a paramour;
 Did her mock-honour as the fairest fair,
 And, toppling over all antagonism,
 So wax'd in pride, that I believed myself
 Unconquerable, for I was wellnigh mad :
 And, but for my main purpose in these
 jousts,
 I should have slain your father, seized
 yourself.
 I lived in hope that sometime you would
 come
 To these my lists with him whom best you
 loved;
 And there, poor cousin, with your meek
 blue eyes,
 The truest eyes that ever answer'd Heaven,
 Behold me overturn and trample on him.
 Then, had you cried, or knelt, or pray'd
 to me,
 I should not less have kill'd him. And
 you came,—
 But once you came,—and with your own
 true eyes
 Beheld the man you loved (I speak as one
 Speaks of a service done him) overthrow
 My proud self, and my purpose three
 years old,
 And set his foot upon me, and give me
 life.
 There was I broken down; there was I
 saved :
 Tho' thence I rode all-shamed, hating the
 life
 He gave me, meaning to be rid of it.
 And all the penance the Queen laid upon
 me
 Was but to rest awhile within her court;

Where first as sullen as a beast new-caged,
 And waiting to be treated like a wolf,
 Because I knew my deeds were known, I
 found,
 Instead of scornful pity or pure scorn,
 Such fine reserve and noble reticence,
 Manners so kind, yet stately, such a grace
 Of tenderest courtesy, that I began
 To glance behind me at my former life,
 And find that it had been the wolf's
 indeed :
 And oft I talk'd with Dubric, the high
 saint,
 Who, with mild heat of holy oratory,
 Subdued me somewhat to that gentleness,
 Which, when it weds with manhood,
 makes a man.
 And you were often there about the Queen,
 But saw me not, or mark'd not if you
 saw;
 Nor did I care or dare to speak with you,
 But kept myself aloof till I was changed;
 And fear not, cousin; I am changed
 indeed.'

He spoke, and Enid easily believed,
 Like simple noble natures, credulous
 Of what they long for, good in friend or
 foe,
 There most in those who most have done
 them ill.
 And when they reach'd the camp the
 King himself
 Advanced to greet them, and beholding
 her
 Tho' pale, yet happy, ask'd her not a
 word,
 But went apart with Edyrn, whom he held
 In converse for a little, and return'd,
 And, gravely smiling, lifted her from
 horse,
 And kiss'd her with all pureness, brother-
 like,

And show'd an empty tent allotted her,
And glancing for a minute, till he saw her
Pass into it, turn'd to the Prince, and
said :

Prince, when of late ye pray'd me for
my leave
To move to your own land, and there
defend
Your marches, I was prick'd with some
reproof,
As one that let foul wrong stagnate and
be,
By having look'd too much thro' alien
eyes,
And wrought too long with delegated
hands,
Not used mine own : but now behold me
come
To cleanse this common sewer of all my
realm,
With Edyrn and with others : have ye
look'd
At Edyrn? have ye seen how nobly
changed?
This work of his is great and wonderful.
His very face with change of heart is
changed,
The world will not believe a man repents:
And this wise world of ours is mainly
right.
Full seldom doth a man repent, or use
Both grace and will to pick the vicious
quitch
Of blood and custom wholly out of him,
And make all clean, and plant himself
afresh.
Edyrn has done it, weeding all his heart
As I will weed this land before I go.
I, therefore, made him of our Table
Round,
Not rashly, but have proved him every-
way

One of our noblest, our most valorous,
Sanest and most obedient : and indeed
This work of Edyrn wrought upon himself
After a life of violence, seems to me
A thousand-fold more great and wonderful
Than if some knight of mine, risking his
life,
My subject with my subjects under him,
Should make an onslaught single on a
realm
Of robbers, tho' he slew them one by one,
And were himself nigh wounded to the
death.'

So spake the King ; low bow'd the
Prince, and felt
His work was neither great nor wonderful,
And past to Enid's tent ; and thither came
The King's own leech to look into his
hurt ;
And Enid tended on him there ; and there
Her constant motion round him, and the
breath
Of her sweet tendance hovering over him,
Fill'd all the genial courses of his blood
With deeper and with ever deeper love,
As the south-west that blowing Bala lake
Fills all the sacred Dee. So past the days.

But while Geraint lay healing of his
hurt,
The blameless King went forth and cast
his eyes
On each of all whom Uther left in charge
Long since, to guard the justice of the
King :
He look'd and found them wanting ; and
as now
Men weed the white horse on the Berk-
shire hills
To keep him bright and clean as hereto-
fore,
He rooted out the slothful officer

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ful officer

Or guilty, which for bribe had wink'd at
wrong,

And in their chairs set up a stronger race
With hearts and hands, and sent a thou-
sand men

To till the wastes, and moving everywhere
Clear'd the dark places and iet in the law,
And broke the bandit holds and cleansed
the land.

Then, when Geraint was whole again,
they past

With Arthur to Caerleon upon Usk.

There the great Queen once more em-
braced her friend,

And clothed her in apparel like the day.
And tho' Geraint could never take again
That comfort from their converse which
he took

Before the Queen's fair name was breathed
upon,

He rested well content that all was well.
Thence after tarrying for a space they rode,
And fifty knights rode with them to the
shores

Of Severn, and they past to their own
land.

And there he kept the justice of the King
So vigorously yet mildly, that all hearts
Applauded, and the spiteful whisper died :
And being ever foremost in the chase,
And victor at the tilt and tournament,
They call'd him the great Prince and man
of men.

But Enid, whom the ladies loved to call
Enid the Fair, a grateful people named
Enid the Good ; and in their halls arose
The cry of children, Enids and Geraints
Of times to be ; nor did he doubt her more,
But rested in her fealty, till he crown'd
A happy life with a fair death, and fell
Against the heathen of the Northern Sea
In battle, fighting for the blameless King.

MERLIN AND VIVIEN.

A STORM was coming, but the winds
were still,

And in the wild woods of Broceliande,
Before an oak, so hollow, huge and old
It look'd a tower of ruin'd masonwork,
At Merlin's feet the wily Vivien lay.

Whence came she ? One that bare in
bitter grudge

The scorn of Arthur and his Table, Mark
The Cornish King, had heard a wandering
voice,

A minstrel of Caerleon by strong storm
Blown into shelter at Tintagil, say
That out of naked knightlike purity
Sir Lancelot worshipt no unmarried girl
But the great Queen herself, fought in her
name,

Swore by her—vows like theirs, that high
in heaven

Love most, but neither marry, nor are
given

In marriage, angels of our Lord's report.

He ceased, and then—for Vivien
sweetly said

(She sat beside the banquet nearest Mark),
'And is the fair example follow'd, Sir,
In Arthur's household ?'—answer'd inno-
cently :

'Ay, by some few—ay, truly—youths
that hold

It more beseems the perfect virgin knight
To worship woman as true wife beyond
All hopes of gaining, than as maiden girl.
They place their pride in Lancelot and
the Queen.

So passionate for an utter purity
Beyond the limit of their bond, are these,
For Arthur bound them not to singleness.

Brave hearts and clean ! and yet—God
guide them—young.'

Then Mark was half in heart to hurl
his cup
Straight at the speaker, but forbore : he
rose
To leave the hall, and, Vivien following
him,
Turn'd to her : 'Here are snakes within
the grass ;
And you methinks, O Vivien, save ye fear
The monkish manhood, and the mask of
pure
Worn by this court, can stir them till they
sting.'

And Vivien answer'd, smiling scorn-
fully,
Why fear? because that foster'd at *thy*
court

I savour of thy—virtues? fear them? no.
As Love, if Love be perfect, casts out fear,
So Hate, if Hate be perfect, casts out fear.
My father died in battle against the King,
My mother on his corpse in open field ;
She bore me there, for born from death
was I

Among the dead and sown upon the
wind—

And then on thee ! and shown the truth
betimes,

That old true filth, and bottom of the well,
Where Truth is hidden. Gracious lessons
thine

And maxims of the mud ! "This Arthur
pure !

Great Nature thro' the flesh herself hath
made

Gives him the lie ! There is no being
pure,

My cherub ; saith not Holy Writ the
same?"—

If I were Arthur, I would have thy blood.
Thy blessing, stainless King ! I bring
thee back,

When I have ferreted out their burrow-
ings,

The hearts of all this Order in mine
hand—

Ay—so that fate and craft and folly close,
Perchance, one curl of Arthur's golden
beard.

To me this narrow grizzled fork of thine
Is cleaner-fashion'd—Well, I loved thee
first,

That warps the wit.'

Loud laugh'd the graceless Mark.
But Vivien, into Camelot stealing, lodged
Low in the city, and on a festal day
When Guinevere was crossing the great
hall

Cast herself down, knelt to the Queen,
and wail'd.

'Why kneel ye there? What evil have
ye wrought?

Rise !' and the damsel bidden rise arose
And stood with folded hands and down-
ward eyes

Of glancing corner, and all meekly said,
'None wrought, but suffer'd much, an
orphan maid !

My father died in battle for thy King,
My mother on his corpse—in open field,
The sad sea-sounding wastes of Lyonesse—
Poor wretch—no friend !—and now by
Mark the King

For that small charm of feature mine,
pursued—

If any such be mine—I fly to thee.
Save, save me thou—Woman of women—
thine

The wreath of beauty, thine the crown of
power,

Be thine the balm of pity, O Heaven's
own white
Earth-angel, stainless bride of stainless
King—
Help, for he follows ! take me to thyself !
O yield me shelter for mine innocency
Among thy maidens !'

Here her slow sweet eyes
Fear-tremulous, but humbly hopeful, rose
Fixt on her hearer's, while the Queen
who stood
All glittering like May sunshine on May
leaves
In green and gold, and plumed with green
replied,
'Peace, child ! of overpraise and over-
blame
We choose the last. Our noble Arthur,
him
Ye scarce can overpraise, will hear and
know.
Nay—we believe all evil of thy Mark—
Well, we shall test thee farther ; but this
hour
We ride a-hawking with Sir Lancelot.
He hath given us a fair falcon which he
train'd ;
We go to prove it. Bide ye here the
while.'

She past ; and Vivien murmur'd after
'Go !
I bide the while.' Then thro' the portal-
arch
Peering askance, and muttering broken-
wise,
As one that labours with an evil dream,
Beheld the Queen and Lancelot get to
horse.

'Is that the Lancelot ? goodly—ay, but
gaunt :

Courteous—amends for gauntness—takes
her hand—

That glance of theirs, but for the street,
had been

A clinging kiss—how hand lingers in
hand !

Let go at last !—they ride away—to hawk
For waterfowl. Royaller game is mine.

For such a supersensual sensual bond
As that gray cricket chirpt of at our
hearth—

Touch flax with flame—a glance will serve
—the liars !

Ah little rat that borest in the dyke
Thy hole by night to let the boundless deep
Down upon far-off cities while they
dance—

Or dream—of thee they dream'd not—
nor of me

These—ay, but each of either : ride, and
dream

The mortal dream that never yet was
mine—

Ride, ride and dream until ye wake—to
me !

Then, narrow court and lubber King,
farewell !

For Lancelot will be gracious to the rat,
And our wise Queen, if knowing that I
know,

Will hate, loathe, fear—but honour me
the more.'

Yet while they rode together down the
plain,

Their talk was all of training, terms of art,
Diet and seeling, jesses, leash and lure.

'She is too noble' he said 'to check at
pies,

Nor will she rake : there is no baseness
in her.'

Here when the Queen demanded as by
chance

<p>'Know ye the stranger woman?' 'Let her be,' Said Lancelot and unhooded casting off The goodly falcon free; she tower'd; her bells, Tone under tone, shrill'd; and they lifted up Their eager faces, wondering at the strength, Boldness and royal knighthood of the bird Who pounced her quarry and slew it. Many a time As once—of old—among the flowers— they rode.</p> <p>But Vivien half-forgotten of the Queen Among her damsels broidering sat, heard, watch'd And whisper'd: thro' the peaceful court she crept And whisper'd: then as Arthur in the highest Leaven'd the world, so Vivien in the lowest, Arriving at a time of golden rest, And sowing one ill hint from ear to ear, While all the heathen lay at Arthur's feet, And no quest came, but all was joust and play, Leaven'd his hall. They heard and let her be.</p> <p>Thereafter as an enemy that has left Death in the living waters, and with- drawn, The wily Vivien stole from Arthur's court.</p> <p>She hated all the knights, and heard in thought Their lavish comment when her name was named. For once, when Arthur walking all alone, Vext at a rumour issued from herself</p>	<p>Of some corruption crept among his knights, Had met her, Vivien, being greeted fair, Would fain have wrought upon his cloudy mood With reverent eyes mock-loyal, shaken voice, And flutter'd adoration, and at last With dark sweet hints of some who prized him more Than who should prize him most; at which the King Had gazed upon her blankly and gone by: But one had watch'd, and had not held his peace: It made the laughter of an afternoon That Vivien should attempt the blameless King. And after that, she set herself to gain Him, the most famous man of all those times, Merlin, who knew the range of all their arts, Had built the King his havens, ships, and halls, Was also Bard, and knew the starry heavens; The people call'd him Wizard; whom at first She play'd about with slight and sprightly talk, And vivid smiles, and faintly-venom'd points Of slander, glancing here and grazing there; And yielding to his kindlier moods, the Seer Would watch her at her petulance, and play, Ev'n when they seem'd unloveable, and laugh As those that watch a kitten; thus he grew</p>
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Tolerant of what he half disdain'd, and she,
 Perceiving that she was but half disdain'd,
 Began to break her sports with graver fits,
 Turn red or pale, would often when they met
 Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him
 With such a fixt devotion, that the old man,
 Tho' doubtful, felt the flattery, and at times
 Would flatter his own wish in age for love,
 And half believe her true: for thus at times
 He waver'd; but that other clung to him,
 Fixt in her will, and so the seasons went.

Then fell on Merlin a great melancholy;
 He walk'd with dreams and darkness, and he found

A doom that ever poised itself to fall,
 An ever-moaning battle in the mist,
 World-war of dying flesh against the life,
 Death in all life and lying in all love,
 The meanest having power upon the highest,
 And the high purpose broken by the worm.

So leaving Arthur's court he gain'd the beach;
 There found a little boat, and stept into it;
 And Vivien follow'd, but he mark'd her not.
 She took the helm and he the sail; the boat
 Drave with a sudden wind across the deeps,
 And touching Breton sands, they disembark'd.
 And then she follow'd Merlin all the way,
 Ev'n to the wild woods of Broceliande.

For Merlin once had told her of a charm,
 The which if any wrought on anyone
 With woven paces and with waving arms,
 The man so wrought on ever seem'd to lie
 Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower,
 From which was no escape for evermore;
 And none could find that man for evermore,
 Nor could he see but him who wrought the charm
 Coming and going, and he lay as dead
 And lost to life and use and name and fame.
 And Vivien ever sought to work the charm
 Upon the great Enchanter of the Time,
 As fancying that her glory would be great
 According to his greatness whom she quench'd.

There lay she all her length and kiss'd his feet,
 As if in deepest reverence and in love.
 A twist of gold was round her hair; a robe
 Of samite without price, that more exprest
 Than hid her, clung about her lissome limbs,
 In colour like the satin-shining palm
 On shallows in the windy gleams of March:
 And while she kiss'd them, crying,
 'Trample me,
 Dear feet, that I have follow'd thro' the world,
 And I will pay you worship; tread me down
 And I will kiss you for it;' he was mute:
 So dark a forethought roll'd about his brain,
 As on a dull day in an Ocean cave
 The blind wave feeling round his long sea-hall
 In silence: wherefore, when she lifted up

A face of sad appeal, and spake and said,
 'O Merlin, do ye love me?' and again,
 'O Merlin, do ye love me?' and once
 more,

'Great Master, do ye love me?' he was
 mute.

And lissome Vivien, holding by his heel,
 Writhed toward him, slid up his knee
 and sat,

Behind his ankle twined her hollow feet
 Together, curved an arm about his neck,
 Clung like a snake; and letting her left
 hand

Droop from his mighty shoulder, as a leaf,
 Made with her right a comb of pearl to
 part

The lists of such a beard as youth gone out
 Had left in ashes: then he spoke and said,
 Not looking at her, 'Who are wise in love
 Love most, say least,' and Vivien answer'd
 quick,

'I saw the little elf-god eyeless once
 In Arthur's arras hall at Camelot:
 But neither eyes nor tongue—O stupid
 child!

Yet you are wise who say it; let me think
 Silence is wisdom: I am silent then,
 And ask no kiss;' then adding all at once,
 'And lo, I clothe myself with wisdom,'
 drew

The vast and shaggy mantle of his beard
 Across her neck and bosom to her knee,
 And call'd herself a gilded summer fly
 Caught in a great old tyrant spider's web,
 Who meant to eat her up in that wild
 wood

Without one word. So Vivien call'd
 herself,

But rather seem'd a lovely baleful star
 Veil'd in gray vapour; till he sadly
 smiled:

'To what request for what strange boon,'
 he said,

'Are these your pretty tricks and fooleries,
 O Vivien, the preamble? yet my thanks,
 For these have broken up my melancholy.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily,
 'What, O my Master, have ye found
 your voice?

I bid the stranger welcome. Thanks at
 last!

But yesterday you never open'd lip,
 Except indeed to drink: no cup had we:
 In mine own lady palms I cull'd the
 spring

That gather'd trickling dropwise from the
 cleft,

And made a pretty cup of both my hands
 And offer'd you it kneeling: then you
 drank

And knew no more, nor gave me one
 poor word;

O no more thanks than might a goat have
 given

With no more sign of reverence than a
 beard.

And when we halted at that other well,
 And I was faint to swooning, and you lay
 Foot-gilt with all the blossom-dust of
 those

Deep meadows we had traversed, did you
 know

That Vivien bathed your feet before her
 own?

And yet no thanks: and all thro' this wild
 wood

And all this morning when I fondled you:
 Boon, ay, there was a boon, one not so
 strange—

How had I wrong'd you? surely ye are
 wise,

But such a silence is more wise than kind.'

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers and
 said:

'O did ye never lie upon the shore,
And watch the curl'd white of the coming
wave

Glass'd in the slippery sand before it
breaks?

Ev'n such a wave, but not so pleasurable,
Dark in the glass of some presageful mood,
Had I for three days seen, ready to fall.

And then I rose and fled from Arthur's
court

To break the mood. You fllw'd me
unask'd;

And when I look'd, and saw you follow
ing still,

My mind involved yourself the nearest
thing

In that mind-mist: for shall I tell you
truth?

You seem'd that wave about to break upon
me

And sweep me from my hold upon the
world,

My use and name and fame. Your pardon,
child.

Your pretty sports have brighten'd all
again.

And ask your boon, for boon I owe you
thrice,

Once for wrong done you by confusion, next
For thanks it seems till now neglected, last

For these your dainty gambols: wherefore
ask;

And take this boon so strange and not so
strange.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling mourn-
fully:

'O not so strange as my long asking it,
Not yet so strange as you yourself are

strange,
Nor half so strange as that dark mood of

yours.
I ever fear'd ye were not wholly mine;

And see, yourself have own'd ye did me
wrong.

The people call you prophet: let it be:
But not of those that can expound them-

selves.
Take Vivien for expounder; she will call

That three-days-long presageful gloom of
yours

No presage, but the same mistrustful mood
That makes you seem less noble than

yourself,
Whenever I have ask'd this very boon,

Now ask'd again: for see you not, dear
love,

That such a mood as that, which lately
gloom'd

Your fancy when ye saw me following you,
Must make me fear still more you are not

mine,
Must make me yearn still more to prove

you mine,
And make me wish still more to learn

this charm
Of woven paces and of waving hands,

As proof of trust. O Merlin, teach it me.
The charm so taught will charm us both

to rest.
For, grant me some slight power upon

your fate,
I, feeling that you felt me worthy trust,

Should rest and let you rest, knowing you
mine.

And therefore be as great as ye are named,
Not muffled round with selfish reticence.

How hard you look and how denyingly!
O, if you think this wickedness in me,

That I should prove it on you unawares,
That makes me passing wrathful; then

our bond
Had best be loosed for ever: but think

or not,
By Heaven that hears I tell you the clean

truth,

As clean as blood of babes, as white as
milk :

O Merlin, may this earth, if ever I,
If these unwitty wandering wits of mine,
Ev'n in the jumbled rubbish of a dream,
Have tript on such conjectural treachery—
May this hard earth cleave to the Nadir
hell

Down, down, and close again, and nip
me flat,

If I be such a traitress. Yield my boon,
Till which I scarce can yield you all I am ;
And grant my re-reiterated wish,
The great proof of your love : because I
think,

However wise, ye hardly know me yet.'

And Merlin loosed his hand from hers
and said,

'I never was less wise, however wise,
Too curious Vivien, tho' you talk of trust,
Than when I told you first of such a
charm.

Yea, if ye talk of trust I tell you this,
Too much I trusted when I told you that,
And stirr'd this vice in you which ruin'd
man

Thro' woman the first hour ; for howsoe'er
In children a great curiousness be well,
Who have to learn themselves and all the
world,

In you, that are no child, for still I find
Your face is practised when I spell the
lines,

I call it,—well, I will not call it vice :
But since you name yourself the summer
fly,

I well could wish a cobweb for the gnat,
That settles, beaten back, and beaten back
Settles, till one could yield for weariness :
But since I will not yield to give you power
Upon my life and use and name and fame,
Why will ye never ask some other boon ?

Yea, by God's rood, I trusted you too
much.'

And Vivien, like the tenderest-hearted
maid

That ever bided tryst at village stile,
Made answer, either eyelid wet with tears :
'Nay, Master, be not wrathful with your
maid ;

Caress her : let her feel herself forgiven
Who feels no heart to ask another boon.
I think ye hardly know the tender rhyme
Of " trust me not at all or all in all."
I heard the great Sir Lancelot sing it once,
And it shall answer for me. Listen to it.

" In Love, if Love be Love, if Love
be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal
powers :

Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

" It is the little rift within the lute,
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all.

" The little rift within the lover's lute
Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,
That rotting inward slowly moulders all.

" It is not worth the keeping : let it go :
But shall it ? answer, darling, answer, no.
And trust me not at all or all in all."

O Master, do ye love my tender rhyme ?'

And Merlin look'd and half believed
her true,

So tender was her voice, so fair her face,
So sweetly gleam'd her eyes behind her
tears

Like sunlight on the plain behind a
shower :

And yet he answer'd half indignantly :

'Far other was the song that once I heard

By this huge oak, sung nearly where we sit:
For here we met, some ten or twelve of us,
To chase a creature that was current then
In these wild woods, the hart with golden horns.

It was the time when first the question rose

About the founding of a Table Round,
That was to be, for love of God and men
And noble deeds, the flower of all the world.

And each incited each to noble deeds.
And while we waited, one, the youngest of us,

We could not keep him silent, out he flash'd,

And into such a song, such fire for fame,
Such trumpet-blowings in it, coming down
To such a stern and iron-clashing close,
That when he stopt we long'd to hurl together,

And should have done it; but the beautiful beast

Scared by the noise upstart at our feet,
And like a silver shadow slipt away
Thro' the dim land; and all day long we rode

Thro' the dim land against a rushing wind,
That glorious roundel echoing in our ears,
And chased the flashes of his golden horns
Until they vanish'd by the fairy well
That laughs at iron—as our warriors did—
Where children cast their pins and nails,
and cry,

"Laugh, little well!" but touch it with a sword,

It buzzes fiercely round the point; and there

We lost him: such a noble song was that.
But, Vivien, when you sang me that sweet rhyme,

I felt as tho' you knew this cursed charm,
Were proving it on me, and that I lay
And felt them slowly ebbing, name and fame.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling mournfully:

'O mine have ebb'd away for evermore,
And all thro' following you to this wild wood,

Because I saw you sad, to comfort you.
Lo now, what hearts have men! they never mount

As high as woman in her selfless mood.
And touching fame, howe'er ye scorn my song,

Take one verse more—the lady speaks it—this:

"My name, once mine, now thine, is closelier mine,

For fame, could fame be mine, that fame were thine,

And shame, could shame be thine, that shame were mine.

So trust me not at all or all in all."

'Says she not well? and there is more—this rhyme

Is like the fair pearl-necklace of the Queen,

That burst in dancing, and the pearls were spilt;

Some lost, some stolen, some as relics kept.

But nevermore the same two sister pearls
Ran down the silken thread to kiss each other

On her white neck—so is it with this rhyme:

It lives dispersedly in many hands,
And every minstrel sings it differently;
Yet is there one true line, the pearl of pearls:

"Man dreams of Fame while woman
wakes to love."

Yea ! Love, tho' Love were of the gross-
est, carves

A portion from the solid present, eats
And uses, careless of the rest ; but Fame,
The Fame that follows death is nothing to
us ;

And what is Fame in life but half-disfame,
And counterchanged with darkness ? ye
yourself

Know well that Envy calls you Devil's
son,

And since ye seem the Master of all Art,
They fain would make you Master of all
vice."

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers and
said,

"I once was looking for a magic weed,
And found a fair young squire who sat
alone,

Had carved himself a knightly shield of
wood,

And then was painting on it fancied arms,
Azure, an Eagle rising or, the Sun
In dexter chief; the scroll "I follow
fame."

And speaking not, but leaning over him,
I took his brush and blotted out the bird,
And made a Gardener putting in a graff,
With this for motto, "Rather use than
fame,"

You should have seen him blush ; but
afterwards

He made a stalwart knight. O Vivien,
For you, methinks you think you love me
well ;

For me, I love you somewhat ; rest : and
Love

Should have some rest and pleasure in
himself,

Not ever be too curious for a boon,

Too prurient for a proof against the grain
Of him ye say ye love : but Fame with men,
Being but ampler means to serve man-
kind,

Should have small rest or pleasure in
herself,

But work as vassal to the larger love,
That dwarfs the petty love of one to one.
Use gave me Fame at first, and Fame
again

Increasing gave me use. Lo, there my
boon !

What other ? for men sought to prove me
vile,

Because I fain had given them greater
wits :

And then did Envy call me Devil's son :
The sick weak beast seeking to help
herself

By striking at her better, miss'd, and
brought

Her own claw back, and wounded her
own heart.

Sweet were the days when I was all un-
known,

But when my name was lifted up, the
storm

Brake on the mountain and I cared not
for it.

Right well know I that Fame is half-
disfame,

Yet needs must work my work. That
other fame,

To one at least, who hath not children,
vague,

The cackle of the unborn about the grave,
I cared not for it : a single misty star,

Which is the second in a line of stars

That seem a sword beneath a belt of three,
I never gazed upon it but I dreamt

Of some vast charm concluded in that star
To make fame nothing. Wherefore, if I
fear,

Giving you power upon me thro' this charm,

That you might play me falsely, having power,

However well ye think ye love me now
(As sons of kings loving in pupilage
Have turn'd to tyrants when they came to power)

I rather dread the loss of use than fame ;
If you—and not so much from wickedness,
As some wild turn of anger, or a mood
Of overstrain'd affection, it may be,
To keep me all to your own self,—or else
A sudden spurt of woman's jealousy,—
Should try this charm on whom ye say ye love.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling as in wrath :

'Have I not sworn? I am not trusted.
Good!

Well, hide it, hide it ; I shall find it out ;
And being found take heed of Vivien.
A woman and not trusted, doubtless I
Might feel some sudden turn of anger born
Of your misfaith ; and your fine epithet
Is accurate too, for this full love of mine
Without the full heart back may merit well
Your term of overstrain'd. So used as I,
My daily wonder is, I love at all.

And as to woman's jealousy, O why not?
O to what end, except a jealous one,
And one to make me jealous if I love,
Was this fair charm invented by yourself?
I well believe that all about this world
Ye cage a buxom captive here and there,
Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower
From which is no escape for evermore.'

Then the great Master merrily answer'd her :

'Full many a love in loving youth was mine ;

I need'd then no charm to keep them mine
But youth and love ; and that full heart
of yours

Whereof ye prattle, may now assure you mine ;

So live uncharm'd. For those who wrought it first,

The wrist is parted from the hand that waved,

The feet unmortised from their ankle-bones

Who paced it, ages back : but will ye hear
The legend as in guerdon for your rhyme?

'There lived a king in the most Eastern East,

Less old than I, yet older, for my blood
Hath earnest in it of far springs to be.

A tawny pirate anchor'd in his port,
Whose bark had plunder'd twenty nameless isles ;

And passing one, at the high peep of dawn,

He saw two cities in a thousand boats
All fighting for a woman on the sea.

And pushing his black craft among them all,

He lightly scatter'd theirs and brought her off,

With loss of half his people arrow-slain ;
A maid so smooth, so white, so wonderful,
They said a light came from her when she moved :

And since the pirate would not yield her up,

The King impaled him for his piracy ;
Then made her Queen : but those isle-nurtured eyes

Waged such unwilling tho' successful war
On all the youth, they sicken'd ; councils thinn'd,

And armies waned, for magnet-like she drew

<p>The rustiest iron of old fighters' hearts ; And beasts themselves would worship ; camels knelt Unbidden, and the brutes of mountain back That carry kings in castles, bow'd black knees Of homage, ringing with their serpent hands, To make her smile, her golden ankle-bells. What wonder, being jealous, that he sent His horns of proclamation out thro' all The hundred under-kingdoms that he sway'd To find a wizard who might teach the King Some charm, which being wrought upon the Queen Might keep her all his own : to such a one He promised more than ever king has given, A league of mountain full of golden mines, A province with a hundred miles of coast, A palace and a princess, all for him : But on all those who tried and fail'd, the King Pronounced a dismal sentence, meaning by it To keep the list low and pretenders back, Or like a king, not to be trifled with— Their heads should moulder on the city gates. And many tried and fail'd, because the charm Of nature in her overbore their own : And many a wizard brow bleach'd on the walls : And many weeks a troop of carrion crows Hung like a cloud above the gateway towers.'</p> <p>And Vivien breaking in upon him, said : 'I sit and gather honey ; yet, methinks, Thy tongue has tript a little : ask thyself.</p>	<p>The lady never made <i>unwilling</i> war With those fine eyes : she had her pleasure in it, And made her good man jealous with good cause. And lived there neither dame nor damsel then Wroth at a lover's loss ? were all as tame, I mean, as noble, as their Queen was fair ? Not one to flirt a venom at her eyes, Or pinch a murderous dust into her drink, Or make her paler with a poison'd rose ? Well, those were not our days : but did they find A wizard ? Tell me, was he like to thee ?'</p> <p>She ceased, and made her lithe arm round his neck Tighten, and then drew back, and let her arms Speak <i>freer</i>, glowing on him, like a blue's On her new lord, her own, the first of men.</p> <p>He answer'd laughing, 'Nay, not like to me. At last they found—his foragers for charms— A little glassy-headed hairless man, Who lived alone in a great wild on grass ; Read but one book, and ever reading grew So grated down and filed away with thought, So lean his eyes were monstrous ; while the s' Clung but to one end basket, ribs and spire. And since he kept his mind on one sole aim, Nor ever touch'd fierce wine, nor tasted flesh, Nor own'd a sensual wish, to him the wall</p>
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That sunders ghosts and shadow-casting
men
Became a crystal, and he saw them thro' it,
And heard their voices talk behind the
wall,
And learnt their elemental secrets, powers
And forces; often o'er the sun's bright eye
Drew the vast eyelid of an inky cloud,
And lash'd it at the base with slanting
storm;
Or in the noon of mist and driving rain,
When the lake whiten'd and the pinewood
roar'd,
And the cairn'd mountain was a shadow,
sunn'd
The world to peace again: here was the
man,
And so by force they dragg'd him to the
King.
And then he taught the King to charm
the Queen
In such-wise, that no man could see her
more,
Nor saw she save the King, who wrought
the charm,
Coming and going, and she lay as dead,
And lost all use of life: but when the King
Made proffer of the league of golden mines,
The province with a hundred miles of coast,
The palace and the princess, that old man
Went back to his old wild, and lived on
grass,
And vanish'd, and his book came down
to me.'

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily:
'Ye have the book: the charm is written
in it:
Good: take my counsel: let me know it
at once:
For keep it like a puzzle chest in chest,
With each chest lock'd and padlock'd
thirty-fold,

And whelm all this beneath as vast a
mound

As after furious battle turfs the slain
On some wild down above the windy deep,
I yet should strike upon a sudden deep,
To dig, pick, open, find and read the
charm:

Then, if I tried it, who should blame me
then?'

And smiling as a master smiles at one
That is not of his school, nor any school
But that where blind and naked Ignorance
Delivers brawling judgments, unashamed,
On all things all day long, he answer'd her:

'Thou read the book, my pretty Vivien!
O ay, it is but twenty pages long,
But every page having an ample marge,
And every marge enclosing in the midst
A square of text that looks a little blot,
The text no larger than the limbs of fleas;
And every square of text an awful charm,
Writ in a language that has long gone by.
So long, that mountains have arisen since
With cities on their flanks—thou read the
book!

And every margin scribbled, crost, and
cramm'd

With comment, densest condensation, hard
To mind and eye; but the long sleepless
nights

Of my long life have made it easy to me.
And none can read the text, not even I;
And none can read the comment but
myself;

And in the comment did I find the charm.
O, the results are simple; a mere child
Might use it to the harm of anyone,
And never could undo it: ask no more:
For tho' you should not prove it upon me,
But keep that oath ye sware, ye might,
perchance,

Assay it on some one of the Table Round,
And all because ye dream they babble of
you.'

And Vivien, frowning in true anger,
said :

'What dare the full-fed liars say of me?
They ride abroad redressing human
wrongs !

They sit with knife in meat and wine in
horn !

They bound to holy vows of chastity !

Were I not woman, I could tell a tale.

But you are man, you well can understand
The shame that cannot be explain'd for
shame.

Not one of all the drove should touch me :
swine !'

Then answer'd Merlin careless of her
words :

'You breathe but accusation vast and
vague,

Spleen-born, I think, and proofless. If
ye know,

Set up the charge ye know, to stand or fall !'

And Vivien answer'd frowning wrath-
fully :

'O ay, what say ye to Sir Valence, him
Whose kinsman left him watcher o'er his
wife

And two fair babes, and went to distant
lands ;

Was one year gone, and on returning
found

Not two but three ? there lay the reckling,
one

But one hour old ! What said the happy
sire ?

A seven-months' babe had been a truer gift.
Those twelve sweet moons confused his
fatherhood.'

Then answer'd Merlin, 'Nay, I know
the tale.

Sir Valence wedded with an outland
dame :

'Some cause had kept him sunder'd from
his wife :

One child they had : it lived with her :
she died :

His kinsman travelling on his own affair
Was charged by Valence to bring home
the child.

He brought, not found it therefore : take
the truth.'

'O ay,' said Vivien, 'overtune a tale.

What say ye then to sweet Sir Sagamore,
That ardent man? "to pluck the flower
in season,"

So says the song, "I trow it is no treason."

O Master, shall we call him overquick
To crop his own sweet rose before the
hour?'

And Merlin answer'd, 'Overquick art
thou

To catch a loathly plume fall'n from the
wing

Of that foul bird of rapine whose whole
prey

Is man's good name : he never wrong'd
his bride.

I know the tale. An angry gust of wind
Puff'd out his torch among the myriad-
room'd

And many a disorder'd complexities
Of Arthur's palace : then he found a door,

And darkling felt the sculptured ornament
That was on round it made it seem his
own ;

And hurried out made for the couch and
sleep.

A stainless man beside a stainless maid ;
And either slept, nor knew of other there ;

Merlin, 'Nay, I know
 dled with an outland
 ept him sunder'd from
 d : it lived with her :
 ling on his own affair
 alence to bring home
 und it therefore : take
 en, 'overtrue a tale.
 sweet Sir Sagramore,
 "to pluck the flower
 throw it is no treason."
 call him overquick
 sweet rose before the
 er'd, 'Overquick art
 ume fall'n from the
 rapine whose whole
 : he never wrong'd
 angry gust of wind
 among the myriad-
 complexities
 en he found a door,
 culptured ornament
 it made it seem his
 for the couch and
 a stainless maid ;
 new of other there ;

Till the high dawn piercing the royal rose
 In Arthur's casement glimmer'd chastely
 down,

Blushing upon them blushing, and at once
 He rose without a word and parted from
 her :

But when the thing was blazed about the
 court,

The brute world howling forced them into
 bonds,

And as it chanced they are happy, being
 pure.'

'O ay,' said Vivien, 'that were likely
 too.

What say ye then to fair Sir Percivale
 And of the horrid foulness that he wrought,
 The saintly youth, the spotless lamb of
 Christ,

Or some black wether of St. Satan's fold.
 What, in the precincts of the chapel-yard,
 Among the knightly brasses of the graves,
 And by the cold Hic Jacets of the dead !'

And Merlin answer'd careless of her
 charge,

'A sober man is Percivale and pure ;
 But once in life was fluster'd with new
 wiue,

Then paced for coolness in the chapel-
 yard ;

Where one of Satan's shepherdesses caught
 And meant to stamp him with her master's
 mark ;

And that he sinn'd is not believable ;
 For, look upon his face !—but if he sinn'd,
 The sin that practice burns into the blood,
 And not the one dark hour which brings
 remorse,

Will brand us, after, of whose fold we be :
 Or else were he, the holy king, whose
 hymns

Are chanted in the minster, worse than all.

But is your spleen froth'd out, or have ye
 more?'

And Vivien answer'd frowning yet in
 wrath :

'O ay ; what sayye to Sir Lancelot, friend
 Traitor or true? that commerce with the
 Queen,

I ask you, is it clamour'd by the child,
 Or whisper'd in the corner? do ye know
 it?'

To which he answer'd sadly, 'Yea, I
 know it.

Sir Lancelot went ambassador, at first,
 To fetch her, and she watch'd him from
 her walls.

A rumour runs, she took him for the King,
 So fixt her fancy on him : let them be.
 But have ye no one word of loyal praise
 For Arthur, blameless King and stainless
 man?'

She answer'd with a low and chuckling
 laugh :

'Man ! is he man at all, who knows and
 winks ?

Sees what his fair bride is and does, and
 winks ?

By which the good King means to blind
 himself,

And blinds himself and all the Table Round
 To all the foulness that they work. Myself
 Could call him (were it not for womanhood)
 The pretty, popular name such manhood
 earns,

Could call him the main cause of all their
 crime ;

Yea, were he not crown'd King, coward,
 and fool.'

Then Merlin to his own heart, loathing,
 said :

'O true and tender! O my liege and King!

O selfless man and stainless gentleman,
Who wouldst against thine own eye-witness
fain

Have all men true and leal, all women
pure;

How, in the mouths of base interpreters,
From over-fineness not intelligible

To things with every sense as false and foul
As the poach'd filth that floods the middle
street,

Is thy white blamelessness accounted
blame!'

But Vivien, deeming Merlin overhorne
By instance, recommenced, and let her
tongue

Rage like a fire among the noblest names,
Polluting, and imputing her whole self,
Defaming and defacing, till she left
Not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad
clean.

Her words had issue other than she
will'd.

He dragg'd his eyebrow bushes down,
and made

A snowy penthouse for his hollow eyes,
And mutter'd in himself, 'Tell *her* the
charm!

So, if she had it, would she rail on me
To snare the next, and if she have it not,
So will she rail. What did the wanton say?
'Not mount as high;' we scarce can sink
as low:

For men at most differ as Heaven and earth,
But women, worst and best, as Heaven
and Hell.

I know the Table Round, my friends of
old;

All brave, and many generous, and some
chaste.

She cloaks the scar of some repulse with
lies;

I well believe she tempted them and fail'd,
Being so bitter: for fine plots may fail,
Tho' harlots paint their talk as well as face
With colours of the heart that are not theirs.
I will not let her know: nine tithes of
times

Face-flatterer and backbiter are the same.
And they, sweet soul, that most impute a
crime

Are prone to it, and impute themselves,
Wanting the mental range; or low desire
Not to feel lowest makes them level all;
Yea, they would pare the mountain to the
plain,

To leave an equal baseness; and in this
Are harlots like the crowd, that if they find
Some stain or blemish in a name of note,
Not grieving that their greatest are so
small,

Inflate themselves with some insane
delight,

And judge all nature from her feet of clay,
Without the will to lift their eyes, and see
Her godlike head crown'd with spiritual
fire,

And touching other worlds. I am weary
of her.'

He spoke in words part heard, in
whispers part,
Half-suffocated in the hoary fell
And many-winter'd fleece of throat and
chin.

But Vivien, gathering somewhat of his
mood,
And hearing 'harlot' mutter'd twice or
thrice,

Leapt from her session on his lap, and
stood

Stiff as a viper frozen; loathsome sight,
How from the rosy lips of life and love,

Flash'd the bare-grinning skeleton of death !

White was her cheek ; sharp breaths of anger puff'd

Her fairy nostril out ; her hand half-clench'd

Went faltering sideways downward to her belt,

And feeling ; had she found a dagger there
(For in a wink the false love turns to hate)

She would have stabb'd him ; but she found it not :

His eye was calm, and suddenly she took
To bitter weeping like a beaten child,
A long, long weeping, not consolable.

Then her false voice made way, broken
with sobs :

'O crueller than was ever told in tale,
Or sung in song ! O vainly lavish'd love !
O cruel, there was nothing wild or strange,
Or seeming shameful—for what shame in love,

So love be true, and not as yours is—
nothing

Poor Vivien had not done to win his trust
Who call'd her what he call'd her—all
her crime,

All—all—the wish to prove him wholly
hers.'

She mused a little, and then clapt her
hands

Together with a wailing shriek, and said :
'Stabb'd through the heart's affections to
the heart !

Seethed like the kid in its own mother's
milk !

Kill'd with a word worse than a life of
blows !

I thought that he was gentle, being great :
O God, that I had loved a smaller man !

I should have found in him a greater
heart.

O, I, that flattering my true passion, saw
The knights, the court, the King, dark
in your light,

Who loved to make men darker than they
are,

Because of that high pleasure which I
had

To seat you sole upon my pedestal
Of worship—I am answer'd, and hence-
forth

The course of life that seem'd so flowery
to me

With you for guide and master, only you,
Becomes the sea-cliff pathway broken
short,

And ending in a ruin—nothing left,
But into some low cave to crawl, and
there,

If the wolf spare me, weep my life away,
Kill'd with inutterable unkindliness.'

She paused, she turn'd away, she hung
her head,

The snake of gold slid from her hair, the
braid

Slipt and uncoil'd itself, she wept afresh,
And the dark wood grew darker toward
the storm

In silence, while his anger slowly died
Within him, till he let his wisdom go
For ease of heart, and half believed her
true :

Call'd her to shelter in the hollow oak,
'Come from the storm,' and having no
reply,

Gazed at the heaving shoulder, and the
face

Hand-hidden, as for utmost grief or
shame ;

Then thrice essay'd, by tenderest-touching
terms,

To sleek her ruffled peace of mind, in
vain,

At last she let herself be conquer'd by him,
And as the cageling newly flown returns,
The seeming-injured simple-hearted thing
Came to her old perch back, and settled
there.

There while she sat, half-falling from his
knees,

Half-nestled at his heart, and since he saw
The slow tear creep from her closed eyelid
yet,

About her, more in kindness than in love,
The gentle wizard cast a shielding arm.
But she dislink'd herself at once and rose,
Her arms upon her breast across, and
stood,

A virtuous gentlewoman deeply wrong'd,
Upright and flush'd before him : then she
said :

‘ There must be now no passages of love
Betwixt us twain henceforward evermore;
Since, if I be what I am grossly call’d,
What should be granted which your own
gross heart

Would reckon worth the taking? I will
go.

In truth, but one thing now—better have
died

Thrice than have ask’d it once—could
make me stay—

That proof of trust—so often ask’d in
vain !

How justly, after that villain of yours,
I find with grief ! I might believe you
then,

Who knows ? once more. Lo ! what was
once to me

Mere matter of the fancy, now hath grown
The vast necessity of heart and life.

Farewell ; think gently of me, for I fear
My fate or folly, passing gayer youth

For one so old, must be to love thee still.
But ere I leave thee let me swear once
more

That if I schemed against thy peace in
this,

May yon just heaven, that darkens o’er
me, send

One flash, that, missing all things else,
may make

My scheming brain a cinder, if I lie.’

Scarce had she ceased, when out of
heaven a bolt

(For now the storm was close above them)
struck,

Furrowing a giant oak, and javelining
With darted stakes and splinters of the
wood

The dark earth round. He raised his
eyes and saw

The tree that shone white-listed thro’ the
gloom.

But Vivien, fearing heaven had heard her
oath,

And dazzled by the livid-flickering fork,
And deafen’d with the stammering cracks
and claps

That follow’d, flying back and crying out,
‘ O Merlin, tho’ you do not love me, save,
Yet save me ! ’ clung to him and hugg’d
him close ;

And call’d him dear protector in her
fright,

Nor yet forgot her practice in her fright,
But wrought upon his mood and hugg’d
him close.

The pale blood of the wizard at her touch
Took gayer colours, like an opal warm’d.
She blamed herself for telling hearsay
tales :

She shook from fear, and for her fault she
wept

Of petulancy ; she call’d him lord and liege,

Her seer, her bard, her silver star of eve,
Her God, her Merlin, the one passionate
love

Of her whole life ; and ever overhead
Bellow'd the tempest, and the rotten
branch

Snap'd in the rushing of the river-rain
Above them ; and in change of glare and
gloom

Her eyes and neck glittering went and
came ;

Till now the storm, its burst of passion
spent,

Moaning and calling out of other lands,
Had left the ravaged woodland yet once
more

To peace ; and what should not have been
had been,

For Merlin, overtalk'd and overworn,
Had yielded, told her all the charm, and
slept.

And in one moment, she put forth
the charm

Of woven paces and of waving hands,
And in the hollow oak he lay as dead,
And lost to life and use and name and
fame.

Then crying ' I have made his glory
mine,'

And shrieking out ' O fool ! ' the harlot
leapt

Adown the forest, and the thicket closed
Behind her, and the forest echo'd ' fool.'

LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

ELAINE the fair, Elaine the loveable,
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
High in her chamber up a tower to the
east

Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot ;

Which first she placed where morning's
earliest ray

Might strike it, and awake her with the
gleam ;

Then fearing rust or soilure fashion'd for it
A case of silk, and braided thereupon
All the devices blazon'd on the shield
In their own tinct, and added, of her wit,
A border fantasy of branch and flower,
And yellow-throated nestling in the nest.
Nor rested thus content, but day by day,
Leaving her household and good father,
climb'd

That eastern tower, and entering barr'd
her door,

Strip'd off the case, and read the naked
shield,

Now guess'd a hidden meaning in his
arms,

Now made a pretty history to herself
Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,
And every scratch a lance had made
upon it,

Conjecturing when and where : this cut
is fresh ;

That ten years back ; this dealt him at
Caerlyle ;

That at Caerleon ; this at Camelot :
And ah God's mercy, what a stroke was
there !

And here a thrust that might have kill'd,
but God

Broke the strong lance, and roll'd his
enemy down,

And saved him : so she lived in fantasy.

How came the lily maid by that good
shield

Of Lancelot, she that knew not ev'n his
name ?

He left it with her, when he rode to tilt
For the great diamond in the diamond
jousts,

<p>Which Arthur had ordain'd, and by that name Had named them, since a diamond was the prize.</p> <p>For Arthur, long before they crown'd him King, Roving the trackless realms of Lyonesse, Had found a glen, gray boulder and black tarn.</p> <p>A horror lived about the tarn, and clave Like its own mists to all the mountain side :</p> <p>For here two brothers, one a king, had met And fought together ; but their names were lost ; And each had slain his brother at a blow ; And down they fell and made the glen abhor'd :</p> <p>And there they lay till all their bones were bleach'd, And lichen'd into colour with the crags : And he, that once was king, had on a crown Of diamonds, one in front, and four aside. And Arthur came, and labouring up the pass, All in a misty moonshine, unawares Had trodden that crown'd skeleton, and the skull Brake from the nape, and from the skull the crown Roll'd into light, and turning on its rims Fled like a glittering rivulet to the tarn : And down the shingly scaur he plunged, and caught, And set it on his head, and in his heart Heard murmurs, 'Lo, thou likewise shalt be King.'</p> <p>Thereafter, when a King, he had the gems</p>	<p>Pluck'd from the crown, and show'd them to his knights, Saying, 'These jewels, whereupon I chanced Divinely, are the kingdom's, not the King's— For public use : henceforward let there be, Once every year, a joust for one of these : For so by nine years' proof we needs must learn Which is our mightiest, and ourselves shall grow In use of arms and manhood, till we drive The heathen, who, some say, shall rule the land Hereafter, which God hinder.' Thus he spoke :</p> <p>And eight years past, eight jousts had been, and still Had Lancelot won the diamond of the year, With purpose to present them to the Queen, When all were won ; but meaning all at once To snare her royal fancy with a boon Worth half her realm, had never spoken word.</p> <p>Now for the central diamond and the last And largest, Arthur, holding then his court Hard on the river nigh the place which now Is this world's hugest, let proclaim a joust At Camelot, and when the time drew nigh Spake (for she had been sick) to Guinevere, 'Are you so sick, my Queen, you cannot move To these fair jousts ?' 'Yea, lord,' she said, 'ye know it.'</p>
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 r it.'

'Then will ye miss,' he answer'd, 'the
 great deeds
 Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the lists,
 A sight ye love to look on.' And the
 Queen
 Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt languidly
 On Lancelot, where he stood beside the
 King.
 He thinking that he read her meaning
 there,
 'Stay with me, I am sick; my love is
 more
 Than many diamonds,' yielded; and a
 heart
 Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen
 (However much he yearn'd to make
 complete
 The tale of diamonds for his destined
 boon)
 Urged him to speak against the truth,
 and say,
 'Sir King, mine ancient wound is hardly
 whole,
 And lets me from the saddle;' and the
 King
 Glanced first at him, then her, and went
 his way.
 No sooner gone than suddenly she began:
 'To blame, my lord Sir Lancelot,
 much to blame!
 Why go ye not to these fair jousts? the
 knights
 Are half of them our enemies, and the
 crowd
 Will murmur, "Lo the shameless ones,
 who take
 Their pastime now the trustful King is
 gone!"'
 Then Lancelot vext at having lied in vain:
 'Are ye so wise? ye were not once so wise,
 My Queen, that summer, when ye loved
 me first.

Then of the crowd ye took no more
 account
 Than of the myriad cricket of the mead,
 When its own voice clings to each blade
 of grass,
 And every voice is nothing. As to
 knights,
 Them surely can I silence with all ease.
 But now my loyal worship is allow'd
 Of all men: many a bard, without
 offence,
 Has link'd our names together in his lay,
 Lancelot, the flower of bravery, Guine-
 vere,
 The pearl of beauty: and our knights at
 feast
 Have pledged us in this union, while the
 King
 Would listen smiling. How then? is
 there more?
 Has Arthur spoken aught? or would
 yourself,
 Now weary of my service and devoir,
 Henceforth be truer to your faultless lord?'
 She broke into a little scornful laugh:
 'Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faultless
 King,
 That passionate perfection, my good
 lord--
 But who can gaze upon the Sun in heaven?
 He never spake word of reproach to me,
 He never had a glimpse of mine untruth,
 He cares not for me: only here to-day
 There gleam'd a vague suspicion in his
 eyes:
 Some meddling rogue has tamper'd with
 him--else
 Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round,
 And swearing men to vows impossible,
 To make them like himself: but, friend,
 to me
 He is all fault who hath no fault at all:

<p>For who loves me must have a touch of earth ; The low sun makes the colour : I am yours, Not Arthur's, as ye know, save by the bond. And therefore hear my words : go to the jousts : The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our dream Whensweetest ; and the vermin voices here May buzz so loud—we scorn them, but they sting.'</p> <p>Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights : 'And with what face, after my pretext made, Shall I appear, O Queen, at Camelot, I Before a King who honours his own word, As if it were his God's ?'</p> <p>'Yea,' said the Queen, 'A moral child without the craft to rule, Else had he not lost me : but listen to me, If I must find you wit : we hear it said That men go down before your swear at a touch, But knowing you are Lancelot ; your great name, This conquers : hide it therefore ; go unknown : Win ! by this kiss you will : and our true King Will then allow your pretext, O my knight, As all for glory ; for to speak him true, Ye know right well, how meek soe'er he seem, No keener hunter after glory breathes. He loves it in his knights more than himself : They prove to him his work : win and return.'</p>	<p>Then got Sir Lancelot suddenly to horse, Wroth at himself. Not willing to be known, He left the barren-beaten thoroughfare, Chose the green path that show'd the rarer foot, And there among the solitary downs, Full often lost in fancy, lost his way ; Till as he traced a faintly-shadow'd track, That all in loops and links among the dales Ran to the Castle of Astolat, he saw Fired from the west, far on a hill, the towers. Thither he made, and blew the gateway horn. Then came an old, dumb, myriad-wrinkled man, Who let him into lodging and disarm'd. And Lancelot marvell'd at the wordless man ; And issuing found the Lord of Astolat With two strong sons, Sir Torre and Sir Lavaine, Moving to meet him in the castle court ; And close behind them stept the lily maid Elaine, his daughter : mother of the house There was not : some light jest among them rose With laughter dying down as the great knight Approach'd them : then the Lord of Astolat : 'Whence comest thou, my guest, and by what name Livest between the lips ? for by thy state And presence I might guess thee chief of those, After the King, who eat in Arthur's halls. Him have I seen : the rest, his Table Round, Known as they are, to me they are unknown.'</p>
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Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights :

'Known am I, and of Arthur's hall, and known,

What I by mere mischance have brought, my shield.

But since I go to joust as one unknown
At Camelot for the diamond, ask me not,
Hereafter ye shall know me—and the shield—

I pray you lend me one, if such you have,
Blank, or at least with some device not mine.'

Then said the Lord of Astolat, 'Here is Torre's :

Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir Torre.
And so, God wot, his shield is blank enough.

His ye can have.' Then added plain Sir Torre,

'Yea, since I cannot use it, ye may have it.'

Here laugh'd the father saying, 'Fie, Sir Churl,

Is that an answer for a noble knight?
Allow him! but Lavaine, my younger here,

He is so full of lustihood, he will ride,
Joust for it, and win, and bring it in an hour,

And set it in this damsel's golden hair,
To make her thrice as wilful as before.'

'Nay, father, nay good father, shame me not

Before this noble knight,' said young Lavaine,

'For nothing. Surely I but play'd on Torre :

He seem'd so sullen, vext he could not go :
A jest, no more ! for, knight, the maiden dreamt

That some one put this diamond in her hand,

And that it was too slippery to be held,
And slipt and fell into some pool or stream,
The castle-well, belike ; and then I said
That *if* I went and *if* I fought and won it
(But all was jest and joke among ourselves)
Then must she keep it safelier. All was jest.
But, father, give me leave, an if he will,
To ride to Camelot with this noble knight :
Win shall I not, but do my best to win :
Young as I am, yet would I do my best.'

'So ye will grace me,' answer'd Lancelot,

Smiling a moment, 'with your fellowship
O'er these waste downs whereon I lost myself,

Then were I glad of you as guide and friend :

And you shall win this diamond—as I hear,
It is a fair large diamond,—if ye may,
And yield it to this maiden, if ye will.'

'A fair large diamond,' added plain Sir Torre,

'Such be for queens, and not for simple maids.'

Then she, who held her eyes upon the ground,

Elaine, and heard her name so tost about,
Flash'd slightly at the slight disparagement
Before the stranger knight, who, looking at her,

Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus return'd :

'If what is fair be but for what is fair,
And only queens are to be counted so,
Rash were my judgment then, who deem this maid

Might wear as fair a jewel as is on earth,
Not violating the bond of like to like.'

He spoke and ceased : the lily maid Elaine,

<p>Won by the mellow voice before she look'd, Lifted her eyes, and read his lineaments. The great and guilty love he bare the Queen, In battle with the love he bare his lord, Had marr'd his face, and mark'd it ere his time. Another sinning on such heights with one, The flower of all the west and all the world, Had been the sleeker for it : but in him His mood was often like a fiend, and rose And drove him into wastes and solitudes For agony, who was yet a living soul. Marr'd as he was, he seem'd the goodliest man That ever among ladies ate in hall, And noblest, when she lifted up her eyes. However marr'd, of more than twice her years, Seam'd with an ancient swordcut on the cheek, And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up her eyes And loved him, with that love which was her doom.</p> <p>Then the great knight, the darling of the court, Loved of the loveliest, into that rude hall Stept with all grace, and not with half disdain Hid under grace, as in a smaller time, But kindly man moving among his kind : Whom they with meats and vintage of their best And talk and minstrel melody entertain'd. And much they ask'd of court and Table Round, And ever well and readily answer'd he : But Lancelot, when they glanced at Guinevere, Sudden'y speaking of the wordless man,</p>	<p>Heard from the Baron that, ten years before, The heathen caught and reft him of his tongue. ' He learnt and warn'd me of their fierce design Against my house, and him they caught and maim'd ; But I, my sons, and little daughter fled From bonds or death, and dwelt among the woods By the great river in a boatman's hut. Dull days were those, till our good Arthur broke The Pagan yet once more on Badon hill.'</p> <p>' O there, great lord, doubtless,' Lavaine said, rapt By all the sweet and sudden passion of youth Toward greatness in its elder, ' you have fought. O tell us—for we live apart—you know Of Arthur's glorious wars.' And Lancelot spoke And answer'd him at full, as having been With Arthur in the fight which all day long Rang by the white mouth of the violent Glen ; And in the four loud battles by the shore Of Douglas ; that on Bassa ; then the war That thunder'd in and out the gloomy skirts Of Celidon the forest ; and again By castle Gurnion, where the glorious King Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's Head, Carved of one emerald center'd in a sun Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he breathed ; And at Caerleon had he help'd his lord, When the strong neighings of the wild white Horse</p>
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Set every gilded parapet shuddering;
 And up in Agned-Cathregonion too,
 And down the waste sand-shores of Trath
 Treroit,
 Where many a heathen fell; 'and on the
 mount
 Of Badon I myself beheld the King
 Charge at the head of all his Table Round,
 And all his leg'ons crying Christ and him,
 And break them; and I saw him, after,
 stand
 High on a heap of slain, from spur to
 plume
 Red as the rising sun with heathen blood,
 And seeing me, with a great voice he cried,
 "They are broken, they are broken!"
 for the King,
 However mild he seems at home, nor
 cares
 For triumph in our mimic wars, the
 jousts—
 For if his own knight cast him down, he
 laughs
 Saying, his knights are better men than
 he—
 Yet in this heathen war the fire of God
 Fills him: I never saw his like: there lives
 No greater leader.'

While he utter'd this,
 Low to her own heart said the lily maid,
 'Save your great self, fair lord;' and
 when he fell
 From talk of war to traits of pleasantry—
 Being mirthful he, but in a stately kind—
 She still took note that when the living
 smile
 Died from his lips, across him came a cloud
 Of melancholy severe, from which again,
 Whenever in her hovering to and fro
 The lily maid had striven to make him
 cheer,
 There brake a sudden-beaming tenderness

Of manners and of nature: and she
 thought
 That all was nature, all, perchance, for
 her.
 And all night long his face before her lived,
 As when a painter, poring on a face,
 Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the man
 Behind it, and so paints him that his face,
 The shape and colour of a mind and life,
 Lives for his children, ever at its best
 And fullest; so the face before her lived,
 Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence,
 full
 Of noble things, and held her from her
 sleep.
 Till rathe she rose, half-cheated in the
 thought
 She needs must bid farewell to sweet
 Lavaine.
 First as in fear, step after step, she stole
 Down the long tower-stairs, hesitating:
 Anon, she heard Sir Lancelot cry in the
 court,
 'This shield, my friend, where is it?'
 and Lavaine
 Past inward, as she came from out the
 tower.
 There to his proud horse Lancelot turn'd,
 and smooth'd
 The glossy shoulder, humming to himself.
 Half-envious of the flattering hand, she
 drew
 Nearer and stood. He look'd, and more
 amazed
 Than if seven men had set upon him, saw
 The maiden standing in the dewy light.
 He had not dream'd she was so beautiful.
 Then came on him a sort of sacred fear,
 For silent, tho' he greeted her, she stood
 Rapt on his face as if it were a God's.
 Suddenly flash'd on her a wild desire,
 That he should wear her favour at the tilt.
 She braved a riotous heart in asking for it.

<p>'Fair lord, whose name I know not— noble it is, I well believe, the noblest—will you wear My favour at this tourney?' 'Nay,' said he, 'Fair lady, since I never yet have worn Favour of any lady in the lists. Such is my wont, as those, who know me, know.' 'Yea, so,' she answer'd; 'then in wearing mine Needs must be lesser likelihood, noble lord, That those who know should know you.' And he turn'd Her counsel up and down within his mind, And found it true, and answer'd, 'True, my child. Well, I will wear it: fetch it out to me: What is it?' and she told him 'A red sleeve Broider'd with pearls,' and brought it: then he bound Her token on his helmet, with a smile Saying, 'I never yet have done so much For any maiden living,' and the blood Sprang to her face and fill'd her with delight; But left her all the paler, when Lavaine Returning brought the yet-unblazon'd shield, His brother's; which he gave to Lancelot, Who parted with his own to fair Elaine: 'Do me this grace, my child, to have my shield In keeping till I come.' 'A grace to me,' She answer'd, 'twice to-day. I am your squire!' Whereat Lavaine said, laughing, 'Lily maid, For fear our people call you Lily maid In earnest, let me bring your colour back; Once, twice, and thrice: now get you hence to bed:'</p>	<p>So kiss'd her, and Sir Lancelot his own hand, And thus they moved away: she stay'd a minute, Then made a sudden step to the gate, and there— Her bright hair blown about the serious face Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's kiss— Paused by the gateway, standing near the shield In silence, while she watch'd their arms far-off Sparkle, until they dipt below the downs. Then to her tower she climb'd, and took the shield, There kept it, and so lived in fantasy. Meanwhile the new companions past away Far o'er the long backs of the bushless downs, To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived a knight Not far from Camelot, now for forty years A hermit, who had pray'd, labour'd and pray'd, And ever labouring had scoop'd himself In the white rock a chapel and a hall On massive columns, like a shoreeliff cave, And cells and chambers: all were fair and dry; The green light from the meadows under- neath Struck up and lived along the milky roofs; And in the meadows tremulous aspen-trees And poplars made a noise of falling showers. And thither wending there that night they bode. But when the next day broke from un- derground,</p>
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<p>And shot red fire and shadows thro' the cave, They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and rode away: Then Lancelot saying, 'Hear, but hold my name Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the Lake,' Abash'd Lavaine, whose instant rever- ence, Dearer to true young hearts than their own praise, But left him leave to stammer, 'Is it indeed?' And after muttering 'The great Lancelot,' At last he got his breath and answer'd, 'One, One have I seen—that other, our liege lord, The dread Pendragon, Britain's King of kings, Of whom the people talk mysteriously, He will be there—then were I stricken blind That minute, I might say that I had seen.'</p> <p>So spake Lavaine, and when they reach'd the lists By Camelot in the meadow, let his eyes Run thro' the peopled gallery which half round Lay like a rainbow fall'n upon the grass, Until they found the clear-faced King, who sat Robed in red samite, easily to be known, Since to his crown the golden dragon clung, And down his robe the dragon writhed in gold, And from the carven-work behind him crept Two dragons gilded, sloping down to make</p>	<p>Arms for his chair, while all the rest of them Thro' knots and loops and folds innu- merable Fled ever thro' the woodwork, till they found The new design wherein they lost them- selves, Yet with all ease, so tender was the work: And, in the costly canopy o'er him set, Blazed the last diamond of the nameless king.</p> <p>Then Lancelot answer'd young Lavaine and said, 'Me you call great: mine is the firmer seat, The truer lance: but there is many a youth Now crescent, who will come to all I am And overcome it; and in me there dwells No greatness, save it be some far-off touch Of greatness to know well I am not great: There is the man.' And Lavaine gaped upon him As on a thing miraculous, and anon The trumpets blew; and then did either side, They that assail'd, and they that held the lists, Set lance in rest, strike spur, suddenly move, Meet in the midst, and there so furiously Shock, that a man far-off might well perceive, If any man that day were left afield, The hard earth shake, and a low thunder of arms.</p> <p>And Lancelot bode a little, till he saw Which were the weaker; then he hurl'd into it Against the stronger: little need to speak Of Lancelot in his glory! King, duke, earl,</p>
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Count, baron—whom he smote, he overthrew.

But in the field were Lancelot's kith and kin,
Ranged with the Table Round that held the lists,

Strong men, and wrathful that a stranger knight

Should do and almost overdo the deeds
Of Lancelot ; and one said to the other,
‘Lo !

What is he ? I do not mean the force alone—

The grace and versatility of the man !
Is it not Lancelot ?’ ‘When has Lancelot worn

Favour of any lady in the lists ?

Not such his wont, as we, that know him, know.’

‘How then ? who then ?’ a fury seized them all,

A fiery family passion for the name
Of Lancelot, and a glory one with theirs.
They couch'd their spears and prick'd their steeds, and thus,

Their plumes driv'n backward by the wind they made

In moving, all together down upon him
Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North-sea,
Green-glimmering toward the summit, bears, with all

Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies,

Down on a bark, and overbears the bark,
And him that helms it, so they overbore
Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a spear
Down-glancing lamed the charger, and a spear

Prick'd sharply his own cuirass, and the head

Pierced thro' his side, and there snapt, and remain'd.

Then Sir Lavaine did well and worshipfully ;

He bore a knight of old repute to the earth,

And brought his horse to Lancelot where he lay.

He up the side, sweating with agony, got,
But thought to do while he might yet endure,

And being lastly holpen by the rest,
His party,—tho' it seem'd half-miracle
To those he fought with,—drave his kith and kin,

And all the Table Round that held the lists,

Back to the barrier ; then the trumpets blew

Proclaiming his the prize, who wore the sleeve

Of scarlet, and the pearls ; and all the knights,

His party, cried ‘Advance and take thy prize

The diamond ;’ but he answer'd, ‘Diamond me

No diamonds ! for God's love, a little air !
Prize me no prizes, for my prize is death !

Hence will I, and I charge you, follow me not.’

He spoke, and vanish'd suddenly from the field

With young Lavaine into the poplar grove.
There from his charger down he slid, and sat,

Gasping to Sir Lavaine, ‘Draw the lance-head :’

‘Ah my sweet lord Sir Lancelot,’ said Lavaine,

‘I dread me, if I draw it, you will die.’
But he, ‘I die already with it : draw—

Draw,’—and Lavaine drew, and Sir Lancelot gave

A marvellous great shriek and ghastly
groan,
And half his blood burst forth, and down
he sank
For the pure pain, and wholly swoon'd
away.
Then came the hermit out and bare him
in,
There stanch'd his wound ; and there, in
daily doubt
Whether to live or die, for many a week
Hid from the wide world's rumour by the
grove
Of poplars with their noise of falling
showers,
And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he lay.

But on that day when Lancelot fled the
lists,
His party, knights of utmost North and
West,
Lords of waste marches, kings of desolate
isles,
Came round their great Pendragon, saying
to him,
'Lo, Sire, our knight, thro' whom we
won the day,
Hath gone sore wounded, and hath left
his prize
Untaken, crying that his prize is death.'
'Heaven hinder,' said the King, 'that
such an one,
So great a knight as we have seen to-day—
He seem'd to me another Lancelot—
Yea, twenty times I thought him Lance-
lot—
He must not pass uncared for. Where-
fore, rise,
O Gawain, and ride forth and find the
knight.
Wounded and wearied needs must he be
near.
I charge you that you get at once to horse,

And, knights and kings, there breathes
not one of you
Will deem this prize of ours is rashly
given :
His prowess was too wondrous. We will
do him
No customary honour : since the knight
Came not to us, of us to claim the prize,
Ourselves will send it after. Rise and take
This diamond, and deliver it, and return,
And bring us where he is, and how he
fares,
And cease not from your quest until ye
find.'

So saying, from the carven flower above,
To which it made a restless heart, he took,
And gave, the diamond : then from where
he sat
At Arthur's right, with smiling face arose,
With smiling face and frowning heart, a
Prince
In the mid might and flourish of his May,
Gawain, surnamed The Courteous, fair
and strong,
And after Lancelot, Tristram, and
Geraint
And Gareth, a good knight, but there-
withal
Sir Modred's brother, and the child of
Lot,
Nor often loyal to his word, and now
Wroth that the King's command to sally
forth
In quest of whom he knew not, made him
leave
The banquet, and concourse of knights
and kings.

So all in wrath he got to horse and
went ;
While Arthur to the banquet, dark in
mood,

Past, thinking 'Is it Lancelot who hath come Despite the wound he spake of, all for gain Of glory, and hath added wound to wound, And ridd'n away to die?' So fear'd the King, And, after two days' tarriance there, return'd. Then when he saw the Queen, embrac- ing ask'd, 'Love, are you yet so sick?' 'Nay, lord,' she said. 'And where is Lancelot?' Then the Queen amazed, 'Was he not with you? won he not your prize?' 'Nay, but one like him.' 'Why that like was he.' And when the King demanded how she knew, Said, 'Lord, no sooner had ye parted from us, Than Lancelot told me of a common talk That men went down before his spear at a touch, But knowing he was Lancelot; his great name Conquer'd; and therefore would he hide his name From all men, ev'n the King, and to this end Had made the pretext of a hindering wound, That he might joust unknown of all, and learn If his old prowess were in aught decay'd; And added, "Our true Arthur, when he learns, Will well allow my pretext, as for gain Of purer glory."'	'Far lovelier in our Lancelot had it been, In lieu of idly dallying with the truth, To have trusted me as he hath trusted thee. Surely his King and most familiar friend Might well have kept his secret. True, indeed, Albeit I know my knights fantastical, So fine a fear in our large Lancelot Must needs have moved my laughter : now remains But little cause for laughter : his own kin— Ill news, my Queen, for all who love him, this !— His kith and kin, not knowing, set upon him ; So that he went sore wounded from the field : Yet good news too : for goodly hopes are mine That Lancelot is no more a lonely heart. He wore, against his wont, upon his helm A sleeve of scarlet, broider'd with great pearls, Some gentle maiden's gift.'
Then replied the King :	'Yea, lord,' she said, 'Thy hopes are mine,' and saying that, she choked, And sharply turn'd about to hide her face, Past to her chamber, and there flung herself Down on the great King's couch, and writhed upon it, And clench'd her fingers till they bit the palm, And shriek'd out 'Traitor' to the un- hearing wall, Then flash'd into wild tears, and rose again, And moved about her palace, proud and pale.

<p>Gawain the while thro' all the region round Rode with his diamond, wearied of the quest, Touch'd at all points, except the poplar grove, And came at last, tho' late, to Astolat: Whom glittering in enamell'd arms the maid Glanced at, and cried, 'What news from Camelot, lord?' What of the knight with the red sleeve?' 'He won.' 'I knew it,' she said. 'But parted from the jousts Hurt in the side,' whereat she caught her breath; Thro' her own side she felt the sharp lance go; Thereon she smote her hand: wellnigh she swoon'd: And, while he gazed wonderingly at her, came The Lord of Astolat out, to whom the Prince Reported who he was, and on what quest Sent, that he bore the prize and could not find The victor, but had ridd'n a random round To seek him, and had wearied of the search. To whom the Lord of Astolat, 'Bide with us, And ride no more at random, noble Prince! Here was the knight, and here he left a shield; This will he send or come for: furthermore Our son is with him; we shall hear anon, Needs must we hear.' To this the cour- teous Prince Accorded with his wonted courtesy,</p>	<p>Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it, And stay'd; and cast his eyes on fair Elaine: Where could be found face daintier? then her shape From forehead down to foot, perfect— again From foot to forehead exquisitely turn'd: 'Well—if I bide, lo! this wild flower for me! And oft they met among the garden yews, And there he set himself to play upon her With sallying wit, free flashes from a height Above her, graces of the court, and songs, Sighs, and slow smiles, and golden elo- quence And amorous adulation, till the maid Rebell'd against it, saying to him, 'Prince, O loyal nephew of our noble King, Why ask you not to see the shield he left, Whence you might learn his name? Why slight your King, And lose the quest he sent you on, and prove No surer than our falcon yesterday, Who lost the hern we slipt him at, and went To all the winds?' 'Nay, by mine head,' said he, 'I lose it, as we lose the lark in heaven, O damsel, in the light of your blue eyes; But an ye will it let me see the shield.' And when the shield was brought, and Gawain saw Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crown'd with gold, Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh, and mock'd: 'Right was the King! our Lancelot! that true man! 'And right was I,' she answer'd merrily, 'I,</p>
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Who dream'd my knight the greatest knight of all.'
 'And if I dream'd,' said Gawain, 'that you love
 This greatest knight, your pardon! lo, ye know it!
 Speak therefore: shall I waste myself in vain?'
 Full simple was her answer, 'What know I?
 My brethren have been all my fellowship;
 And I, when often they have talk'd of love,
 Wish'd it had been my mother, for they talk'd,
 Meseem'd, of what they knew not; so myself—
 I know not if I know what true love is,
 But if I know, then, if I love not him,
 I know there is none other I can love.'
 'Yes, by God's death,' said he, 'ye love him well,
 But would not, knew ye what all others know,
 And whom he loves.' 'So be it,' cried Elaine,
 And lifted her fair face and moved away:
 But he pursued her, calling, 'Stay a little!
 One golden minute's grace! he wore your sleeve:
 Would he break faith with one I may not name?
 Must our true man change like a leaf at last?
 Nay—like enow: why then, far be it from me
 To cross our mighty Lancelot in his loves!
 And, damsel, for I deem you know full well
 Where your great knight is hidden, let me leave
 My quest with you; the diamond also: here!
 For if you love, it will be sweet to give it;

And if he love, it will be sweet to have it
 From your own hand; and whether he love or not,
 A diamond is a diamond. Fare you well
 A thousand times!—a thousand times farewell!
 Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we two
 May meet at court hereafter: there, I think,
 So ye will learn the courtesies of the court,
 We two shall know each other.'

Then he gave,
 And slightly kiss'd the hand to which he gave,
 The diamond, and all wearied of the quest
 Leapt on his horse, and carolling as he went
 A true-love ballad, lightly rode away.

Thence to the court he past; there told the King
 What the King knew, 'Sir Lancelot is the knight.'
 And added, 'Sire, my liege, so much I learnt;
 But fail'd to find him tho' I rode all round
 The region: but I lighted on the maid
 Whose sleeve he wore; she loves him; and to her,
 Deeming our courtesy is the truest law,
 I gave the diamond: she will render it;
 For by mine head she knows his hiding-place.'

The seldom-frowning King frown'd, and replied,
 'Too courteous truly! ye shall go no more
 On quest of mine, seeing that ye forget
 Obedience is the courtesy due to kings.'

He spake and parted. Wroth, but all in awe,

For twenty strokes of the blood, without
a word,
Linger'd that other, staring after him ;
Then shook his hair, strode off, and buzz'd
abroad

About the maid of Astolat, and her love.
All ears were prick'd at once, all tongues
were loosed :

'The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lancelot,
Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Astolat.'
Some read the King's face, some the
Queen's, and all

Had marvel what the maid might be, but
most

Predoom'd her as unworthy. One old
dame

Came suddenly on the Queen with the
sharp news.

She, that had heard the noise of it
before,

But sorrowing Lancelot should have
stoop'd so low,

Marr'd her friend's aim with pale tran-
quillity.

So ran the tale like fire about the court,
Fire in dry stubble a nine-days' wonder
flared :

Till ev'n the knights at banquet twice or
thrice

Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the
Queen,

And pledging Lancelot and the lily maid
Smiled at each other, while the Queen,
who sat

With lips severely placid, felt the knot
Climb in her throat, and with her feet
unseen

Crush'd the wild passion out against the
floor

Beneath the banquet, where the meats
became

As wormwood, and she hated all who
pledged.

But far away the maid in Astolat,
Her guiltless rival, she that ever kept
The one-day-seen Sir Lancelot in her
heart,

Came to her father, while he mused alone,
His knee, stroked his gray face and
said,

'Father, you call me wilful, and the fault
Is yours who let me have my will, and
now,

Sweet father, will you let me lose my
wits ?'

'Nay,' said he, 'surely.' 'Wherefore, let
me hence,'

She answer'd, 'and find out our dear
Lavaine,'

'Ye will not lose your wits for dear
Lavaine :

Bide,' answer'd he : 'we needs must hear
anon

Of him, and of that other.' 'Ay,' she
said,

'And of that other, for I needs must hence
And find that other, wheresoe'er he be,
And with mine own hand give his diamond
to him,

Least I be found as faithless in the quest
As yon proud Prince who left the quest
to me.

Sweet father, I behold him in my dreams
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,
Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's
aid.

The gentler-born the maiden, the more
bound,

My father, to be sweet and serviceable
To noble knights in sickness, as ye know
When these have worn their tokens : let
me hence

I pray you.' Then her father nodding
said,

'Ay, ay, the diamond : wit ye well, my
child,



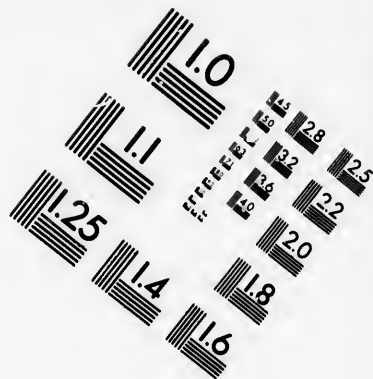
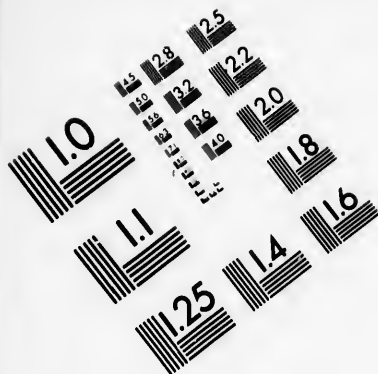
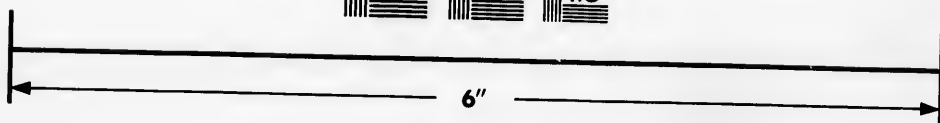
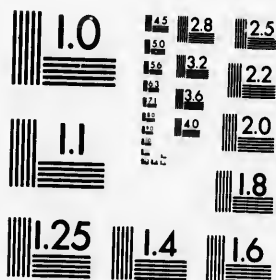


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<p>Right fain were I to learn this knight were whole, Being our greatest : yea, and you must give it— And sure I think this fruit is hung too high For any mouth to gape for save a queen's— Nay, I mean nothing : so then, get you gone, Being so very wilful you must go.'</p> <p>Lightly, her suit allow'd, she slipt away, And while she made her ready for her ride, Her father's latest word humm'd in her ear, 'Being so very wilful you must go,' And changed itself and echo'd in her heart, 'Being so very wilful you must die.' But she was happy enough and shook it off, As we shake off the bee that buzzes at us ; And in her heart she answer'd it and said, 'What matter, so I help him back to life ?' Then far away with good Sir Torre for guide Rode o'er the long backs of the bushless downs To Camelot, and before the city-gates Came on her brother with a happy face Making a roan horse caper and curvet For pleasure all about a field of flowers : Whom when she saw, 'Lavaine,' she cried, 'Lavaine, How fares my lord Sir Lancelot ?' He amazed, 'Torre and Elaine ! why here ? Sir Lancelot ! How know ye my lord's name is Lance- lot ?' But when the maid had told him all her tale, Then turn'd Sir Torre, and being in his moods Left them, and under the strange-statued gate,</p>	<p>Where Arthur's wars were render'd mystically, Past up the still rich city to his kin, His own far blood, which dwelt at Camelot ; And her, Lavaine across the poplar grove Led to the caves : there first she saw the casque Of Lancelot on the wall : her scarlet sleeve, Tho' carved and cut, and half the pearls away, Stream'd from it still ; and in her heart she laugh'd, Because he had not loosed it from his helm, But meant once more perchance to tourney in it. And when they gain'd the cell wherein he slept, His battle-writen arms and mighty hands Lay naked on the wolfskin, and a dream Of dragging down his enemy made them move. Then she that saw him lying unsleek, unshorn, Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself, Utter'd a little tender dolorous cry. The sound not wonted in a place so still Woke the sick knight, and while he roll'd his eyes Yet blank from sleep, she started to him, saying, 'Your prize the diamond sent you by the King :' His eyes glisten'd : she fancied 'Is it for me ?' And when the maid had told him all the tale Of King and Prince, the diamond sent, the quest Assign'd to her not worthy of it, she knelt Full lowly by the corners of his bed,</p>
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And laid the diamond in his open hand.
Her face was near, and as we kiss the
child
That does the task assign'd, he kiss'd her
face.
At once she slipt like water to the floor.
'Alas,' he said, 'your ride hath wearied
you.
Rest must you have.' 'No rest for me,'
she said ;
'Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at rest.'
What might she mean by that ? his large
black eyes,
Yet larger thro' his leanness, dwelt upon
her,
Till all her heart's sad secret blazed itself
In the heart's colours on her simple face ;
And Lancelot look'd and was perplex in
mind,
And being weak in body said no more ;
But did not love the colour ; woman's love,
Save one, he not regarded, and so turn'd
Sighing, and feign'd a sleep until he slept.

Then rose Elaine and glided thro' the
fields,
And past beneath the weirdly-sculptured
gates
Far up the dim rich city to her kin ;
There bode the night : but woke with
dawn, and past
Down thro' the dim rich city to the fields,
Thence to the cave : so day by day she
past
In either twilight ghost-like to and fro
Gliding, and every day she tended him,
And likewise many a night : and Lancelot
Would, tho' he call'd his wound a little
hurt
Whereof he should be quickly whole, at
times
Brain-feverous in his heat and agony,
seem

Uncourteous, even he : but the meek
maid
Sweetly forbore him ever, being to him
Meeker than any child to a rough nurse,
Milder than any mother to a sick child,
And never woman yet, since man's first
fall,
Did kindlier unto man, but her deep love
Uppore her ; till the hermit, skill'd in all
The simples and the science of that time,
Told him that her fine care had saved his
life.
And the sick man forgot her simple blush,
Would call her friend and sister, sweet
Elaine,
Would listen for her coming and regret
Her parting step, and held her tenderly,
And loved her with all love except the love
Of man and woman when they love their
best,
Closest and sweetest, and had died the
death
In any knightly fashion for her sake.
And peradventure had he seen her first
She might have made this and that other
world
Another world for the sick man ; but now
The shackles of an old love straiten'd him,
His honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.
Yet the great knight in his mid-sick-
ness made
Full many a holy vow and pure resolve.
These, as but born of sickness, could not
live :
For when the blood ran lustier in him
again,
Full often the bright image of one face,
Making a treacherous quiet in his heart,
Dispersed his resolution like a cloud.
Then if the maiden, while that ghostly
grace

<p>Beam'd on his fancy, spoke, he answer'd not, Or short and coldly, and she knew right well What the rough sickness meant, but what this meant She knew not, and the sorrow dimm'd her sight, And drave her ead her time across the fields Far into the rich city, where alone She murmur'd, 'Vain, in vain : it cannot be. He will not love me : how then ? must I die ?' Then as a little helpless innocent bird, That has but one plain passage of few notes, Will sing the simple passage o'er and o'er For all an April morning, till the ear Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid Went half the night repeating, 'Must I die ?' And now to right she turn'd, and now to left, And found no ease in turning or in rest ; And 'Him or death,' she mutter'd, 'death or him,' Again and like a burthen, 'Him or death.'</p> <p>But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt was whole, To Astolat returning rode the three. There morn by morn, arraying her sweet self In that wherein she deem'd she look'd her best, She came before Sir Lancelot, for she thought 'If I be loved, these are my festal robes, If not, the victim's flowers before he fall.' And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid</p>	<p>That she should ask some goodly gift of him For her own self or hers ; 'and do not shun To speak the wish most near to your true heart ; Such service have ye done me, that I make My will of yours, and Prince and Lord am I In mine own land, and what I will I can.' Then like a ghost she lifted up her face, But like a ghost without the power to speak. And Lancelot saw that she withheld her wish, And bode among them yet a little space Till he should learn it ; and one morn it chanced He found her in among the garden yews, And said, 'Delay no longer, speak your wish, Seeing I go to-day : ' then out she brake : 'Going and we shall never see you more. And I must die for want of one bold word.' 'Sp' that I live to hear,' he said, 'is ours.' Then suddenly and passionately she spoke : 'I have gone mad. I love you : let me die.' 'Ah, sister,' answer'd Lancelot, 'what is this ?' And innocently extending her white arms, 'Your love,' she said, 'your love—to be your wife.' And Lancelot answer'd, 'Had I chosen to wed, I had been wedded earlier, sweet Elaine : But now there never will be wife of mine.' 'No, no,' she cried, 'I care not to be wife, But to be with you still, to see your face, To serve you, and to follow you thro' the world.'</p>
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I be wife of mine.'
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to see your face,
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And Lancelot answer'd, 'Nay, the world,
the world,
All ear and eye, with such a stupid heart
To interpret ear and eye, and such a
tongue
To blare its own interpretation—nay,
Full ill then should I quit your brother's
love,
And your good father's kindness.' And
she said,
'Not to be with you, not to see your face—
Alas for me then, my good days are done.'
'Nay, noble maid,' he answer'd, 'ten
times nay!
This is not love: but love's first flash in
youth,
Most common: yea, I know it of mine
own self:
And you yourself will smile at your own
self
Hereafter, when you yield your flower of
life
To one more fitly yours, not thrice your
age:
And then will I, for true you are and
sweet
Beyond mine old belief in womanhood,
More specially should your good knight
be poor,
Endow you with broad land and territory
Even to the half my realm beyond the
seas,
So that would make you happy: further-
more,
Ev'n to the death, as tho' ye were my
blood,
In all your quarrels will I be your knight.
This will I do, dear damsel, for your sake,
And more than this I cannot.'

While he spoke
She neither blush'd nor shook, but
deathly-pale

Stood grasping what was nearest, then
replied:
'Of all this will I nothing;' and so fell,
And thus they bore her swooning to her
tower.

Then spake, to whom thro' those black
walls of yew
Their talk had pierced, her father: 'Ay,
a flash,
I fear me, that will strike my blossom
dead.
Too courteous are ye, fair Lord Lancelot.
I pray you, use some rough discourtesy
To blunt or break her passion.'

Lancelot said,
'That were against me: what I can I
will;'
And there that day remain'd, and toward
even
Sent for his shield: full meekly rose the
maid,
Stript off the case, and gave the naked
shield;
Then, when she heard his horse upon the
stones,
Unclasping flung the casement back, and
look'd
Down on his helm, from which her sleeve
had gone.
And Lancelot knew the little clinking
sound;
And she by tact of love was well aware
That Lancelot knew that she was looking
at him.
And yet he glanced not up, nor wav'd
his hand,
Nor bad farewell, but sadly rode away.
This was the one discourtesy that he used.

So in her tower alone the maiden sat:
His very shield was gone; only the case,

<p>Her own poor work, her empty labour, left. But still she heard him, still his picture form'd And grew between her and the pictured wall. Then came her father, saying in low tones, 'Have comfort,' whom she greeted quietly. Then came her brethren saying, 'Peace to thee, Sweet sister,' whom she answer'd with all calm. But when they left her to herself again, Death, like a friend's voice from a distant field Approaching thro' the darkness, call'd ; the owls Wailing had power upon her, and she milt Her fancies with the sorrow-rifted glooms Of evening, and the moanings of the wind.</p> <p>And in those days she made a little song, And call'd her song 'The Song of Love and Death,' And sang it : sweetly could she make and sing.</p> <p>'Sweet is true love tho' given in vain, in vain ; And sweet is death who puts an end to pain : I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.</p> <p>'Love, art thou sweet? then bitter death must be : Love, thou art bitter ; sweet is death to me. O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.</p> <p>'Sweet love, that seems not made to fade away,</p>	<p>Sweet death, that seems to make us love- less clay, I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.</p> <p>'I fain would follow love, if that could be ; I needs must follow death, who calls for me ; Call and I follow, I follow ! let me die.'</p> <p>High with the last line scaled her voice, and this, All in a fiery dawning wild with wind That shook her tower, the brothers heard, and thought With shuddering, 'Hark the Phantom of the house That ever shrieks before a death,' and call'd The father, and all three in hurry and fear Ran to her, and lo ! the blood-red light of dawn Flared on her face, she shrilling, 'Let me die !'</p> <p>As when we dwell upon a word we know, Repeating, till the word we know so well Becomes a wonder, and we know not why, So dwelt the father on her face, and thought 'Is this Elaine?' till back the maiden fell, Then gave a languid hand to each, and lay, Speaking a still good-morrow with her eyes. At last she said, 'Sweet brothers, yester- night I seem'd a curious little maid again, As happy as when we dwelt among the woods, And when ye used to take me with the flood</p>
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Up the great river in the boatman's boat.
Only ye would not pass beyond the cape
That has the poplar on it : there ye fixt
Your limit, oft returning with the tide.
And yet I cried because ye would not pass
Beyond it, and far up the shining flood
Until we found the palace of the King.
And yet ye would not ; but this night I
dream'd

That I was all alone upon the flood,
And then I said, "Now shall I have my
will :"

And there I woke, but still the wish
remain'd.

So let me hence that I may pass at last
Beyond the poplar and far up the flood,
Until I find the palace of the King.
There will I enter in among them all,
And no man there will dare to mock at
me ;

But there the fine Gawain will wonder at
me,

And there the great Sir Lancelot muse
at me ;

Gawain, who bad a thousand farewells to
me,

Lancelot, who coldly went, nor bad me
one :

And there the King will know me and
my love,

And there the Queen herself will pity me,
And all the gentle court will welcome
me,

And after my long voyage I shall rest !'

'Peace,' said her father, 'O my child,
ye seem

Light-headed, for what force is yours to
go

So far, being sick ? and wherefore would
ye look

On this proud fellow again, who scorns
us all ?'

Then the rough Torre began to heave
and move,

And bluster into stormy sobs and say,
'I never loved him : an I meet with him,
I care not howsoever great he be,
Then will I strike at him and strike him
down,

Give me good fortune, I will strike him
dead,

For this discomfort he hath done the
house.'

To whom the gentle sister made reply,
'Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor be
wroth,

Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's fault
Not to love me, than it is mine to love
Him of all men who seems to me the
highest.'

'Highest ?' the father answer'd, echoing
'highest ?'

(He meant to break the passion in her)
'nay,

Daughter, I know not what you call the
highest ;

But this I know, for all the people know it,
He loves the Queen, and in an open shame :
And she returns his love in open shame ;
If this be high, what is it to be low ?'

Then spake the lily maid of Astolat :
'Sweet father, all too faint and sick am I
For anger : these are slanders : never yet
Was noble man but made ignoble talk.

He makes no friend who never made a foe.
But now it is my glory to have loved
One peerless, without stain : so let me
pass,

My father, howsoever I seem to you,
Not all unhappy, having loved God's best
And greatest, tho' my love had no return :
Yet, seeing you desire your child to live,

Thanks, but you work against your own desire ;

For if I could believe the things you say I should but die the sooner ; wherefore cease,

Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly man Hither, and let me shrive me clean, and die.'

So when the ghostly man had come and gone,

She with a face, bright as for sin forgiven, Besought Lavaine to write as she devised A letter, word for word ; and when he ask'd,

'Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear lord? Then will I bear it gladly ;' she replied, 'For Lancelot and the Queen and all the world,

But I myself must bear it.' Then he wrote The letter she devised ; which being writ And folded, 'O sweet father, tender and true,

Deny me not,' she said — 'ye never yet Denied my fancies — this, however strange, My latest : lay the letter in my hand A little ere I die, and close the hand Upon it ; I shall guard it even in death. And when the heat is gone from out my heart,

Then take the little bed on which I died For Lancelot's love, and deck it like the Queen's

For richness, and me also like the Queen In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.

And let there be prepared a chariot-bier To take me to the river, and a barge Be ready on the river, clothed in black.

I go in state to court, to meet the Queen. There surely I shall speak for mine own self,

And none of you can speak for me so well.

And therefore let our dumb old man alone

Go with me, he can steer and row, and he Will guide me to that palace, to the doors.'

She ceased : her father promised ; whereupon

She grew so cheerful that they deem'd her death

Was rather in the fantasy than the blood. But ten slow mornings past, and on the eleventh

Her father laid the letter in her hand, And closed the hand upon it, and she died. So that day there was dole in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from underground,

Then, those two brethren slowly with bent brows

Accompanying, the sad chariot-bier Past like a shadow thro' the field, that shone

Full-summer, to that stream whereon the barge,

Pall'd all its length in blackest samite, lay. There sat the lifelong creature of the house,

Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck, Winking his eyes, and twisted all his face.

So those two brethren from the chariot took And on the black decks laid her in her bed,

Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung

The silken case with braided blazonings, And kiss'd her quiet brows, and saying to her

'Sister, farewell for ever,' and again 'Farewell, sweet sister,' parted all in tears.

Then rose the dumb old servitor, and the dead,

Oar'd by the dumb, went upward with the flood —

In her right hand the lily, in her left The letter — all her bright hair streaming down —

And all the coverlid was cloth of gold

Drawn to her waist, and she herself in
white

All but her face, and that clear-featured
face

Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead,
But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she smiled.

That day Sir Lancelot at the palace
craved

Audience of Guinevere, to give at last
The price of half a realm, his costly gift,
Hard-won and hardly won with bruise and
blow,

With deaths of others, and almost his own,
The nine-years-fought-for diamonds: for
he saw

One of her house, and sent him to the
Queen

Bearing his wish, whereto the Queen
agreed

With such and so unmoved a majesty
She might have seem'd her statue, but
that he,

Low-drooping till he wellnigh kiss'd her
feet

For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye
The shadow of some piece of pointed lace,
In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the
walls,

And parted, laughing in his courtly heart.

All in an oriel on the summer side,
Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward the
stream,

They met, and Lancelot kneeling utter'd,
'Queen,

Lady, my liege, in whom I have my joy,
Take, what I had not won except for you,
These jewels, and make me happy, making
them

An armlet for the roundest arm on earth,
Or necklace for a neck to which the
swan's

Is tawnier than her cygnet's: these are
words:

Your beauty is your beauty, and I sin
In speaking, yet O grant my worship of it
Words, as we grant grief tears. Such sin
in words

Perchance, we both can pardon: but, my
Queen,

I hear of rumours flying thro' your court.
Our bond, as not the bond of man and
wife,

Should have in it an absoluter trust
To make up that defect: let rumours be:
When did not rumours fly? these, as I
trust

That you trust me in your own nobleness,
I may not well believe that you believe.'

While thus he spoke, half turn'd away,
the Queen

Brake from the vast oriel-embowering vine
Leaf after leaf, and tore, and cast them
off,

Till all the place whereon she stood was
green;

Then, when he ceased, in one cold passive
hand

Received at once and laid aside the gems
There on a table near her, and replied:

'It may be, I am quicker of belief
Than you believe me, Lancelot of the
Lake.

Our bond is not the bond of man and wife.
This good is in it, whatsoe'er of ill,

It can be broken easier. I for you
This many a year have done despite and
wrong

To one whom ever in my heart of hearts
I did acknowledge nobler. What are
these?

Diamonds for me! they had been thrice
their worth

<p>Being your gift, had you not lost your own. To loyal hearts the value of all gifts Must vary as the giver's. Not for me ! For her ! for your new fancy. Only this Grant me, I pray you : have your joys apart. I doubt not that however changed, you keep So much of what is graceful : and myself Would shun to break those bounds of courtesy In which as Arthur's Queen I move and rule : So cannot speak my mind. An end to this ! A strange one ! yet I take it with Amen. So pray you, add my diamonds to her pearls ; Deck her with these ; tell her, she shines me down : An armlet for an arm to which the Queen's Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck O as much fairer—as a faith once fair Was richer than these diamonds—hers not mine— Nay, by the mother of our Lord himself, Or hers or mine, mine now to work my will— She shall not have them.'</p>	<p>At love, life, all things, on the window ledge, Close underneath his eyes, and right across Where these had fallen, slowly past the barge Whereon the lily maid of Astolat Lay smiling, like a star in blackest night. But the wild Queen, who saw not, burst away To weep and wail in secret ; and the barge, On to the palace-doorway sliding, paused. There two stood arm'd, and kept the door ; to whom, All up the marble stair, tier over tier, Were added mouths that gaped, and eyes that ask'd 'What is it ?' but that oarsman's haggard face, As hard and still as is the face that men Shape to their fancy's eye from broken rocks On some cliff-side, appall'd them, and they said, 'He is enchanted, cannot speak—and she, Look how she sleeps—the Fairy Queen, so fair ! Yea, but how pale ! what are they ? flesh and blood ? Or come to take the King to fairyland ? For some do hold our Arthur cannot die, But that he passes into fairyland.'</p>
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<p>Saying which she seized, And, thro' the casement standing wide for heat, Flung them, and down they flash'd, and smote the stream. Then from the smitten surface flash'd, as it were, Diamonds to meet them, and they past away. Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half disdain</p>	<p>While thus they babbled of the King, the King Came girt with knights : then turn'd the tongueless man From the half-face to the full eye, and rose And pointed to the damsel, and the doors. So Arthur bad the meek Sir Percivale And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the maid ;</p>
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And reverently they bore her into hall.
Then came the fine Gawain and wonder'd
at her,
And Lancelot later came and mused at her,
And last the Queen herself, and pitied her :
But Arthur spied the letter in her hand,
Stooped, took, brake seal, and read it ;
this was all :

'Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the
Lake,
I, sometime call'd the maid of Astolat,
Come, for you left me taking no farewell,
Hither, to take my last farewell of you.
I loved you, and my love had no return,
And therefore my true love has been my
death.

And therefore to our Lady Guinevere,
And to all other ladies, I make moan.
Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.
Pray for my soul thou too, Sir Lancelot,
As thou art a knight peerless.'

Thus he read ;
And ever in the reading, lords and dames
Wept, looking often from his face who read
To hers which lay so silent, and at times,
So touch'd were they, half-thinking that
her lips,
Who had devised the letter, moved again.

Then freely spoke Sir Lancelot to them
all :
'My lord liege Arthur, and all ye that
hear,
Know that for this most gentle maiden's
death
Right heavy am I ; for good she was and
true,
But loved me with a love beyond all love
In women, whomsoever I have known.
Yet to be loved makes not to love again ;
Not at my years, however it hold in youth.

I swear by truth and knighthood that I
gave
No cause, not willingly, for such a love :
To this I call my friends in testimony,
Her brethren, and her father, who himself
Besought me to be plain and blunt, and use,
To break her passion, some discourtesy
Against my nature : what I could, I did.
I left her and I bad her no farewell ;
Tho', had I dreamt the damsel would
have died,
I might have put my wits to some rough use,
And help'd her from herself.'

Then said the Queen
(Sea was her wrath, yet working after
storm)

'Ye might at least have done her so
much grace,
Fair lord, as would have help'd her from
her death.'
He raised his head, their eyes met and
hers fell,

He adding,
'Queen, she would not be content
Save that I wedded her, which could not be.
Then might she follow me thro' the world,
she ask'd ;
It could not be. I told her that her love
Was but the flash of youth, would darken
down

To rise hereafter in a stiller flame
Toward one more worthy of her—then
would I,
More specially were he, she wedded, poor,
Estate them with large land and territory
In mine own realm beyond the narrow seas,
To keep them in all joyance : more than this
I could not ; this she would not, and she
died.'

He pausing, Arthur answer'd, 'O my
knight,

It will be to thy worship, as my knight,
And mine, as head of all our Table Round,
To see that she be buried worshipfully.'

So toward that shrine which then in all
the realm
Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly went
The marshal'd Order of their Table
Round,

And Lancelot sad beyond his wont, to
see

The maiden buried, not as one unknown,
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obsequies,
And mass, and rolling music, like a queen.
And when the knights had laid her comely
head

Low in the dust of half-forgotten kings,
Then Arthur spake among them, 'Let
her tomb

Be costly, and her image thereupon.
And let the shield of Lancelot at her feet
Be carven, and her lily in her hand.

And let the story of her dolorous voyage
For all true hearts be blazon'd on her tomb
In letters gold and azure !' which was
wrought

Thereafter ; but when now the lords and
dames

And people, from the high door streaming,
brake

Disorderly, as homeward each, the Queen,
Who mark'd Sir Lancelot where he
moved apart,

Drew near, and sigh'd in passing,
'Lancelot,

Forgive me ; mine was jealousy in love.'
He answer'd with his eyes upon the
ground,

'That is love's curse ; pass on, my Queen,
forgiven.'

But Arthur, who beheld his cloudy brows,
Approach'd him, and with full affection
said,

'Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in whom
I have

Most joy and most affiance, for I know
What thou hast been in battle by my side,
And many a time have watch'd thee at
the tilt

Strike down the lusty and long practised
knight,

And let the younger and unskill'd go by
To win his honour and to make his name,
And loved thy courtesies and thee, a man
Made to be loved ; but now I would to
God,

Seeing the homeless trouble in thine eyes,
Thou couldst have loved this maiden,
shaped, it seems,

By God for thee alone, and from her face,
If one may judge the living by the dead,
Delicately pure and marvellously fair,
Who might have brought thee, now a
lonely man

Wifeless and heirless, noble issue, sons
Born to the glory of thy name and fame,
My knight, the great Sir Lancelot of the
Lake.'

Then answer'd Lancelot, 'Fair she was,
my King,

Pure, as you ever wish your knights to be.
To doubt her fairness were to want an eye,
To doubt her pureness were to want a
heart—

Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love
Could bind him, but free love will not be
bound.'

'Free love, so bound, were freest,' said
the King.

'Let love be free ; free love is for the best :
And, after heaven, on our dull side of
death,

What should be best, if not so pure a love
Clothed in so pure a loveliness ? yet thee

She fail'd to bind, tho' being, as I think,
Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I know.'

And Lancelot answer'd nothing, but
he went,

And at the inrunning of a little brook
Sat by the river in a cove, and watch'd
The high reed wave, and lifted up his eyes
And saw the barge that brought her
moving down,

Far-off, a blot upon the stream, and said
Low in himself, 'Ah simple heart and
sweet,

Ye loved me, damsel, surely with a love
Far tenderer than my Queen's. Pray for
thy soul?

Ay, that will I. Farewell too—now at
last—

Farewell, fair lily. "Jealousy in love?"
Not rather dead love's harsh heir, jealous
pride?

Queen, if I grant the jealousy as of love,
May not your crescent fear for name and
fame

Speak, as it waxes, of a love that wanes?
Why did the King dwell on my name to
me?

Mine own name shames me, seeming a
reproach,

Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake
Caught from his mother's arms—the
wondrous one

Who passes thro' the vision of the night—
She chanted snatches of mysterious hymns
Heard on the winding waters, eve and
morn

She kiss'd me saying, "Thou art fair,
my child,

As a king's son," and often in her arms
She bare me, pacing on the dusky mere.
Would she had drown'd me in it, where'er
it be!

For what am I? what profits me my name

Of greatest knight? I fought for it, and
have it:

Pleasure to have it, none; to lose it, pain;
Now grown a part of me: but what use in
it?

To make men worse by making my sin
known?

Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming great?
Alas for Arthur's greatest knight, a man
Not after Arthur's heart! I needs must
break

These blows that so defame me: not
without

She wills it: would I, if she will'd it? nay,
Who knows? but if I would not, then
may God,

I pray him, send a sudden Angel down
To seize me by the hair and bear me far,
And fling me deep in that forgotten mere,
Among the tumbled fragments of the
hills.'

So groan'd Sir Lancelot in remorseful
pain,

Not knowing he should die a holy man.

THE HOLY GRAIL.

FROM noiseful arms, and acts of prowess
done

In tournament or tilt, Sir Percivale,
Whom Arthur and his knighthood call'd
The Pure,

Had pass'd into the silent life of prayer,
Praise, fast, and alms; and leaving for
the cowl

The helmet in an abbey far away
From Camelot, there, and not long after,
died.

And one, a fellow-monk among the rest,
Ambrosius, loved him much beyond the
rest,

And honour'd him, and wrought into his heart

A way by love that waken'd love within,
To answer that which came ; and as they sat

Beneath a world-old yew-tree, darkening half

The cloisters, on a gustful April morn
That puff'd the swaying branches into smoke

Above them, ere the summer when he died,
The monk Ambrosius question'd Percivale :

'O brother, I have seen this yew-tree smoke,

Spring after spring, for half a hundred years :

For never have I known the world without,
Nor ever stray'd beyond the pale : but thee,
When first thou camest—such a courtesy
Spake thro' the limbs and in the voice—I knew

For one of those who eat in Arthur's hall ;
For good ye are and bad, and like to coins,
Some true, some light, but everyone of you
Stamp'd with the image of the King ; and now

Tell me, what drove thee from the Table Round,

My brother? was it earthly passion crost?'

'Nay,' said the knight ; 'for no such passion mine.

But the sweet vision of the Holy Grail
Drove me from all vainglories, rivalries,
And earthly heats that spring and sparkle out

Among us in the jousts, while women watch

Who wins, who falls ; and waste the spiritual strength

Within us, better offer'd up to Heaven.'

To whom the monk : 'The Holy Grail !—I trust

We are green in Heaven's eyes ; but here too much

We moulder—as to things without I mean—

Yet one of your own knights, a guest of ours,

Told us of this in our refectory,
But spake with such a sadness and so low
We heard not half of what he said. What is it ?

The phantom of a cup that comes and goes?'

'Nay, monk ! what phantom?' answer'd Percivale.

'The cup, the cup itself, from which our Lord

Drank at the last sad supper with his own.

This, from the blessed land of Aromat—
After the day of darkness, when the dead
Went wandering o'er Moriah—the good saint,

Arimathæan Joseph, journeying brought
To Glastonbury, where the winter thorn
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our Lord.

And there awhile it bode ; and if a man
Could touch or see it, he was heal'd at once,

By faith, of all his ills. But then the times
Grew to such evil that the holy cup
Was caught away to Heaven, and disappear'd.'

To whom the monk : 'From our old books I know

That Joseph came of old to Glastonbury,
And there the heathen Prince, Arviragus,
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to build ;

And there he built with wattles from the
marsh

A little lonely church in days of yore,
For so they say, these books of ours, but
seem

Mute of this miracle, far as I have read.
But who first saw the holy thing to-day?

'A woman,' answer'd Percivale, 'a
nun,

And one no further off in blood from me
Than sister; and if ever holy maid
With knees of adoration wore the stone,
A holy maid; tho' never maiden glow'd,
But that was in her earlier maidenhood,
With such a fervent flame of human love,
Which being rudely blunted, glanced and
shot

Only to holy things; to prayer and praise
She gave herself, to fast and alms. And
yet,

Nun as she was, the scandal of the Court,
Sin against Arthur and the Table Round,
And the strange sound of an adulterous
race,

Across the iron grating of her cell
Beat, and she pray'd and fasted all the
more

'And he to whom she told her sins, or
what

Her all but utter whiteness held for sin,
A man wellnigh a hundred winters old,
Spake often with her of the Holy Grail,
A legend handed down thro' five or six,
And each of these a hundred winters old,
From our Lord's time. And when King
Arthur made

His Table Round, and all men's hearts
became

Clear for a season, surely he had thought
That now the Holy Grail would come
again;

But sin broke out. Ah, Christ, that it
would come,

And heal the world of all their wickedness!
"O Father!" ask'd the maiden, "might
it come

To me by prayer and fasting?" "Nay,"
said he,

"I know not, for thy heart is pure as
snow."

And so she pray'd and fasted, till the sun
Shone, and the wind blew, thro' her, and
I thought

She might have risen and floated when I
saw her.

'For on a day she sent to speak with
me.

And when she came to speak, behold her
eyes

Beyond my knowing of them, beautiful,
Beyond all knowing of them, wonderful,
Beautiful in the light of holiness.

And "O my brother Percivale," she
said,

"Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy
Grail:

For, waked at dead of night, I heard a
sound

As of a silver horn from o'er the hills
Blown, and I thought, 'It is not Arthur's
use

To hunt by moonlight;' and the slender
sound

As from a distance beyond distance grew
Coming upon me—O never harp nor
horn,

Nor aught we blow with breath, or touch
with hand,

Was like that music as it came; and then
Stream'd thro' my cell a cold and silver
beam,

And down the long beam stoie the Holy
Grail,

Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,
Till all the white walls of my cell were
dyed

With rosy colours leaping on the wall ;
And then the music faded, and the Grail
Past, and the beam decay'd, and from the
walls

The rosy quiverings died into the night.
So now the Holy Thing is here again
Among us, brother, fast thou too 'and
pray,

And tell thy brother knights to fast and
pray,

That so perchance the vision may be seen
By thee and those, and all the world be
heal'd."

"Then leaving the pale nun, I spake
of this
To all men; and myself fasted and
pray'd

Always, and many among us many a week
Fasted and pray'd even to the uttermost,
Expectant of the wonder that would be.

"And one there was among us, ever
moved

Among us in white armour, Galahad.

"God make thee good as thou art beau-
tiful,"

Said Arthur, when he dubb'd him knight;
and none,

In so young youth, was ever made a
knight

Till Galahad; and this Galahad, when
he heard

My sister's vision, fill'd me with amaze;
His eyes became so like her own, they
seem'd

Hers, and himself her brother more than I.

"Sister or brother none had he; but
some

Call'd him a son of Lancelot, and some
said

Begotten by enchantment—chatterers
they,

Like birds of passage piping up and
down,

That gape for flies—we know not whence
they come;

For when was Lancelot wanderingly
lewd?

"But she, the wan sweet maiden, shore
away

Clean from her forehead all that wealth
of hair

Which made a silken mat-work for her
feet;

And out of this she plaited broad and long
A strong sword-belt, and wove with silver
thread

And crimson in the belt a strange device,
A crimson grail within a silver beam;

And saw the bright boy-knight, and
bound it on him,

Saying, "My knight, my love, my knight
of heaven,

O thou, my love, whose love is one with
mine,

I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my
belt.

Go forth, for thou shalt see what I have
seen,

And break thro' all, till one will crown
thee king

Far in the spiritual city:" and as she
spake

She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
Thro' him, and made him hers, and laid
her mind

On him, and he believed in her belief.

"Then came a year of miracle: O
brother,

In our great hall there stood a vacant
chair,

Fashion'd by Merlin ere he past away,
And carven with strange figures ; and in
and out

The figures, like a serpent, ran a scroll
Of letters in a tongue no man could read.
And Merlin call'd it "The Siege peri-
lous,"

Perilous for good and ill ; "for there,"
he said,

"No man could sit but he should lose
himself : "

And once by misadventure Merlin sat
In his own chair, and so was lost ; but he,
Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's doom,
Cried, "If I lose myself, I save myself ! "

'Then on a summer night it came to
pass,
While the great banquet lay along the
hall,
That Galahad would sit down in Merlin's
chair.

'And all at once, as there we sat, we
heard

A cracking and a riving of the roofs,
And rending, and a blast, and overhead
Thunder, and in the thunder was a cry.
And in the blast there smote along the hall
A beam of light seven times more clear
than day :

And down the long beam stole the Holy
Grail

All over cover'd with a luminous cloud,
And none might see who bare it, and it
past.

But every knight beheld his fellow's face
As in a glory, and all the knights arose,
And staring each at other like dumb men
Stood, till I found a voice and sware a
vow.

'I sware a vow before them all, that I,
Because I had not seen the Grail, would
ride

A twelvemonth and a day in quest of it,
Until I found and saw it, as the nun
My sister saw it ; and Galahad sware the
vow,
And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot's consin,
sware,

And Lancelot sware, and many among
the knights,
And Gawain sware, and louder than the
rest.'

Then spake the monk Ambrosius, ask-
ing him,
'What said the King? Did Arthur take
the vow?'

'Nay, for my lord,' said Percivale,
'the King,

Was not in hall : for early that same day,
Scaped thro' a cavern from a bandit hold,
An outraged maiden sprang into the hall
Crying on help : for all her shining hair
Was smear'd with earth, and either milky
arm

Red-rent with hooks of bramble, and all
she wore

Torn as a sail that leaves the rope is torn
In tempest : so the King arose and went
To smoke the scandalous hive of those
wild bees

That made such honey in his realm.
Howbeit

Some little of this marvel he too saw,
Returning o'er the plain that then began
To darken under Camelot ; whence the
King

Look'd up, calling aloud, "Lo, there !
the roofs

Of our great hall are roll'd in thunder-
smoke !

Pray Heaven, they be not smitten by the bolt."

For dear to Arthur was that hall of ours,
As having there so oft with all his knights
Feasted, and as the stateliest under
heaven.

'O brother, had you known our mighty
hall,

Which Merlin built for Arthur long ago !
For all the sacred mount of Camelot,
And all the dim rich city, roof by roof,
Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,
By grove, and garden-lawn, and rushing
brook,

Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin
built.

And four great zones of sculpture, set
betwixt

With many a mystic symbol, gird the hall :
And in the lowest beasts are slaying men,
And in the second men are slaying beasts,
And on the third are warriors, perfect men,
And on the fourth are men with growing
wings,

And over all one statue in the mould
Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a crown,
And peak'd wings pointed to the Northern
Star.

And eastward fronts the statue, and the
crown

And both the wings are made of gold,
and flame

At sunrise till the people in far fields,
Wasted so often by the heathen hordes,
Behold it, crying, "We have still a King."

'And, brother, had you known our hall
within,

Broader and higher than any in all the
lands !

Where twelve great windows blazon
Arthur's wars,

And all the light that falls upon the board
Streams thro' the twelve great battles of
our King.

Nay, one there is, and at the eastern end,
Wealthy with wandering lines of mount
and mere,

Where Arthur finds the brand Excalibur.
And also one to the west, and counter to it,
And blank : and who shall blazon it ?
when and how ?—

O there, perchance, when all our wars are
done,

The brand Excalibur will be cast away.

'So to this hall full quickly rode the
King,

In horriest the work by Merlin wrought,
Dreamlike, should on the sudden vanish,
wrapt

In unremorseful folds of rolling fire.
And in he rode, and up I glanced, and saw
The golden dragon sparkling over all :
And many of those who burnt the hold,
their arms

Hack'd, and their foreheads grimed with
smoke, and sear'd,

Follow'd, and in among bright faces, ours,
Full of the vision, prest : and then the
King

Spake to me, being nearest, "Percivale,"
(Because the hall was all in tumult—some
Vowing, and some protesting), "what is
this?"

'O brother, when I told him what had
chanced,

My sister's vision, and the rest, his face
Darken'd, as I have seen it more than
once,

When some brave deed seem'd to be done
in vain,

Darken ; and "Woe is me, my knights,"
he cried,

"Had I been here, ye had not sworn the vow."

Bold was mine answer, "I had thyself been here,

My King, thou wouldst have sworn."

"Yea, yea," said he,

"Art thou so bold and hast not seen the Grail?"

"Nay, lord, I heard the sound, I saw the light,

But since I did not see the Holy Thing, I swear a vow to follow it till I saw."

"Then when he ask'd us, knight by knight, if any

Had seen it, all their answers were as one:

"Nay, lord, and therefore have we sworn our vows."

"Lo now," said Arthur, "have ye seen a cloud?

What go ye into the wilderness to see?"

"Then Galahad on the sudden, and in a voice

Shrilling along the hall to Arthur, call'd,

"But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy Grail,

I saw the Holy Grail and heard a cry—

'O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow me.'"

"Ah, Galahad, Galahad," said the King, "for such

As thou art is the vision, not for these.

Thy holy nun and thou have seen a sign—

Holier is none, my Percivale, than she—

A sign to main this Order which I made.

But ye, that follow but the leader's bell"

(Brother, the King was hard upon his knights)

"Taliessin is our fullest threat of song,

And one hath sung and all the dumb will sing.

Lancelot is Lancelot, and hath overborne Five knights at once, and every younger knight,

Unproven, holds himself as Lancelot,

Till overborne by one, he learns—and ye,

What are ye? Galahads?—no, nor Percivales"

(For thus it pleased the King to range me close

After Sir Galahad); "nay," said he, "but men

With strength and will to right the wrong'd, of power

To lay the sudden heads of violence flat,

Knights that in twelve great battles splash'd and dyed

The strong White Horse in his own

heathen blood—

But one hath seen, and all the blind will see.

Go, since your vows are sacred, being made:

Yet—for ye know the cries of all my realm

Pass thro' this hall—how often, O my knights,

Your places being vacant at my side,

This chance of noble deeds will come and go

Unchallenged, while ye follow wandering fires

Lost in the quagmire! Many of you, yea most,

Return no more: ye think I show myself

To dark a prophet: come now, let us meet The morrow morn once more in one full

field

Of gracious pastime, that once more the King,

Before ye leave him for this Quest, may count

The yet-unbroken strength of all his knights,

Rejoicing in that Order which he made."

'So when the sun broke next from
under ground,
All the great table of our Arthur closed
And clash'd in such a tourney and so full,
So many lances broken—never yet
Had Camelot seen the like, since Arthur
came;
And I myself and Galahad, for a strength
Was in us from the vision, overthrew
So many knights that all the people cried,
And almost burst the barriers in their
heat,
Shouting, "Sir Galahad and Sir Perci-
vale!"

'But when the next day brake from
under ground—
O brother, had you known our Camelot,
Built by old kings, age after age, so old
The King himself had fears that it would
fall,
So strange, and rich, and dim; for where
the roofs
Totter'd toward each other in the sky,
Met foreheads all along the street of those
Who watch'd us pass; and lower, and
where the long
Rich galleries, lady-laden, weigh'd the
recks
Of dragons clinging to the crazy walls,
Thicker than drops from thunder, showers
of flowers
Fell as we past; and men and boys astride
On wyvern, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,
At all the corners, named us each by name,
Calling "God speed!" but in the ways
below
The knights and ladies wept, and rich
and poor
Wept, and the King himself could hardly
speak
For grief, and all in middle street the
Queen,

Who rode by Lancelot, wail'd and shriek'd
aloud,
"This madness has come on us for our
sins."
So to the Gate of the three Queens we
came,
Where Arthur's wars are render'd mys-
tically,
And thence departed every one his way.

'And I was lifted up in heart, and
thought
Of all my late-shown prowess in the lists,
How my strong lance had beaten down
the knights,
So many and famous names; and never
yet
Had heaven appear'd so blue, nor earth
so green,
For all my blood danced in me, and I
knew
That I should light upon the Holy Grail.

'Thereafter, the dark warning of our
King,
That most of us would follow wandering
fires,
Came like a driving gloom across my
mind.
Then every evil word I had spoken once,
And every evil thought I had thought of
old,
And every evil deed I ever did,
Awoke and cried, "This Quest is not for
thee."
And lifting up mine eyes, I found myself
Alone, and in a land of sand and thorns,
And I was thirsty even unto death;
And I, too, cried, "This Quest is not for
thee."

'And on I rode, and when I thought
my thirst

Would slay me, saw deep lawns, and then
a brook,

With one sharp rapid, where the crisping
white

Play'd ever back upon the sloping wave,
And took both ear and eye; and o'er the
brook

Were apple-trees, and apples by the brook
Fallen, and on the lawns. "I will rest
here,"

I said, "I am not worthy of the Quest;"
But even while I drank the brook, and ate
The goodly apples, all these things at once
Fell into dust, and I was left alone,
And thirsting, in a land of sand and thorns.

'And then behold a woman at a door
Spinning; and fair the house whereby she
sat,

And kind the woman's eyes and innocent,
And all her bearing gracious; and she rose
Opening her arms to meet me, as who
should say,

"Rest here;" but when I touch'd her, lo!
she, too,

Fell into dust and nothing, and the house
Became no better than a broken shed,
And in it a dead babe; and also this
Fell into dust, and I was left alone.

'And on I rode, and greater was my
thirst.

Then flash'd a yellow gleam across the
world,

And where it smote the plowshare in the
field,

The plowman left his plowing, and fell
down

Before it; where it glitter'd on her pail,
The milkmaid left her milking, and fell
down

Before it, and I knew not why, but
thought

"The sun is rising," tho' the sun had risen.
Then was I ware of one that on me moved
In golden armour with a crown of gold
About a casque all jewels; and his horse
In golden armour jewell'd everywhere:
And on the splendour came, flashing me
blind;

And seem'd to me the Lord of all the
world,

Being so huge. But when I thought he
meant

To crush me, moving on me, lo! he, too,
Open'd his arms to embrace me as he
came,

And up I went and touch'd him, and he,
too,

Fell into dust, and I was left alone
And wearying in a land of sand and thorns.

'And I rode on and found a mighty
hill,

And on the top, a city wall'd: the spires
Prick'd with incredible pinnacles into
heaven.

And by the gateway stirr'd a crowd; and
these

Cried to me climbing, "Welcome, Perci-
vale!"

Thou mightiest and thou purest among
men!"

And glad was I and clomb, but found at top
No man, nor any voice. And thence I
past

Far thro' a ruinous city, and I saw
That man had once dwelt there; but
there I found

Only one man of an exceeding age.

"Where is that goodly company," said I,
"That so cried out upon me?" and he had
Scarce any voice to answer, and yet
gasp'd,

"Whence and what art thou?" and even
as he spoke

Fell into dust, and disappear'd, and I
Was left alone once more, and cried in
grief,

"Lo, if I find the Holy Grail itself
And touch it, it will crumble into dust."

'And thence I dropt into a lowly vale,
Low as the hill was high, and where the
vale

Was lowest, found a chapel, and thereby
A holy hermit in a hermitage,
To whom I told my phantoms, and he
said :

"O son, thou hast not true humility,
The highest virtue, mother of them all ;
For when the Lord of all things made
Himself

Naked of glory for His mortal change,
'Take thou my robe,' she said, 'for all is
thine,'

And all her form shone forth with sudden
light

So that the angels were amazed, and she
Follow'd Him down, and like a flying star
Led on the gray-hair'd wisdom of the east ;
But her thou hast not known : for what
is this

Thou thoughtest of thy prowess and thy
sins ?

Thou hast not lost thyself to save thyself
As Galahad." When the hermit made
an end,

In silver armour suddenly Galahad shone
Before us, and against the chapel door
Laid lance, and enter'd, and we knelt in
prayer.

And there the hermit slaked my burning
thirst,

And at the sacring of the mass I saw
The holy elements alone ; but he,
"Saw ye no more ? I, Galahad, saw the
Grail,

The Holy Grail, descend upon the shrine :

I saw the fiery face as of a child

That smote itself into the bread, and went ;

And hither am I come ; and never yet

Hath what thy sister taught me first to see,

This Holy Thing, fail'd from my side, nor
come

Cover'd, but moving with me night and
day,

Fainter by day, but always in the night
Blood-red, and sliding down the blacken'd

marsh

Blood-red, and on the naked mountain
top

Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere below

Blood-red. And in the strength of this I
rode,

Shattering all evil customs everywhere,
And past thro' Pagan realms, and made
them mine,

And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and bore
them down,

And broke thro' all, and in the strength
of this

Come victor. But my time is hard at
hand,

And hence I go ; and one will crown me
king

Far in the spiritual city ; and come thou,
too,

For thou shalt see the vision when I go."

'While thus he spake, his eye, dwelling
on mine,

Drew me, with power upon me, till I grew
One with him, to believe as he believed.

Then, when the day began to wane, we
went.

'There rose a hill that none but man
could climb,

Scarr'd with a hundred wintry water-
courses—

Storm at the top, and when we gain'd it,
storm

Round us and death ; for every moment
glanced

His silver arms and gloom'd : so quick
and thick

The lightnings here and there to left and
right

Struck, till the dry old trunks about us,
dead,

Yea, rotten with a hundred years of death,
Sprang into fire : and at the base we found

On either hand, as far as eye could see,
A great black swamp and of an evil smell,

Part black, part whiten'd with the bones
of men,

Not to be crost, save that some ancient
king

Had built a way, where, link'd with
many a bridge,

A thousand piers ran into the great Sea.
And Galahad fled along them bridge by

bridge,
And every bridge as quickly as he crost

Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I
yearn'd

To follow ; and thrice above him all the
heavens

Open'd and blazed with thunder such as
seem'd

Shoutings of all the sons of God : and first
At once I saw him far on the great Sea,

In silver-shining armour starry-clear ;
And o'er his head the Holy Vessel hung

Clothed in white samite or a luminous
cloud.

And with exceeding swiftness ran the boat,
If boat it were—I saw not whence it came.

And when the heavens open'd and blazed
again

Roaring, I saw him like a silver star—
And had he set the sail, or had the boat

Become a living creature clad with wings?

And o'er his head the Holy Vessel hung
Redder than any rose, a joy to me,
For now I knew the veil had been with-
drawn.

Then in a moment when they blazed again
Opening, I saw the least of little stars
Down on the waste, and straight beyond
the star

I saw the spiritual city and all her spires
And gateways in a glory like one pearl—
No larger, tho' the goal of all the saints—
Strike from the sea ; and from the star
there shot

A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there
Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Grail,
Which never eyes on earth again shall see.
Then fell the floods of heaven drowning
the deep.

And how my feet recrost the deathful ridge
No memory in me lives ; but that I touch'd
The chapel-doors at dawn I know ; and
thence

Taking my war-horse from the holy man,
Glad that no phantom vexed me more,
return'd

To whence I came, the gate of Arthur's
wars.'

'O brother,' ask'd Ambrosius,—'for
in sooth

These ancient books—and they would win
thee—teem,

Only I find not there this Holy Grail,
With miracles and marvels like to these,
Not all unlike ; which oftentimes I read,
Who read but on my breviary with ease,
Till my head swims ; and then go forth
and pass

Down to the little thorpe that lies so close,
And almost plaster'd like a martin's nest
To these old walls—and mingle with our
folk ;

And knowing every honest face of theirs

As well as ever shepherd knew his sheep,
And every homely secret in their hearts,
Delight myself with gossip and old wives,
And ills and aches, and teetlings, lyings-
in,

And mirthful sayings, children of the place,
That have no meaning half a league away :
Or lulling random squabbles when they
rise,

Chafferings and chatterings at the market-
cross,

Rejoice, small man, in this small world
of mine,

Yea, even in their hens and in their eggs—
O brother, saving this Sir Galahad,
Came ye on none but phantoms in your
quest,

No man, no woman ?'

Then Sir Percivale :

'All men, to one so bound by such a vow,
And women were as phantoms. O, my
brother,

Why wilt thou shame me to confess to thee
How far I falter'd from my quest and vow ?

For after I had lain so many nights,
A bedmate of the snail and eft and snake,
In grass and burdock, I was changed to
wan

And meagre, and the vision had not come ;
And then I chanced upon a goodly town
With one great dwelling in the middle of
it ;

Thither I made, and there was I disarm'd
By maidens each as fair as any flower :
But when they led me into hall, behold,
The Princess of that castle was the one,
Brother, and that one only, who had ever
Made my heart leap ; for when I moved
of old

A slender page about her father's hall,
And she a slender maiden, all my heart
Went after her with longing : yet we twain

Had never kiss'd a kiss, or vow'd a vow.
And now I came upon her once again,
And one had wedded her, and he was dead,
And all his land and wealth and state
were hers.

And while I tarried, every day she set
A banquet richer than the day before
By me ; for all her longing and her will
Was toward me as of old ; till one fair
morn,

I walking to and fro beside a stream
That flash'd across her orchard underneath
Her castle-walls, she stole upon my walk,
And calling me the greatest of all knights,
Embraced me, and so kiss'd me the first
time,

And gave herself and all her wealth to me.
Then I remember'd Arthur's warning
word,

That most of us would follow wandering
fires,

And the Quest faded in my heart. Anon,
The heads of all her people drew to me,
With supplication both of knees and
tongue :

'We have heard of thee : thou art our
greatest knight,

Our Lady says it, and we well believe :
Wed thou our Lady, and rule over us,
And thou shalt be as Arthur in our land.'
O me, my brother ! but one night my vow
Burnt me within, so that I rose and fled,
But wail'd and wept, and hated mine own
self,

And ev'n the Holy Quest, and all but her ;
Then after I was join'd with Galahad
Cared not for her, nor anything upon
earth.'

Then said the monk, 'Poor men, when
yule is cold,
Must be content to sit by little fires,
And this am I, so that ye care for me

Ever so little ; yea, and blest be Heaven
That brought thee here to this poor house
of ours

Where all the brethren are so hard, to
warm

My cold heart with a friend : but O the
pity

To find thine own first love once more—
to hold,

Hold her a wealthy bride within thine
arms,

Or all but hold, and then—cast her aside,
Foregoing all her sweetness, like a weed.

For we that want the warmth of double
life,

We that are plagued with dreams of
something sweet

Beyond all sweetness in a life so rich,—
Ah, blessed Lord, I speak too earthlywise,

Seeing I never stray'd beyond the cell,
But live like an old badger in his earth,

With earth about him everywhere, despite
All fast and penance. Saw ye none
beside,

Nene of your knights ?

'Yea so,' said Percivale :

'One night my pathway swerving east, I
saw

The pelican on the casque of our Sir Bors
All in the middle of the rising moon :

And toward him spurr'd, and hail'd him,
and he me,

And each made joy of either ; then he
ask'd,

"Where is he? hast thou seen him—
Lancelot?—Once,"

Said good Sir Bors, "he dash'd across me
—mad,

And maddening what he rode : and when
I cried,

'Ridest thou then so hotly on a quest
So holy,' Lancelot shouted, 'Stay me not !

I have been the sluggard, and I ride apace,
For now there is a lion in the way.'
So vanish'd."

'Then Sir Bors had ridden on
Softly, and sorrowing for our Lancelot,
Because his former madness, once the talk
And scandal of our table, had return'd ;
For Lancelot's kith and kin so worship
him

That ill to him is ill to them ; to Bors
Beyond the rest : he well had been content
Not to have seen, so Lancelot might have
seen,

The Holy Cup of healing ; an', indeed,
Being so clouded with his grief and love,
Small heart was his after the Holy Quest :
If God would send the vision, well : if not,
The Quest and he were in the hands of
Heaven.

'And then, with small adventure met,
Sir Bors

Rode to the lonest tract of all the realm,
And found a people there among their
crag,

Our race and blood, a remnant that were
left

Paynim amid their circles, and the stones
They pitch up straight to heaven : and
their wise men

Were strong in that old magic which can
trace

The wandering of the stars, and scoff'd at
him

And this high Quest as at a simple thing :
Told him he follow'd—almost Arthur's
words—

A mocking fire : "what other fire than he,
Whereby the blood beats, and the blossom
blows,

And the sea rolls, and all the world is
warm'd?"

And when his answer chafed them, the
rough crowd,
Hearing he had a difference with their
priests,
Seized him, and bound and plunged him
into a cell
Of great piled stones; and lying bounden
there
In darkness thro' innumerable hours
He heard the hollow-ringing heavens
sweep
Over him till by miracle—what else?—
Heavy as it was, a great stone slipt and
fell,
Such as no wind could move: and thro'
the gap
Glimmer'd the streaming scud: then
came a night
Still as the day was loud; and thro' the gap
The seven clear stars of Arthur's Table
Round—
For, brother, so one night, because they
roll
Thro' such a round in heaven, we named
the stars,
Rejoicing in ourselves and in our King—
And these, like bright eyes of familiar
friends,
In on him shone: "And then to me, to
me,"
Said good Sir Bors, "beyond all hopes of
mine,
Who scarce had pray'd or ask'd it for
myself—
Across the seven clear stars—O grace to
me—
In colour like the fingers of a hand
Before a burning taper, the sweet Grail
Glided and past, and close upon it peal'd
A sharp quick thunder." Afterwards, a
maid,
Who kept our holy faith among her kin
In secret, entering, loosed and let him go.

To whom the monk: 'And I remember
now
That pelican on the casque: Sir Bors it
was
Who spake so low and sadly at our board;
And mighty reverent at our grace was he:
A square-set man and honest; and his
eyes,
An out-door sign of all the warmth within,
Smiled with his lips—a smile beneath a
cloud,
But heaven had meant it for a sunny one:
Ay, ay, Sir Bors, who else? But when
ye reach'd
The city, found ye all your knights
return'd,
Or was there sooth in Arthur's prophecy,
Tell me, and what said each, and what
the King?'

Then answer'd Percivale: 'And that
can I,
Brother, and truly; since the living words
Of so great men as Lancelot and our King
Pass not from door to door and out again,
But sit within the house. O, when we
reach'd
The city, our horses stumbling as they
trode
On heaps of ruin, hornless unicorns,
Crack'd basilisks, and splinter'd cocka-
trices,
And shatter'd tabots, which had left the
stones
Raw, that they fell from, brought us to
the hall.

'And there sat Arthur on the dais-
throne,
And those that had gone out upon the
Quest,
Wasted and worn, and but a tithe of
them,

: 'And I remember

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at our grace was he :
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And those that had not, stood before the
King,

Who, when he saw me, rose, and bade
me hail,

Saying, "A welfare in thine eye reproves
Our fear of some disastrous chance for thee
On hill, or plain, at sea, or flooding ford.
So fierce a gale made havoc here of late
Among the strange devices of our kings ;
Yea, shook this newer, stronger hall of ours,
And from the statue Merlin moulded for us
Half-wrench'd a golden wing ; but now—
the Quest,

This vision—hast thou seen the Holy Cup,
That Joseph brought of old to Glaston-
bury ?"

'So when I told him all thyself hast
heard,
Ambrosius, and my fresh but fixt resolve
To pass away into the quiet life,
He answer'd not, but, sharply turning,
ask'd

Of Gawain, "Gawain, was this Quest for
thee ?"

"Nay, lord," said Gawain, "not for
such as I.
Therefore I communed with a saintly man,
Who made me sure the Quest was not for
me ;

For I was much aweared of the Quest :
But found a silk pavilion in a field,
And merry maidens in it ; and then this
gale

Tore my pavilion from the tenting-pin,
And blew my merry maidens all about
With all discomfort ; yea, and but for this,
My twelvemonth and a day were pleasant
to me."

'He ceased ; and Arthur turn'd to
whom at first

He saw not, for Sir Bors, on entering,
push'd

Athwart the throng to Lancelot, caught
his hand,

Held it, and there, half-hidden by him,
stood,

Until the King espied him, saying to him,
"Hail, Bors ! if ever loyal man and true
Could see it, thou hast seen the Grail ;"
and Bors,

"Ask me not, for I may not speak of it :
I saw it ;" and the tears were in his eyes.

'Then there remain'd but Lancelot, for
the rest

Spake but of sundry perils in the storm ;
Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy Writ,
Our Arthur kept his best until the last ;
"Thou, too, my Lancelot," ask'd the
King, "my friend,
Our mightiest, hath this Quest avail'd for
thee ?"

"Our mightiest !" answer'd Lancelot,
with a groan ;

"O King !" — and when he paused,
methought I spied

A dying fire of madness in his eyes—
"O King, my friend, if friend of thine I be,
Happier are those that welter in their sin,
Swine in the mud, that cannot see for
slime,

Slime of the ditch : but in me lived a sin
So strange, of such a kind, that all of pure,
Noble, and knightly in me twined and
clung

Round that one sin, until the wholesome
flower

And poisonous grew together, each as
each,

Not to be pluck'd asunder ; and when thy
knights

Sware, I swear with them only in the hope

<p>That could I touch or see the Holy Grail They might be pluck'd asunder. Then I spake To one most holy saint, who wept and said, That save they could be pluck'd asunder, all My quest were but in vain; to whom I vow'd That I would work according as he will'd. And forth I went, and while I yearn'd and strove To tear the twain asunder in my heart, My madness came upon me as of old, And whipt me into waste fields far away; There was I beaten down by little men, Mean knights, to whom the moving of my sword And shadow of my spear had been enow To scare them from me once; and then I came All in my folly to the naked shore, Wide flats, where nothing but coarse grasses grew; But such a blast, my King, began to blow, So loud a blast along the shore and sea, Ye could not hear the waters for the blast, Tho' heapt in mounds and ridges all the sea Drove like a cataract, and all the sand Swept like a river, and the clouded heavens Were shaken with the motion and the sound. And blackening in the sea-foam sway'd a boat, Half-swallow'd in it, anchor'd with a chain; And in my madness to myself I said, 'I will embark and I will lose myself, And in the great sea wash away my sin.' I burst the chain, I sprang into the boat. Seven days I drove along the dreary deep,</p>	<p>And with me drove the moon and all the stars; And the wind fell, and on the seventh night I heard the shingle grinding in the surge, And felt the boat shock earth, and looking up, Behold, the enchanted towers of Car- bonek, A castle like a rock upon a rock, With chasm-like portals open to the sea, And steps that met the breaker! there was none Stood near it but a lion on each side That kept the entry, and the moon was full. Then from the boat I leapt, and up the stairs. There drew my sword. With sudden- flaring manes Those two great beasts rose upright like a man, Each gript a shoulder, and I stood between; And, when I would have smitten them, heard a voice, 'Doubt not, go forward; if thou doubt, the beasts Will tear thee piecemeal.' Then with violence The sword was dash'd from out my hand, and fell. And up into the sounding hall I past; But nothing in the sounding hall I saw, No bench nor table, painting on the wall Or shield of knight; only the rounded moon. Thro' the tall oriel on the rolling sea. But always in the quiet house I heard, Clear as a lark, high o'er me as a lark, A sweet voice singing in the topmost tower</p>
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To the eastward : up I climb'd a thousand
steps

With pain : as in a dream I seem'd to
climb

For ever : at the last I reach'd a door,
A light was in the crannies, and I heard,
'Glory and joy and honour to our Lord
And to the Holy Vessel of the Grail.'

Then in my madness I essay'd the door ;
It gave ; and thro' a stormy glare, a heat
As from a seventimes-heated furnace, I,
Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I was,
With such a fierceness that I swoon'd
away—

O, yet methought I saw the Holy Grail,
All pall'd in crimson samite, and around
Great angels, awful shapes, and wings
and eyes.

And but for all my madness and my sin,
And then my swooning, I had sworn I
saw

That which I saw ; but what I saw was
veil'd

And cover'd ; and this Quest was not for
me."

'Sospeaking, and here ceasing, Lance-
lot left

The hall long silent, till Sir Gawain—nay,
Brother, I need not tell thee foolish
words,—

A reckless and irreverent knight was he,
Now bolden'd by the silence of his
King,—

Well, I will tell thee : "O King, my
liege," he said,

"Hath Gawain fail'd in any quest of
thine ?

When have I stinted stroke in foughten
field ?

But as for thine, my good friend Percivale,
Thy holy nun and thou have driven men
mad,

Yea, made our mightiest madder than
our least.

But by mine eyes and by mine ears I
swear,

I will be deafer than the blue-eyed cat,
And thrice as blind as any noonday owl,
To holy virgins in their ecstasies,
Henceforward."

"Deafer," said the blameless King,
"Gawain, and blinder unto holy things
Hope not to make thyself by idle vows,
Being too blind to have desire to see.

But if indeed there came a sign from
heaven,

Blessed are Bors, Lancelot and Percivale,
For these have seen according to their
sight.

For every fiery prophet in old times,
And all the sacred madness of the bard,
When God made music thro' them, could
but speak

His music by the framework and the
chord ;

And as ye saw it ye have spoken truth.

"Nay—but thou errest, Lancelot :
never yet

Could all of true and noble in knight and
man

Twine round one sin, whatever it might
be,

With such a closeness, but apart there
grew,

Save that he were the swine thou spakest
of,

Some root of knighthood and pure noble-
ness ;

Whereto see thou, that it may bear its
flower.

"And spake I not too truly, O my
knights ?

Was I too dark a prophet when I said
To those who went upon the Holy Quest,
That most of them would follow wan-
dering fires,

Lost in the quagmire?—lost to me and
gone,

And left me gazing at a barren board,
And a lean Order—scarcely return'd a
tithe—

And out of those to whom the vision came
My greatest hardly will believe he saw ;
Another hath beheld it afar off,
And leaving human wrongs to right them-
selves,

Cares but to pass into the silent life.
And one hath had the vision face to face,
And now his chair desires him here in
vain,

However they may crown him elsewhere.

“And some among you held, that if
the King

Had seen the sight he would have sworn
the vow :

Not easily, seeing that the King must
guard

That which he rules, and is but as the hind
To whom a space of land is given to
plough,

Who may not wander from the allotted
field

Before his work be done ; but, being done,
Let visions of the night or of the day

Come, as they will ; and many a time
they come,

Until this earth he walks on seems not
earth,

This light that strikes his eyeball is not
light,

This air that smites his forehead is not air
But vision—yea, his very hand and foot—

In moments when he feels he cannot die,
And knows himself no vision to himself,

Nor the high God a vision, nor that One
Who rose again : ye have seen what ye
have seen.”

‘So spake the King : I knew not all
he meant.’

PELLEAS AND ETTARRE.

KING ARTHUR made new knights to fill
the gap

Left by the Holy Quest ; and as he sat
In hall at old Caerleon, the high doors
Were softly sunder'd, and thro' these a
youth,

Pelleas, and the sweet smell of the fields
Past, and the sunshine came along with
him.

‘Make me thy knight, because I know,
Sir King,

All that belongs to knighthood, and I love.’
Such was his cry ; for having heard the
King

Had let proclaim a tournament—the prize
A golden circlet and a knightly sword,

Full fain had Pelleas for his lady won
The golden circlet, for himself the sword :
And there were those who knew him near
the King,

And promised for him : and Arthur made
him knight.

And this new knight, Sir Pelleas of the
isles—

But lately come to his inheritance,
And lord of many a barren isle was he—
Riding at noon, a day or twain before,
Across the forest call'd of Dean, to find
Caerleon and the King, had felt the sun
Beat like a strong knight on his helm, and
reel'd

Almost to falling from his horse ; but saw

Near him a mound of even-sloping side,
Whereon a hundred stately beeches grew,
And here and there great hollies under
them;

But for a mile all round was open space,
And fern and leath: and slowly Pelleas
drew

To that dim day, then binding his good
horse

To a tree, cast himself down; and as he
lay

At random looking over the brown earth
Thro' that green-glooming twilight of the
grove,

It seem'd to Pelleas that the fern without
Burnt as a living fire of emeralds,
So that his eyes were dazzled looking at it.
Then o'er it crost the dimness of a cloud
Floating, and once the shadow of a bird
Flying, and then a fawn; and his eyes
closed.

And since he loved all maidens, but no
maid

In special, half-awake he whisper'd,
'Where?

O where? I love thee, tho' I know thee
not.

For fair thou art and pure as Guinevere,
And I will make thee with my spear and
sword

As famous—O my Queen, my Guinevere,
For I will be thine Arthur when we meet.'

Suddenly waken'd with a sound of talk
And laughter at the limit of the wood,
And glancing thro' the hoary boles, he
saw,

Strange as to some old prophet might
have seem'd

A vision hovering on a sea of fire,
Damsels in divers colours like the cloud
Of sunset and sunrise, and all of them
On horses, and the horses richly trapt

Breast-high in that bright line of bracken
stood:

And all the damsels talk'd confusedly,
And one was pointing this way, and one
that,
Because the way was lost.

And Pelleas rose,
And loosed his horse, and led him to the
light.

There she that seem'd the chief among
them said,

'In happy time behold our pilot-star!
Youth, we are damsels-errant, and we ride,
Arm'd as ye see, to tilt against the knights
There at Caerleon, but have lost our way:
To right? to left? straight forward? back
again?

Which? tell us quickly.'

And Pelleas gazing thought,
'Is Guinevere herself so beautiful?'
For large her violet eyes look'd, and her
bloom

A rosy dawn kindled in stainless heavens,
And round her limbs, mature in woman-
hood;

And slender was her hand and small her
shape;

And but for those large eyes, the haunts
of scorn,

She might have seem'd a toy to trifle with,
And pass and care no more. But while
he gazed

The beauty of her flesh abash'd the boy,
As tho' it were the beauty of her soul:

For as the base man, judging of the good,
Puts his own baseness in him by default
Of will and nature, so did Pelleas lend
All the young beauty of his own soul to
hers,

Believing her; and when she spake to
him,

Stammer'd, and could not make her a
reply.

For out of the waste islands had he come,
Where saving his own sisters he had known
Scarce any but the women of his isles,
Rough wives, that laugh'd and scream'd
against the gulls,
Makers of nets, and living from the sea.

Then with a slow smile turn'd the lady
round

And look'd upon her people; and as when
A stone is flung into some sleeping tarn,
The circle widens till it lip the marge,
Spread the slow smile thro' all her com-
pany.

Three knights were thereamong; and they
too smiled,

Scorning him; for the lady was Ettarre,
And she was a great lady in her land.

Again she said, 'O wild and of the
woods,

Knowest thou not the fashion of our
speech?

Or have the Heavens but given thee a fair
face,

Lacking a tongue?'

'O damsel,' answer'd he,

'I woke from dreams; and coming out
of gloom

Was dazzled by the sudden light, and
crave

Pardon: but will ye to Caerleon? I
Go likewise: shall I lead you to the King?'

'Lead then,' she said; and thro' the
woods they went.

And while they rode, the meaning in his
eyes,

His tenderness of manner, and chaste awe,
His broken utterances and bashfulness,

Were all a burthen to her, and in her heart
She mutter'd, 'I have lighted on a fool,
Raw, yet so stale!' But since her mind
was bent

On hearing, after trumpet blown, her name
And title, 'Queen of Beauty,' in the lists
Cried—and beholding him so strong, she
thought

That peradventure he will fight for me,
And win the circlet: therefore flatter'd
him,

Being so gracious, that he wellnigh deem'd
His wish by hers was echo'd; and her
knights

And all her damsels too were gracious to
him,

For she was a great lady.

And when they reach'd

Caerleon, ere they past to lodging, she,
Taking his hand, 'O the strong hand,'
she said,

'See! look at mine! but wilt thou fight
for me,

And win me this fine circlet, Pelleas,
That I may love thee?'

Then his helpless heart

Leapt, and he cried, 'Ay! wilt thou if I
win?'

'Ay, that will I,' she answer'd, and she
laugh'd,

And straitly nipt the hand, and flung it
from her;

Then glanced askew at those three knights
of hers,

Till all her ladies laugh'd along with her.

'O happy world,' thought Pelleas, 'all,
meseems,

Are happy; I the happiest of them all.'
Nor slept that night for pleasure in his
blood,

And green wood-ways, and eyes among
the leaves ;
Then being on the morrow knighted,
sware
To love one only. And as he came away,
The men who met him rounded on their
heels
And wonder'd after him, because his face
Shone like the countenance of a priest of
old
Against the flame about a sacrifice
Kindled by fire from heaven : so glad was
he.

Then Arthur made vast banquets, and
strange knights
From the four winds came in : and each
one sat,
Tho' served with choice from air, land,
stream, and sea,
Oft in mid-banquet measuring with his
eyes
His neighbour's make and might : and
Pelleas look'd
Noble among the noble, for he dream'd
His lady loved him, and he knew himself
Loved of the King : and him his new-
made knight
Worshipt, whose lightest whisper moved
him more
Than all the ranged reasons of the world.

Then blush'd and brake the morning of
the jousts,
And this was call'd 'The Tournament of
Youth :'
For Arthur, loving his young knight,
withheld
His older and his mightier from the lists,
That Pelleas might obtain his lady's love,
According to her promise, and remain
Lord of the tourney. And Arthur had the
jousts

Down in the flat field by the shore of Usk
Holden : the gilded parapets were crown'd
With faces, and the great tower fill'd with
eyes
Up to the summit, and the trumpets blew.
There all day long Sir Pelleas kept the
field
With honour : so by that strong hand of
his
The sword and golden circlet were
achieved.

Then rang the shout his lady loved :
the heat
Of pride and glory fired her face ; her eye
Sparkled ; she caught the circlet from his
lance,
And there before the people crown'd
herself :
So for the last time she was gracious to
him.

Then at Caerleon for a space—her look
Bright for all others, cloudier on her
knight—
Linger'd Ettarre : and seeing Pelleas
droop,
Said Guinevere, 'We marvel at thee
much,
O damsel, wearing this unsunny face
To him who won thee glory !' And she
said,
'Had ye not held your Lancelot in your
bower,
My Queen, he had not won.' Whereat
the Queen,
As one whose foot is bitten by an ant,
Glanced down upon her, turn'd and went
her way.

But after, when her damsels, and herself,
And those three knights all set their faces
home,

<p>Sir Pelleas follow'd. She that saw him cried, 'Damsels—and yet I should be shamed to say it— I cannot bide Sir Baby. Keep him back Among yourselves. Would rather that we had Some rough old knight who knew the worldly way, Albeit grizzlier than a bear, to ride And jest with : take him to you, keep him off, And pamper him with papmeat, if ye will, Old milky fables of the wolf and sheep, Such as the wholesome mothers tell their boys. Nay, should ye try him with a merry one To find his mettle, good : and if he fly us, Small matter ! let him.' This her damsels heard, And mindful of her small and cruel hand, They, closing round him thro' the journey home, Acted her hest, and always from her side Restrain'd him with all manner of device, So that he could not come to speech with her. And when she gain'd her castle, upsprang the bridge, Down rang the grate of iron thro' the groove, And he was left alone in open field.</p> <p>'These be the ways of ladies,' Pelleas thought, 'To those who love them, trials of our faith. Yea, let her prove me to the uttermost, For loyal to the uttermost am I.' So made his moan ; and, darkness falling, sought A priory not far off, there lodged, but rose</p>	<p>With morning every day, and, moist or dry, Full-arm'd upon his charger all day long Sat by the walls, and no one open'd to him.</p> <p>And this persistence turn'd her scorn to wrath. Then calling her three knights, she charged them, 'Out ! And drive him from the walls.' And out they came, But Pelleas overthrew them as they dash'd Against him one by one ; and these return'd, But still he kept his watch beneath the wall.</p> <p>Thereon her wrath became a hate ; and once, A week beyond, while walking on the walls With her three knights, she pointed downward, 'Look, He haunts me—I cannot breathe— besieges me ; Down ! strike him ! put my hate into your strokes, And drive him from my walls.' And down they went, And Pelleas overthrew them one by one ; And from the tower above him cried Ettarre, 'Bind him, and bring him in.'</p> <p>He heard her voice ; Then let the strong hand, which had overthrown Her minion-knights, by those he over- threw Be bounden straight, and so they brought him in.</p> <p>Then when he came before Ettarre, the sight</p>
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Of her rich beauty made him at one glance
More bondsman in his heart than in his
bonds.

Yet with good cheer he spake, 'Behold
me, Lady,

A prisoner, and the vassal of thy will ;
And if thou keep me in thy donjon here,
Content am I so that I see thy face

But once a day : for I have sworn my
vows,

And thou hast given thy promise, and I
know

That all these pains are trials of my faith,
And that thyself, when thou hast seen me
strain'd

And sifted to the utmost, wilt at length
Yield me thy love and know me for thy
knight.'

Then she began to rail so bitterly,
With all her damsels, he was stricken
mute ;

But when she mock'd his vows and the
great King,

Lighted on words : 'For pity of thine
own self,

Peace, Lady, peace : is he not thine and
mine ?'

'Thou fool,' she said, 'I never heard his
voice

But long'd to break away. Unbind him
now,

And thrust him out of doors ; for save
he be

Fool to the midmost marrow of his bones,
He will return no more.' And those, her
three,

Laugh'd, and unbound, and thrust him
from the gate.

And after this, a week beyond, again
She call'd them, saying, 'There he
watches yet,

There like a dog before his master's door !
Kick'd, he returns : do ye not hate him,
ye ?

Ye know yourselves : how can ye bide at
peace,

Affronted with his fulsome innocence ?
Are ye but creatures of the board and
bed,

No men to strike ? Fall on him all at
once,

And if ye slay him I reckon not : if ye fail,
Give ye the slave mine order to be bound,
Bind him as heretofore, and bring him in :
It may be ye shall slay him in his bonds.'

She spake ; and at her will they couch'd
their spears,

Three against one : and Gawain passing
by,

Bound upon solitary adventure, saw
Low down beneath the shadow of those
towers

A villainy, three to one : and thro' his
heart

The fire of honour and all noble deeds
Flash'd, and he call'd, 'I strike upon thy
side—

The catiffs !' 'Nay,' said Pelleas, 'but
forbear ;

He needs no aid who doth his lady's will.'

So Gawain, looking at the villainy done,
Forbore, but in his heat and eagerness
Trembled and quiver'd, as the dog, with-
held

A moment from the vermin that he sees
Before him, shivers, ere he springs and
kills.

And Pelleas overthrew them, one to
three ;

And they rose up, and bound, and brought
him in.

<p>Then first her anger, leaving Pelleas, burn'd Full on her knights in many an evil name Of craven, weakling, and thrice-beaten hound : 'Yet, take him, ye that scarce are fit to touch, Far less to bind, your victor, and thrust him out, And let who will release him from his bonds. And if he comes again'—there she brake short ; And Pelleas answer'd, 'Lady, for indeed I loved you and I deem'd you beautiful, I cannot brook to see your beauty marr'd Thro' evil spite : and if ye love me not, I cannot bear to dream you so forsworn : I had liefer ye were worthy of my love, Than to be loved again of you—farewell ; And tho' ye kill my hope, not yet my love, Vex not yourself : ye will not see me more.'</p> <p>While thus he spake, she gazed upon the man Of princely bearing, tho' in bonds, and thought, 'Why have I push'd him from me? this man loves, If love there be : yet him I loved not. Why? I deem'd him fool? yea, so? or that in him A something—was it nobler than my- self?— Seem'd my reproach? He is not of my kind. He could not love me, did he know me well. Nay, let him go—and quickly.' And her knights Laugh'd not, but thrust him bounden out of door.</p>	<p>Forth sprang Gawain, and loosed him from his bonds, And flung them o'er the walls ; and after- ward, Shaking his hands, as from a lazar's rag, 'Faith of my body,' he said, 'and art unou not— Yea thou art he, whom late our Arthur made Knight of his table ; yea and he that won The circlet? wherefore hast thou so defamed Thy brotherhood in me and all the rest, As let these caitiffs on thee work their will?'</p> <p>And Pelleas answer'd, 'O, their wills are hers For whom I won the circlet ; and mine, hers, Thus to be bounden, so to see her face, Marr'd tho' it be with spite and mockery now, Other than when I found her in the woods ; And tho' she hath me bounden but in spite, And all to flout me, when they bring me in, Let me be bounden, I shall see her face ; Else must I die thro' mine unhappiness.'</p> <p>And Gawain answer'd kindly tho' in scorn, 'Why, let my lady bind me if she will, And let my lady beat me if she will ; But an she send her delegate to thrall These fighting hands of mine—Christ kill me then But I will slice him handless by the wrist, And let my lady sear the stump for him, Howl as he may. But hold me for your friend :</p>
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Come, ye know nothing : here I pledge
my troth,

Yea, by the honour of the Table Round,
I will be leal to thee and work thy work,
And tame thy jailing princess to thine
hand.

Lend me thine horse and arms, and I will
say

That I have slain thee. She will let me in
To hear the manner of thy fight and fall ;
Then, when I come within her counsels,
then

From prime to vespers will I chant thy
praise

As prowtest knight and truest lover, more
Than any have sung thee living, till she
long

To have thee back in lusty life again,
Not to be bound, save by white bonds
and warm,

Dearer than freedom. Wherefore now
thy horse

And armour : let me go : be comforted :
Give me three days to melt her fancy,
and hope

The third night hence will bring thee
news of gold.'

Then Pelleas lent his horse and all his
arms,

Saving the goodly sword, his prize, and
took

Gawain's, and said, 'Betray me not, but
help—

Art thou not he whom men call light-of-
love ?'

'Ay,' said Gawain, 'for women be so
light.'

Then bounded forward to the castle walls,
And raised a bugle hanging on his neck,
And winded it, and that so musically
That all the old echoes hidden in the wall

Rang out like hollow woods at hunting-
tide.

Up ran a score of damsels to the tower ;
'Avaunt,' they cried, 'our lady loves thee
not.'

But Gawain lifting up his vizor said,
'Gawain am I, Gawain of Arthur's court,
And I have slain this Pelleas whom ye
hate :

Behold his horse and armour. Open
gates,

And I will make you merry.'

And down they ran,
Her damsels, crying to their lady, 'Lo !
Pelleas is dead—he told us—he that hath
His horse and armour : will ye let him in ?
He slew him ! Gawain, Gawain of the
court,

Sir Gawain—there he waits below the
wall,
Blowing his bugle as who should say him
nay.'

And so, leave given, straight on thro'
open door

Rode Gawain, whom she greeted cour-
teously.

'Dead, is it so ?' she ask'd. 'Ay, ay,'
said he,

'And oft in dying cried upon your name.'
'Pity on him,' she answer'd, 'a good
knight,

But never let me bide one hour at peace.'
'Ay,' thought Gawain, 'and you be fair
enow :

But I to your dead man have given my
troth,

That whom ye loathe, him will I make you
love.'

So those three days, aimless about the
land,

Lost in a doubt, Pelleas wandering
 Waited, until the third night brought a
 moon
 With promise of large light on woods and
 ways.

Hot was the night and silent ; but a
 sound
 Of Gawain ever coming, and this lay—
 Which Pelleas had heard sung before the
 Queen,
 And seen her sadden listening—vext his
 heart,
 And marr'd his rest—'A worm within the
 rose.'

'A rose, but one, none other rose had I,
 A rose, one rose, and this was wondrous
 fair,
 One rose, a rose that gladden'd earth and
 sky,
 One rose, my rose, that sweeten'd all mine
 air—
 I cared not for the thorns ; the thorns
 were there.

'One rose, a rose to gather by and by,
 One rose, one rose, to gather and to
 wear,
 No rose but one—what other rose had I?
 One rose, my rose ; a rose that will not
 die,—
 He dies who loves it,—if the worm be
 there.'

This tender rhyme, and evermore the
 doubt,
 'Why lingers Gawain with his golden
 news ?'
 So shook him that he could not rest, but
 rode
 Ere midnight to her walls, and bound his
 horse

Hard by the gates. Wide open were the
 gates,
 And no watch kept ; and in thro' these
 he past,
 And heard but his own steps, and his own
 heart
 Beating, for nothing moved but his own
 self,
 And his own shadow. Then he crost the
 court,
 And spied not any light in hall or bower,
 But saw the postern portal also wide
 Yawning ; and up a slope of garden, all
 Of roses white and red, and brambles mixt
 And overgrowing them, went on, and
 found,
 Here too, all hush'd below the mellow
 moon,
 Save that one rivulet from a tiny cave
 Came lightening downward, and so spilt
 itself
 Among the roses, and was lost again.

Then was he ware of three pavilions
 rear'd
 Above the bushes, gilden-peakt : in one,
 Red after revel, droned her lurdane
 knights
 Slumbering, and their three squires across
 their feet :
 In one, their malice on the placid lip
 Froz'n by sweet sleep, four of her damsels
 lay :
 And in the third, the circlet of the jousts
 Bound on her brow, were Gawain and
 Ettarre.

Back, as a hand that pushes thro' the
 leaf
 To find a nest and feels a snake, he drew :
 Back, as a coward slinks from what he
 fears
 To cope with, or a traitor proven, or hound

Beaten, did Pelleas in an utter shame
 Creep with his shadow thro' the court
 again,
 Fingering at his sword-handle until he
 stood
 There on the castle-bridge once more, and
 thought,
 'I will go back, and slay them where they
 lie.'

And so went back, and seeing them yet
 in sleep
 Said, 'Ye, that so dishallow the holy
 sleep,
 Your sleep is death,' and drew the sword,
 and thought,
 'What! slay a sleeping knight? the King
 hath bound
 And sworn me to this brotherhood;'
 again,
 'Alas that ever a knight should be so
 false.'
 Then turn'd, and so return'd, and groan-
 ing laid
 The naked sword athwart their naked
 throats,
 There left it, and them sleeping; and she
 lay,
 The circlet of the tourney round her
 brows,
 And the sword of the tourney across her
 throat.

And forth he past, and mounting on
 his horse
 Stared at her towers that, larger than
 themselves
 In their own darkness, throng'd into the
 moon.
 Then crush'd the saddle with his thighs,
 and clench'd
 His hands, and madden'd with himself
 and moan'd:

'Would they have risen against me in
 their blood
 At the last day? I might have answer'd
 them
 Even before high God. O towers so
 strong,
 Huge, solid, would that even while I gaze
 The crack of earthquake shivering to your
 base
 Split you, and I'll burst up your harlot
 roofs
 Bellowing, and charr'd you thro' and thro'
 within,
 Black as the harlot's heart—hollow as a
 skull!
 Let the fierce east scream thro' your eyelet-
 holes,
 And whirl the dust of harlots round and
 round
 In dung and nettles! hiss, snake—I saw
 him there—
 Let the fox bark, let the wolf yell. Who
 yells
 Here in the still sweet summer night, but
 I—
 I, the poor Pelleas whom she call'd her
 fool?
 Fool, beast—he, she, or I? myself most
 fool;
 Beast too, as lacking human wit—dis-
 graced,
 Dishonour'd all for trial of true love—
 Love?—we be all alike: only the King
 Hath made us fools and liars. O noble
 vows!
 O great and sane and simple race of brutes
 That own no lust because they have no
 law!
 For why should I have loved her to my
 shame?
 I loathe her, as I loved her to my shame.
 I never loved her, I but lusted for her—
 Away—'

He dash'd the rowel into his horse,
And bounded forth and vanish'd thro' the
night.

Then she, that felt the cold touch on
her throat,
Awaking knew the sword, and turn'd
herself

To Gawain: 'Liar, for thou hast not slain
This Pelleas! here he stood, and might
have slain

Me and thyself.' And he that tells the tale
Says that her ever-veering fancy turn'd
To Pelleas, as the one true knight on
earth,

And only lover; and thro' her love her
life

Wasted and pined, desiring him in vain.

But he by wild and way, for half the
night,

And over hard and soft, striking the sod
From out the soft, the spark from off the
hard,

Rode till the star above the wakening sun,
Beside that tower where Percivale was
cowl'd,

Glanced from the rosy forehead of the
dawn.

For so the words were flash'd into his
heart

He knew not whence or wherefore: 'O
sweet star,

Pure on the virgin forehead of the dawn!'
And there he would have wept, but felt
his eyes

Harder and drier than a fountain bed
In summer: thither came the village girls
And linger'd talking, and they come no
more

Till the sweet heavens have fill'd it from
the heights

Again with living waters in the change

Of seasons: hard his eyes; harder his
heart

Seem'd; but so weary were his limbs,
that he,

Gasping, 'Of Arthur's hall am I, but
here,

Here let me rest and die,' cast himself
down,

And gulf'd his griefs in inmost sleep; so
lay,

Till shaken by a dream, that Gawain fired
The hall of Merlin, and the morning star
Reel'd in the smoke, brake into flame,
and fell.

He woke, and being ware of some one
nigh,

Sent hands upon him, as to tear him,
crying,

'False! and I held thee pure as Guine-
vere.'

But Percivale stood near him and
replied,

'Am I but false as Guinevere is pure?
Or art thou mazed with dreams? or being
one

Of our free-spoken Table hast not heard
That Lancelot'—there he check'd him-
self and paused.

Then fared it with Sir Pelleas as with
one

Who gets a wound in battle, and the sword
That made it plunges thro' the wound
again,

And pricks it deeper: and he shrank and
wail'd,

'Is the Queen false?' and Percivale was
mute.

'Have any of our Round Table held their
vows?'

And Percivale made answer not a word.

'Is the King true?' 'The King!' said
Percivale.
'Why then let men couple at once with
wolves.
What! art thou mad?'

But Pelleas, leaping up,
Ran thro' the doors and vaulted on his
horse
And fled: small pity upon his horse had
he,
Or on himself, or any, and when he met
A cripple, one that held a hand for alms—
Hunch'd as he was, and like an old dwarf-
elm
That turns its back on the salt blast, the
boy
Paused not, but overrode him, shouting,
'False,
And false with Gawain!' and so left him
bruised
And batter'd, and fled on, and hill and
wood
Went ever streaming by him till the
gloom,
That follows on the turning of the world,
Darken'd the common path: he twitch'd
the reins,
And made his beast that better knew it,
swerve
Now off it and now on; but when he saw
High up in heaven the hall that Merlin
built,
Blackening against the dead-green stripes
of even,
'Black nest of rats,' he groan'd, 'ye build
too high.'

Not long thereafter from the city gates
Issued Sir Lancelot riding airily,
Warm with a gracious parting from the
Queen,
Peace at his heart, and gazing at a star

And marvelling what it was, on whom
the boy,
Across the silent seeded meadow-grass
Borne, clash'd: and Lancelot, saying,
'What name hast thou
That ridest here so blindly and so hard?'
'I have no name,' he shouted, 'a scourge
am I,
To lash the treasons of the Table Round.'
'Yea, but thy name?' 'I have many
names,' he cried:
'I am wrath and shame and hate and evil
fame,
And like a poisonous wind I pass to
blast
And blaze the crime of Lancelot and the
Queen.'
'First over me,' said Lancelot, 'shalt
thou pass.'
'Fight therefore,' yell'd the other, and
either knight
Drew back a space, and when they closed,
at once
The weary steed of Pelleas floundering
flung
His rider, who call'd out from the dark
field,
'Thou art false as Hell: slay me: I have
no sword.'
Then Lancelot, 'Yea, between thy lips—
and sharp;
But here will I disedge it by thy death.'
'Slay then,' he shriek'd, 'my will is to be
slain.'
And Lancelot, with his heel upon the
fall'n,
Rolling his eyes, a moment stood, then
spake:
'Rise, weakling; I am Lancelot; say thy
say.'

And Lancelot slowly rode his warhorse
back

To Camelot, and Sir Pelleas in brief while
Caught his unbroken limbs from the dark
field,

And follow'd to the city. It chanced that
both

Brake into hall together, worn and pale.
There with her knights and dames was
Guinevere.

Full wonderingly she gazed on Lancelot
So soon return'd, and then on Pelleas,
him

Who had not greeted her, but cast him-
self

Down on a bench, hard-breathing. 'I have
ye fought?'

She ask'd of Lancelot. 'Ay, my Queen,'
he said.

'And thou hast overthrown him?' 'Ay,
my Queen.'

Then she, turning to Pelleas, 'O young
knight,

Hath the great heart of knighthood in
thee fail'd

So far thou canst not bide, unfrowardly,
A fall from him?' Then, for he answer'd
not,

'Or hast thou other griefs? If I, the
Queen,

May help them, loose thy tongue, and let
me know.'

But Pelleas lifted up an eye so fierce
She quail'd; and he, hissing 'I have no
sword,'

Sprang from the door into the dark.
The Queen

Look'd hard upon her lover, he on her;
And each foresaw the dolorous day to
be:

And all talk died, as in a grove all song
Beneath the shadow of some bird of prey;
Then a long silence came upon the hall,
And Modred thought, 'The time is hard
at hand.'

THE LAST TOURNAMENT.

DAGONET, the fool, whom Gawain in his
mood

Had made mock-knight of Arthur's
Table Round,

At Camelot, high above the yellowing
woods,

Danced like a wither'd leaf before the hall.
And toward him from the hall, with harp
in hand,

And from the crown thereof a carcanet
Of ruby swaying to and fro, the prize
Of Tristram in the jousts of yesterday,
Came Tristram, saying, 'Why skip ye
so, Sir Fool?'

For Arthur and Sir Lancelot riding once
Far down beneath a winding wall of rock
Heard a child wail. A stump of oak
half-dead,

From roots like some black coil of carven
snakes,

Clutch'd at the crag, and started thro'
mid air

Bearing an eagle's nest: and thro' the tree
Rush'd ever a rainy wind, and thro' the
wind

Pierced ever a child's cry: and crag and
tree

Scaling, Sir Lancelot from the perilous
nest,

This ruby necklace thrice around her neck,
And all unscarr'd from beak or talon,
brought

A maiden babe; which Arthur pitying
took,

Then gave it to his Queen to rear: the
Queen

But coldly acquiescing, in her white arms
Received, and after loved it tenderly,
And named it Nestling; so forgot herself

TOURNAMENT.

Whom Gawain in his
 night of Arthur's
 above the yellowing
 leaf before the hall.
 the hall, with harp
 hereof a carcanet
 and fro, the prize
 mists of yesterday,
 ng, 'Why skip ye
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 A stump of oak
 black coil of carven
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 t : and thro' the tree
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 t from the perilous
 ce around her neck,
 om beak or talon,
 ich Arthur pitying
 Queen to rear : the
 y, in her white arms
 ved it tenderly,
 g ; so forgot herself

A moment, and her cares ; till that young
 life
 Being smitten in mid heaven with mortal
 cold
 Past from her ; and in time the carcanet
 Vext her with plaintive memories of the
 child :
 So she, delivering it to Arthur, said,
 'Take thou the jewels of this dead in-
 nocence,
 And make them, an thou wilt, a tourney-
 prize.'

To whom the King, 'Peace to thine
 eagle-borne
 Dead nestling, and this honour after death,
 Following thy will ! but, O my Queen,
 I muse
 Why ye not wear on arm, or neck, or
 zone
 Those diamonds that I rescued from the
 tarn,
 And Lancelot won, methought, for thee
 to wear.'

'Would rather you had let them fall,'
 she cried,
 'Plunge and be lost—ill-fated as they
 were,
 A bitterness to me !—ye look amazed,
 Not knowing they were los' as soon as
 given—
 Slid from my hands, when I was leaning
 out
 Above the river—that unhappy child
 Past in her barge : but rosier luck will go
 With these rich jewels, seeing that they
 came
 Not from the skeleton of a brother-slayer,
 But the sweet body of a maiden babe.
 Perchance—who knows?—the purest of
 thy knights
 May win them for the purest of my maids.'

She ended, and the cry of a great jousts
 With trumpet-blowings ran on all the
 ways
 From Camelot in among the faded fields
 To furthest towers ; and everywhere the
 knights
 Arm'd for a day of glory before the King.

But on the hither side of that loud morn
 Into the hall stagger'd, his visage ribb'd
 From ear to ear with dogwhip-weals, his
 nose
 Bridge-broken, one eye out, and one hand
 off,
 And one with shatter'd fingers dangling
 lame,
 A churl, to whom indignantly the King,

'My churl, for whom Christ died, what
 evil beast
 Hath drawn his claws athwart thy face ?
 or fiend ?
 Man was it who marr'd heaven's image
 in thee thus ?'

Then, sputtering thro' the hedge of
 splinter'd teeth,
 Yet strangers to the tongue, and with
 blunt stump
 Pitch-blacken'd sawing the air, said the
 maim'd churl,

'He took them and he drave them to
 his tower—
 Some hold he was a table-knight of thine—
 A hundred goodly ones—the Red Knight,
 he—
 Lord, I was tending swine, and the Red
 Knight
 Brake in upon me and drave them to his
 tower ;
 And when I call'd upon thy name as one
 That doest right by gentle and by churl,

Maim'd me and maul'd, and would outright have slain,
Save that he swarc me to a message, saying,

"Tell thou the King and all his liars, that I

Have founded my Round Table in the North,

And whatsoever his own knights have sworn

My knights have sworn the counter to it—and say

My tower is full of harlots, like his court,
But mine are worthier, seeing they profess
To be none other than themselves—and say

My knights are all adulterers like his own,
But mine are truer, seeing they profess

To be none other; and say his hour is come,

The heathen are upon him, his long lance
Broken, and his Excalibur a straw."

Then Arthur turn'd to Kay the senechal,

'Take thou my churl, and tend him curiously

Like a king's heir, till all his hurts be whole.

The heathen—but that ever-climbing wave,

Hurl'd back again so often in empty foam,
Hath lain for years at rest—and renegades,
Thieves, bandits, leavings of confusion, whom

The wholesome realm is purged of other-where,

Friends, thro' your manhood and your féalty,—now

Make their last head like Satan in the North.

My younger knights, new-made, in whom
your flower

Waits to be solid fruit of golden deeds,
Move with me toward their quelling,
which achieved,

The loneliest ways are safe from shore to shore.

But thou, Sir Lancelot, sitting in my place
Enchain'd to-morrow, arbitrate the field;
For wherefore shouldst thou care to mingle
with it,

Only to yield my Queen her own again?
Speak, Lancelot, thou art silent: is it
well?'

Thereto Sir Lancelot answer'd, 'It is
well:

Yet better if the King abide, and leave
The leading of his younger knights to me.
Else, for the King has will'd it, it is well.'

Then Arthur rose and Lancelot follow'd
him,

And while they stood without the doors,
the King

Turn'd to him saying, 'Is it then so well?
Or mine the blame that oft I seem as he
Of whom was written, "A sound is in his
ears"?'

The foot that loiters, bidden go,—the
glance

That only seems half-loyal to command,—
A manner somewhat fall'n from rever-
ence—

Or have I dream'd the bearing of our
knights

Tells of a manhood ever less and lower?
Or whence the fear lest this my realm,
uprear'd,

By noble deeds at one with noble vows,
From flat confusion and brute violences,
Reel back into the beast, and be no
more?'

He spoke, and taking all his younger
knights,

Down the slope city rode, and sharply
turn'd
North by the gate. In her high bower
the Queen.
Working a tapestry, lifted up her head,
Watch'd her lord pass, and knew not that
she sigh'd.
Then ran across her memory the strange
rhyme
Of bygone Merlin, 'Where is he who
knows?
From the great deep to the great deep he
goes.'

But when the morning of a tournament,
By these in earnest those in mockery call'd
The Tournament of the Dead Innocence,
Brake with a wet wind blowing, Lancelot,
Round whose sick head all night, like
birds of prey,
The words of Arthur flying shriek'd, arose,
And down a streetway hung with folds of
pure
White samite, and by fountains running
wine,
Where children sat in white with cups of
gold,
Moved to the lists, and there, with slow
sad steps
Ascending, fill'd his double-dragon'd
chair.

He glanced and saw the stately galleries,
Dame, damsel, each thro' worship of their
Queen
White-robed in honour of the stainless
child,
And some with scatter'd jewels, like a
bank
Of maiden snow mingled with sparks of
fire.
He look'd but once, and veil'd his eyes
again.

The sudden trumpet sounded as in a
dream
To ears but half-awaked, then one low roll
Of Autumn thunder, and the jousts began :
And ever the wind blew, and yellowing
leaf
And gloom and gleam, and shower and
shower plume
Went down it. Sighing wearily, as one
Who sits and gazes on a faded fire,
When all the goodlier guests are past
away,
Sat their great umpire, looking o'er the
lists.
He saw the laws that ruled the tournament
Broken, but spake not; once, a knight
cast down
Before his throne of arbitration cursed
The dead babe and the follies of the King;
And once the laces of a helmet crack'd,
And show'd him, like a vermin in its hole,
Modred, a narrow face : anon he heard
The voice that billow'd round the barriers
roar
An ocean-sounding welcome to one knight,
But newly-enter'd, taller than the rest,
And armour'd all in forest green, whereon
There tript a hundred tiny silver deer,
And wearing but a holly-spray for crest,
With ever-scattering berries, and on shield
A spear, a harp, a bugle—Tristram—late
From overseas in Brittany return'd,
And marriage with a princess of that realm,
Isolt the White—Sir Tristram of the
Woods—
Whom Lancelot knew, had held sometime
with pain
His own against him, and now yearn'd to
shake
The burthen off his heart in one full shock
With Tristram ev'n to death: his strong
hands gript
And dinted the gilt dragons right and left,

Until he groan'd for wrath—so many of those,	Caracole; then bow'd his homage, bluntly saying,
That ware their ladies' colours on the casque,	'Fair damsels, each to him who worships each
Drew from before Sir Tristram to the bounds,	Sole Queen of Beauty and of love, behold
And there with gibes and flickering mockeries	This day my Queen of Beauty is not here.'
Stood, while he mutter'd, 'Craven crests! O shame!	And most of these were mute, some anger'd, one
What faith have these in whom they swear to love?	Murmuring, 'All courtesy is dead,' and one,
The glory of our Round Table is no more.'	'The glory of our Round Table is no more.'
So Tristram won, and Lancelot gave, the gems,	Then fell thick rain, plume droopt and mantle clung,
Not speaking other word than 'Hast thou won?	And pettish cries awoke, and the wan day
Art thou the purest, brother? See, the hand	Went glooming down in wet and weariness:
Wherewith thou takest this, is red!' to whom	But under her black brows a swarthy one
Tristram, half plagued by Lancelot's languorous mood,	Laugh'd shrilly, crying, 'Praise the patient saints,
Made answer, 'Ay, but wherefore toss me this	Our one white day of Innocence hath past,
Like a dry bone cast to some hungry hound?	Tho' somewhat draggled at the skirt. So be it.
Let be thy fair Queen's fantasy. Strength of heart	The snowdrop only, flowering thro' the year,
And might of limb, but mainly use and skill,	Would make the world as blank as Winter-tide.
Are winners in this pastime of our King.	Come—let us gladden their sad eyes, our Queen's
My hand—belike the lance hath dript upon it—	And Lancelot's, at this night's solemnity
No blood of mine, I trow; but O chief knight,	With all the kindlier colours of the field.'
Right arm of Arthur in the battlefield,	So dame and damsel glitter'd at the feast
Great brother, thou nor I have made the world;	Variouly gay: for he that tells the tale
Be happy in thy fair Queen as I in mine.'	Liken'd them, saying, as when an hour of cold
And Tristram round the gallery made his horse	Falls on the mountain in midsummer snows,
	And all the purple slopes of mountain flowers
	Pass under white, till the warm hour returns

With veer of wind, and all are flowers
again;

So dame and damsel cast the simple white,
And glowing in all colours, the live grass,
Rose-campion, bluebell, kingcup, poppy,
glanced

About the revels, and with mirth so loud
Beyond all use, that, half-amazed, the
Queen,

And wroth at Tristram and the lawless
jousts,

Brake up their sports, then slowly to her
bower

Parted, and in her bosom pain was lord.

And little Dagonet on the morrow
morn,

High over all the yellowing Autumn-tide,
Danced like a winner'd leaf before the hall.

Then Tristram saying, 'Why skip ye so,
Sir Fool?'

Wheel'd round on either heel, Dagonet
replied,

'Belike for lack of wiser company;
Or being fool, and seeing too much wit

Makes the world rotten, why, belike I skip
To know myself the wisest knight of all.'

'Ay, fool,' said Tristram, 'but 'tis eating
dry

To dance without a catch, a roundelay
To dance to.' Then he twangled on his

harp,
And while he twangled little Dagonet

stood,
Quiet as any water-sodden log

Stay'd in the wandering warble of a brook;
But when the twangling ended, skipt

again;
And being ask'd, 'Why skipt ye not, Sir

Fool?'

Made answer, 'I had liefer twenty years
Skip to the broken music of my brains

Than any broken music thou canst make.'

Then Tristram, waiting for the quip to
come,

'Good now, what music have I broken,
fool?'

And little Dagonet, skipping, 'Arthur,
the King's;

For when thou playest that air with Queen
Isolt,

Thou makest broken music with thy bride,
Her daintier namesake down in Brittany—

And so thou breakest Arthur's music
too.'

'Save for that broken music in thy brains,
Sir Fool,' said Tristram, 'I would break

thy head.

Fool, I came late, the heathen wars were
o'er,

The life had flown, we sware but by the
shell—

I am but a fool to reason with a fool—
Come, thou art crabb'd and sour: but

lean me down,
Sir Dagonet, one of thy long asses' ears,

And harken if my music be not true.

'Free love—free field—we love but
while we may:

The woods are hush'd, their music is no
more:

The leaf is dead, the yearning past away:
New leaf, new life—the days of frost are

o'er:

New life, new love, to suit the newer day:
New loves are sweet as those that went

before:
Free love—free field—we love but while

we may."

'Ye might have moved slow-measure
to my tune,

Not stood stockstill. I made it in the
woods,

And heard it ring as true as tested gold.'

<p>But Dagonet with one foot poised in his hand, 'Friend, did ye mark that fountain yesterday Made to run wine?—but this had run itself All out like a long life to a sour end— And them that round it sat with golden cups To hand the wine to whosoever came— The twelve small damosels white as Innocence; In honour of poor Innocence the babe, Who left the gems which Innocence the Queen Lent to the King, and Innocence the King Gave for a prize—and one of those white slips Handed her cup and piped, the pretty one, "Drink, drink, Sir Fool," and thereupon I drank, Spat—pish—the cup was gold, the draught was mud.'</p> <p>And Tristram, 'Was it muddier than thy gibes? Is all the laughter gone dead out of thee?— Not marking how the knighthood mock thee, fool— "Fear God : honour the King—his one true knight— Sole follower of the vows"—for here be they Who knew thee swine enow before I came, Smuttier than blasted grain : but when the King Had made thee fool, thy vanity so shot up It frightened all free fool from out thy heart ; Which left thee less than fool, and less than swine, A naked aught—yet swine I hold thee still,</p>	<p>For I have flung thee pearls and find thee swine.'</p> <p>And little Dagonet mincing with his feet, 'Knight, an ye sling those rubies round my neck In lieu of hers, I'll hold thou hast some touch Of music, since I care not for thy pearls. Swine? I have wallow'd, I have wash'd—the world In flesh and shadow—I have had my day. The dirty nurse, Experience, in her kind Hath foul'd me—an I wallow'd, then I wash'd— I have had my day and my philosophies— And thank the Lord I am King Arthur's fool. Swine, say ye? swine, goats, asses, rams and geese Troop'd round a Paynim harper once, who thrumm'd On such a wire as musically as thou Some such fine song—but never a king's fool.'</p> <p>And Tristram, 'Then were swine, goats, asses, geese The wiser fools, seeing thy Paynim bard Had such a mastery of his mystery That he could harp his wife up out of hell.'</p> <p>Then Dagonet, turning on the ball of his foot, 'And whither harp'st thou thine? down ! and thyself Down ! and two more : a helpful harper thou, That harpest downward ! Dost thou know the star We call the harp of Arthur up in heaven?'</p>
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And Tristram, 'Ay, Sir Fool, for when
our King
Was victor wellnigh day by day, the
knights,
Glorying in each new glory, set his name
High on all hills, and in the signs of
heaven.'

And Dagonet answer'd, 'Ay, and
when the land
Was freed, and the Queen false, ye set
yourself
To babble about him, all to show your
wit—
And whether he were King by courtesy,
Or King by right—and so went harping
down
The black king's highway, got so far,
and grew
So witty that ye play'd at ducks and drakes
With Arthur's vows on the great lake of
fire.
Tuwhoo ! do ye see it ? do ye see the star ?'

'Nay, fool,' said Tristram, 'not in
open day.'
And Dagonet, 'Nay, nor will : I see it
and hear.
It makes a silent music up in heaven,
And I, and Arthur and the angels hear,
And then we skip.' 'Lo, fool,' he said,
'ye talk
Fool's treason : is the King thy brother
fool ?'
Then little Dagonet clapt his hands and
shrill'd,
'Ay, ay, my brother fool, the king of fools !
Conceits himself as God that he can make
Figs out of thistles, silk from bristles, milk
From burning spurge, honey from hornet-
combs,
And men from beasts—Long live the king
of fools !'

And down the city Dagonet danced
away ;
But thro' the slowly-mellowing avenues
And solitary passes of the wood
Rode Tristram toward Lyonesse and
the west.
Before him fled the face of Queen Isolt
Wit' ruby-circled neck, but evermore
Past, as a rustle or twitter in the wood
Made dull his inner, keen his outer eye
For all that walk'd, or crept, or perch'd,
or flew.
Anon the face, as, when a gust hath blown,
Unruffling waters re-collect the shape
Of one that in them sees himself, return'd ;
But at the slot or fewmets of a deer,
Or ev'n a fall'n feather, vanish'd again.

So on for all that day from lawn to lawn
Thro' many a league-long bower he rode.
At length
A lodge of intertwisted beechen-boughs
Furze-cramm'd, and bracken-rooft, the
which himself
Built for a summer day with Queen Isolt
Against a shower, dark in the golden grove
Appearing, sent his fancy back to where
She lived a moon in that low lodge with
him :
Till Mark her lord had past, the Cornish
king,
With six or seven, when Tristram was
away,
And snatch'd her thence ; yet dreading
worse than shame
Her warrior Tristram, spake not any
word,
But bode his hour, devising wretchedness.

And now that desert lodge to Tristram
lookt
So sweet, that halting, in he past, and
sank

<p>Down on a drift of foliage random-blown ; But could not rest for musing how to smoothe And sleek his marriage over to the Queen. Perchance in lone Tintagil far from all The tonguesters of the court she had not heard. But then what folly had sent him overseas After she left him lonely here ? a name ? Was it the name of one in Brittany, Isolt, the daughter of the King ? ' Isolt Of the white hands ' they call'd her : the sweet name Allured him first, and then the maid her- self, Who served him well with those white hands of hers, And loved him well, until himself had thought He loved her also, wedded easily, But left her all as easily, and return'd. The black-blue Irish hair and Irish eyes Had drawn him home—what marvel ? then he laid His brows upon the drifted leaf and dream'd.</p> <p>He seem'd to pace the strand of Brittany Between Isolt of Britain and his bride, And show'd them both the ruby-chain, and both Began to struggle for it, till his Queen Graspt it so hard, that all her hand was red. Then cried the Breton, ' Look, her hand is red ! These be no rubies, this is frozen blood, And melts within her hand—her hand is hot With ill desires, but this I gave thee, look, Is all as cool and white as any flower.' Follow'd a rush of eagle's wings, and then</p>	<p>A whimpering of the spirit of the child, Because the twain had spoil'd her car- canet.</p> <p>He dream'd ; but Arthur with a hun- dred spears Rode far, till o'er the illimitable reed, And many a glancing plash and fallow isle, The wide-wing'd sunset of the misty marsh Glared on a huge machicolated tower That stood with open doors, whereout was roll'd A roar of riot, as from men secure Amid their marshes, ruffians at their ease Among their harlot-brides, an evil song. ' Lo there,' said one of Arthur's youth, for there, High on a grim dead tree before the tower, A goodly brother of the Table Round Swung by the neck : and on the boughs a shield Showing a shower of blood in a field noir And therebeside a horn, inflamed the knights At that dishonour done the gilded spur, Till each would clash the shield, and blow the horn. But Arthur waved them back. Alone he rode. Then at the dry harsh roar of the great horn, That sent the face of all the marsh aloft An ever upward-rushing storm and cloud Of shriek and plume, the Red Knight heard, and all, Even to tipmost lance and topmost helm, In blood-red armour sallying, howl'd to the King,</p> <p>' The teeth of Hell flay bare and gnash thee flat !—</p>
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Lo! art thou not that cunuch-hearted
King
Who fain had clipt free manhood from
the world—
The woman-worshipper? Yea, God's
curse, and I!
Slain was the brother of my paramour
By a knight of thine, and I that heard
her whine
And snivel, being eunuch-hearted too,
Swore by the scorpion-worm that twists
in hell,
And stings itself to everlasting death,
To hang whatever knight of thine I fought
And tumbled. Art thou King?—Look
to thy life !'

He ended : Arthur knew the voice ; the
face
Wellnigh was helmet-hidden, and the
name
Went wandering somewhere darkling in
his mind.
And Arthur deign'd not use of word or
sword,
But let the drunkard, as he stretch'd from
horse
To strike him, overbalancing his bulk,
Down from the causeway heavily to the
swamp .
Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching
wave,
Heard in dead night along that table-
shore,
Drops flat, and after the great waters
break
Whitening for half a league, and thin
themselves,
Far over sands marbled with moon and
cloud,
From less and less to nothing ; thus he fell
Head-heavy ; then the knights, who
watch'd him, roar'd

And shouted and leapt down upon the
fall'n ;
There trampled out his face from being
known,
And sank his head in mire, and slined
themselves :
Nor heard the King for their own cries,
but sprang
Thro' open doors, and swording right and
left
Men, women, on their sodden faces,
hurl'd
The tables over and the wines, and slew
Till all the rafters rang with woman-yells,
And all the pavement stream'd with
massacre :
Then, yell with yell echoing, they fired
the tower,
Which half that autumn night, like the
live North,
Red-pulsing up thro' Alioth and Alcor,
Made all above it, and a hundred meres
About it, as the water Moab saw
Come round by the East, and out beyond
them flush'd
The long low dune, and lazy-plunging sea.

So all the ways were safe from shore to
shore,
But in the heart of Arthur pain was lord.

Then, out of Tristram waking, the red
dream
Fled with a shout, and that low lodge
return'd,
Mid-forest, and the wind among the
boughs.
He whistled his good warhorse left to
graze
Among the forest greens, vaulted upon him,
And rode beneath an ever-showering leaf,
Till one lone woman, weeping near a
cross,

Stay'd him. 'Why weep ye?' 'Lord,'
she said, 'my man
Hath left me or is dead;' whereon he
thought—

'What, if she hate me now? I would
not this.

What, if she love me still? I would not
that.

I know not what I would'—but said to
her,

'Yet weep not thou, lest, if thy mate
return,

He find thy favour changed and love thee
not'—

Then pressing day by day thro' I yonnesse
Last in a roky hollow, belling, heard

The hounds of Mark, and felt the goodly
hounds

Yelp at his heart, but turning, past and
gain'd

Tintagil, half in sea, and high on land,
A crown of towers.

Down in a casement sat,
A low sea-sunset glorying round her hair
And glossy-throated grace, Isolt the
Queen.

And when she heard the feet of Tristram
grind

The spiring stone that scaled about her
tower,

Flush'd, started, met him at the doors,
and there

Belted his body with her white embrace,
Crying aloud, 'Not Mark—not Mark,
my soul!

The footstep flutter'd me at first: not he:
Catlike thro' his own castle steals my
Mark,

But warrior-wise thou stridest thro' his
halls

Who hates thee, as I him—ev'n to the
death.

My soul, I felt my hatred for my Mark
Quickened within me, and knew that thou
wert nigh.'

To whom Sir Tristram smiling, 'I am
here.

Let be thy Mark, seeing he is not thine.'

And drawing somewhat backward she
replied,

'Can he be wrong'd who is not ev'n his
own,

But save for dread of thee had beaten me,
Scratch'd, bitten, blinded, marr'd me
somehow—Mark?

What rights are his that dare not strike
for them?

Not lift a hand—not, tho' he found me
thus!

But harken! have ye met him! hence he
went

To-day for three days' hunting—as he
said—

And so returns belike with in an hour.

Mark's way, my soul!—but eat not thou
with Mark,

Because he hates thee even more than
fears;

Nor drink: and when thou passest any
wood

Close vizer, lest an arrow from the bush
Should leave me all alone with Mark and
hell.

My God, the measure of my hate for Mark
Is as the measure of my love for thee.'

So, pluck'd one way by hate and one
by love,

Drain'd of her force, again she sat, and
spake

To Tristram, as he knelt before her,
saying,

'O hunter, and O blower of the horn,
Harper, and thou hast been a rover too,

For, ere I mated with my shambling king,
Ye twain had fallen out about the bride
Of one—his name is out of me—the prize,
If prize she were—(what marvel—she
could see)—

Thine, friend; and ever since my craven
seeks
To wreck thee villainously: but, O Sir
Knight,
What dame or damsel have ye kneel'd to
last?'

And Tristram, 'Last to my Queen
Paramount,
Here now to my Queen Paramount of love
And loveliness—ay, lovelier than when
first
Her light feet fell on our rough Lyonnecse,
Sailing from Ireland.'

Softly laugh'd Isolt;
'Flatter me not, for hath not our great
Queen
My dole of beauty trebled?' and he said,
'Her beauty is her beauty, and thine thine,
And thine is more to me—soft, gracious,
kind—
Save when thy Mark is kindled on thy lips
Most gracious; but she, haughty, ev'n to
him,
Lancelot; for I have seen him wan enow
To make one doubt if ever the great Queen
Have yielded him her love.'

To whom Isolt,
'Ah then, false hunter and false harper,
thou
Who brakest thro' the scruple of my
bond,
Calling me thy white hind, and saying to
me
That Guinevere had sinn'd against the
highest,

And I—mis-yoked with such a want of
man—
That I could hardly sin against the lowest.'

He answer'd, 'O my soul, be com-
forted!
If this be sweet, to sin in leading-strings,
If here be comfort, and if ours be sin,
Crown'd warrant had we for the crowning
sin
That made us happy: but how ye greet
me—fear
And fault and doubt—no word of that
fond tale—
Thy deep heart-yearnings, thy sweet
memories
Of Tristram in that year he was away.'

And, saddening on the sudden, spake
Isolt,
'I had forgotten all in my strong joy
To see thee—yearnings?—ay! for, hour
by hour,
Here in the never-ended afternoon,
O sweeter than all memories of thee,
Deeper than any yearnings after thee
Seem'd those far-rolling, westward-
smiling seas,
Watch'd from this tower. Isolt of Britain
dash'd
Before Isolt of Brittany on the strand,
Would that have chill'd her bride-kiss?
Wedded her?
Fought in her father's battles? wounded
there?
The King was all fulfill'd with gratefulness,
And she, my namesake of the hands, that
heal'd
Thy hurt and heart with unguent and
caress—
Well—can I wish her any huger wrong
Than having known thee? her too hast
thou left

To pine and waste in those sweet memories.

O were I not my Mark's, by whom all men
Are noble, I should hate thee more than
love.'

And Tristram, fondling her light hands,
replied,

'Grace, Queen, for being loved: she
loved me well.

Did I love her? the name at least I loved.

Isolt?—I fought his battles, for Isolt!

The night was dark; the true star set.
Isolt!

The name was ruler of the dark—Isolt?
Care not for her! patient, and prayerful,

meek,

Pale-blooded, she will yield herself to
God.'

And Isolt answer'd, 'Yea, and why
not I?

Mine is the larger need, who am not meek,
Pale-blooded, prayerful. Let me tell
thee now.

Here one black, mute midsummer night
I sat,

Lonely, but musing on thee, wondering
where,

Murmuring a light song I had heard thee
sing,

And once or twice I spake thy name aloud.
Then flash'd a levin-brand; and near me

stood,

In fuming sulphur blue and green, a
fiend—

Mark's way to steal behind one in the
dark—

For there was Mark: "He has wedded
her," he said,

Not said, but hiss'd it: then this crown of
towers

So shook to such a roar of all the sky,

That here in utter dark I swoon'd away,
And woke again in utter dark, and cried,
"I will flee hence and give myself to
God!"—

And thou wert lying in thy new leman's
arms.'

Then Tristram, ever dallying with her
hand,

'May God be with thee, sweet, when old
and gray,

And past desire!' a saying that anger'd her.

"May God be with thee, sweet, when
thou art old,

And sweet no more to me!" I need
Him now.

For when had Lancelot utter'd aught so
gross

Ev'n to the swineherd's malkin in the
mast?

The greater man, the greater courtesy.

Far other was the Tristram, Arthur's
knight!

But thou, thro' ever harrying thy wild
beasts—

Save that to touch a harp, tilt with a lance
Becomes thee well—art grown wild beast
thyself.

How darest thou, if lover, push me even
In fancy from thy side, and set me far

In the gray distance, half a life away,
Hler to be loved no more? Unsay it,

unswear!

Flatter me rather, seeing me so weak,
Broken with Mark and hate and solitude,

Thy marriage and mine own, that I should
suck

Lies like sweet wines: lie to me: I believe.
Will ye not lie? not swear, as there ye

kneel,

And solemnly as when ye swear to him,
The man of men, our King—My God,

the power

Was once in vows when men believed the
King !

They lied not then, who sware, and thro'
their vows

The King prevailing made his realm :—
I say,

Swear to me thou wilt love me ev'n when
old,

Gray-hair'd, and past desire, and in des-
pair.'

Then Tristram, pacing moodily up and
down,

'Vows ! did you keep the vow you made
to Mark

More than I mine? Lied, say ye? Nay,
but learnt,

The vow that binds too strictly snaps
itself—

My knight-hood taught me this—ay, being
snapt—

We run more counter the soul thereof
Than had we never sworn. I swear no
more.

I swore to the great King, and am for-
sworn.

For once—ev'n to the height—I honour'd
him.

"Man, is he man at all?" methought,
when first

I rode from our rough Lyonesse, and
beheld

That victor of the Pagan throned in hall—
His hair, a sun that ray'd from off a brow

Like hillsnow high in heaven, the steel-
blue eyes,

The golden beard that clothed his lips
with light—

Moreover, that weird legend of his birth,
With Merlin's mystic babble about his end

Amazed me; then, his foot was on a stool
Shaped as a dragon; he seem'd to men

man,

But Michael trampling Satan; so I sware,
Being amazed: but this went by—The
vows !

O ay—the wholesome madness of an
hour—

They served their use, their time; for
every knight

Believed himself a greater than himself,
And every follower eyed him as a God;

Till he, being lifted up beyond himself,
Did nightier deeds than elsewhere he had

done,

And so the realm was made; but then
their vows—

First mainly thro' that sullying of our
Queen—

Began to gall the knight-hood, asking
whence

Had Arthur right to bind them to himself?
Dropt down from heaven? wash'd up

from out the deep?

They fail'd to trace him thro' the flesh
and blood

Of our old kings: whence then? a doubt-
ful lord

To bind them by inviolable vows,
Which flesh and blood perforce would

violate:

For feel this arm of mine—the tide within
Red with free chase and heather-scented

air,

Pulsing full man; can Arthur make me
pure

As any maiden child? lock up my tongue
From uttering freely what I freely hear?

Bind me to one? The wide world laughs
at it.

And worldling of the world am I, and
know

The ptarmigan that whitens ere his hour
Woos his own end; we are not angels here

Nor shall be: vows—I am woodman of
the woods,

And hear the garnet-headed yaffingale
Mock them : my soul, we love but while
we may ;
And therefore is my love so large for thee,
Seeing it is not bounded save by love.'

Here ending, he moved toward her,
and she said,
' Good : an I turn'd away my love for thee
To some one thrice as courteous as thy-
self—
For courtesy wins woman all as well
As valour may, but he that closes both
Is perfect, he is Lancelot—taller indeed,
Rosier and comelier, thou—but say I
loved
This knightliest of all knights, and cast
thee back
Thine own small saw, " We love but
while we may,"
Well then, what answer ?'

He that while she spake,
Mindful of what he brought to adorn her
with,
The jewels, had let one finger lightly touch
The warm white apple of her throat,
replied,
' Press this a little closer, sweet, until —
Come, I am hunger'd and half-anger'd —
meat,
Wine, wine—and I will love thee to the
death,
And out beyond into the dream to come.'

So then, when both were brought to
full accord,
She rose, and set before him all he will'd ;
And after these had comforted the blood
With meats and wines, and satiated their
hearts—
Now talking of their woodland paradise,
The deer, the dews, the fern, the founts,
the lawns ;

Now mocking at the much ungainliness,
And craven shifts, and long crane legs of
Mark—

Then Tristram laughing caught the harp,
and sang :

' Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bend
the brier !

A star in heaven, a star within the mere !
Ay, ay, O ay—a star was my desire,
And one was far apart, and one was near :
Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bow the
grass !

And one was water and one star was fire,
And one will ever shine and one will pass.
Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that move the
mere.'

Then in the light's last glimmer Tris-
tram show'd

And swung the ruby carcanet. She cried,
' The collar of some Order, which our
King
Hath newly founded, all for thee, my soul,
For thee, to yield thee grace beyond thy
peers.'

' Not so, my Queen,' he said, ' but the
red fruit

Grown on a magic oak-tree in mid-heaven,
And won by Tristram as a tourney-prize,
And hither brought by Tristram for his
last

Love-offering and peace-offering unto
thee.'

He rose, he turn'd, then, flinging round
her neck,

Claspt it, and cried ' Thine Order, O my
Queen !'

But, while he bow'd to kiss the jewell'd
throat,
Out of the dark, just as the lips had
touch'd,

Behind him rose a shadow and a shriek—
Mark's way,' said Mark, and clove him
thro' the brain.

That night came Arthur home, and
while he climb'd,
All in a death-dumb autumn-dripping
gloom,

The stairway to the hall, he look'd and
saw

The great Queen's bower was dark,—
about his feet

A voice clung sobbing till he question'd it,
'What art thou?' and the voice about
his feet

Sent up an answer, sobbing, 'I am thy
fool,

And I shall never make thee smile again.'

GUINEVERE.

QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court,
and sat

There in the holy house at Almesbury
Weeping, none with her save a little maid,

A novice: one low light betwixt them
burn'd

Blur'd by the creeping mist, for all
abroad,

Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,
The white mist, like a face-cloth to the

face,
Clung to the dead earth, and the land
was still.

For hither had she fled, her cause of
flight

Sir Modred; he that like a subtle beast
Lay couchant with his eyes upon the
throne,

Ready to spring, waiting a chance: for
this

He chill'd the popular praises of the King

With silent smiles of slow disparagement:
And tamper'd with the Lords of the
White Horse,
Heathen, the brood by Hengist left; and
sought

To make disruption in the Table Round
Of Arthur, and to splinter it into feuds
Serving his traitorous end; and all his
aims

Were sharpen'd by strong hate for Lancelot.

For thus it chanced one morn when
all the court,

Green-suited, but with plumes that
mock'd the may,

Had been, their wont, a-maying and
return'd,

That Modred still in green, all ear and eye,
Climb'd to the high-top of the garden-
wall

To spy some secret scandal if he might,
And saw the Queen who sat betwixt her
best

Enid, and lissome Vivien, of her court
The wildest and the worst; and more
than this

He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing by
Spied where he couch'd, and as the
gardener's hand

Picks from the colewort a green cater-
pillar,

So from the high wall and the flowering
grove

Of grasses Lancelot pluck'd him by the
heel,

And cast him as a worm upon the way;
But when he knew the Prince tho' marr'd
with dust,

He, reverencing king's blood in a bad man,
Made such excuses as he might, and these

Full knightly without scorn; for in those
days

No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt in
scorn ;

But, if a man were halt or hunch'd, in him
By those whom God had made full-limb'd
and tall,

Scorn was allow'd as part of his defect,
And he was answer'd softly by the King
And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot help
To raise the Prince, who rising twice or
thrice

Full sharply smote his knees, and smiled,
and went :

But, ever after, the small violence done
Rankled in him and ruffled all his heart,
As the sharp wind that ruffles all day long
A little bitter pool about a stone
On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told
This matter to the Queen, at first she
laugh'd

Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty fall,
Then shudder'd, as the village wife who
cries

'I shudder, some one steps across my
grave ;'

Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for
indeed

She half-foresaw that he, the subtle beast,
Would track her guilt until he found, and
hers

Would be for evermore a name of scorn.
Henceforward rarely could she front in
hall,

Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy face,
Heart-hiding smile, and gray persistent
eye :

Henceforward too, the Powers that tend
the soul,

To help it from the death that cannot die,
And save it even in extremes, began

To vex and plague her. Many a time for
hours,

Beside the placid breathings of the King,
In the dead night, grim faces came and
went

Before her, or a vague spiritual fear—
Like to some doubtful noise of creaking
doors,

Heard by the watcher in a haunted house,
That keeps the rust of murder on the
walls—

Held her awake : or if she slept, she
dream'd

An awful dream ; for then she seem'd to
stand

On some vast plain before a setting sun,
And from the sun there swiftly made at her
A ghastly something, and its shadow flew
Before it, till it touch'd her, and she
turn'd—

When lo ! her own, that broadening from
her feet,

And blackening, swallow'd all the land,
and in it

Far cities burnt, and with a cry she woke.
And all this trouble did not pass but
grew ;

Till ev'n the clear face of the guileless
King,

And trustful courtesies of household life,
Became her bane ; and at the last she
said,

'O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine own
land,

For if thou tarry we shall meet again,
And if we meet again, some evil chance
Will make the smouldering scandal break
and blaze

Before the people, and our lord the King.'

And Lancelot ever promised, but re-
main'd,

And still they met and met. Again she
said,

'O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee
hence.'

<p>And then they were agreed upon a night (When the good King should not be there) to meet And part for ever. Passion-pale they met And greeted : hands in hands, and eye to eye, Low on the border of her couch they sat Stammering and staring : it was their last hour, A madness of farewells. And Modred brought His creatures to the basement of the tower For testimony ; and crying with full voice 'Traitor, come out, ye are trapt at last,' accused Lancelot, who rushing outward lionlike Leapt on him, and hurl'd him headlong, and he fell Stunn'd, and his creatures took and bare him off, And all was still : then she, 'The end is come, And I am shamed for ever ; and he said, 'Mine be the shame ; mine was the sin : but rise, And fly to my strong castle overseas : There will I hide thee, till my life shall end, There hold thee with my life against the world.' She answer'd, 'Lancelot, wilt thou hold me so ? Nay, friend, for we have taken our fare- wells. Would God that thou couldst hide me from myself ! Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and thou Unwedded : yet rise now, and let us fly, For I will draw me into sanctuary, And bide my doom.' So Lancelot got her horse, Set her thereon, and mounted on his own,</p>	<p>And then they rode to the divided way, There kiss'd, and parted weeping : for he past, Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen, Back to his land ; but she to Almesbury Fled all night long by glimmering waste and weald, And heard the Spirits of the waste and weald Moan as she fled, or thought she heard them moan : And in herself she moan'd 'Too late, too late !' Till in the cold wind that foreruns the morn, A blot in heaven, the Raven, flying high, Croak'd, and she thought, 'He spies a field of death ; For now the Heathen of the Northern Sea, Lured by the crimes and frailties of the court, Begin to slay the folk, and spoil the land.' And when she came to Almesbury she spake There to the nuns, and said, 'Mine enemies Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood, Receive, and yield me sanctuary, nor ask My name to whom ye yield it, till her time To tell 'you : ' and her beauty, grace and power, Wrought as a charm upon them, and they spared To ask it. So the stately Queen abode For many a week, unknown, among the nuns ; Nor with them mix'd, nor told her name, nor sought,</p>
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Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for
shrif,
But communed only with the little maid,
Who pleased her with a babbling
heedlessness

Which often lured her from herself ; but
now,

This night, a rumour wildly blown about
Came, that Sir Modred had usurp'd the
realm,

And leagued him with the heathen, while
the King

Was waging war on Lancelot : then she
thought,

'With what a hate the people and the
King

Must hate me,' and bow'd down upon
her hands

Silent, until the little maid, who brook'd
No silence, brake it, uttering 'Late ! so
late !

What hour, I wonder, now?' and when
she drew

No answer, by and by began to hum
An air the nuns had taught her ; 'Late,
so late !'

Which when she heard, the Queen look'd
up, and said,

'O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing,
Sing, and unbind my heart that I may
weep.'

Whereat full willingly sang the little maid.

'Late, late, so late ! and dark the night
and chill !

Late, late, so late ! but we can enter still.
Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.

'No light had we : for that we do
repent ;
And learning this, the bridegroom will
relent.

Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.

'No light : so late ! and dark and chill
the night !

O let us in, that we may find the light !
Too late, too late : ye cannot enter now.

'Have we not heard the bridegroom is
so sweet ?

O let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet !
No, no, too late ! ye cannot enter now.'

So sang the novice, while full passion-
ately,

Her head upon her hands, remembering
Her thought when first she came, wept
the sad Queen.

Then said the little novice prattling to her,

'O pray you, noble lady, weep no
more ;

But let my words, the words of one so
small,

Who knowing nothing knows but to obey,
And if I do not there is penance given—
Comfort your sorrows ; for they do not
flow

From evil done ; right sure am I of that,
Who see your tender grace and stateliness.
But weigh your sorrows with our lord the
King's,

And weighing find them less ; for gone is
he

To wage grim war against Sir Lancelot
there,

Round that strong castle where he holds
the Queen ;

And Modred whom he left in charge of all,
The traitor—Ah sweet lady, the King's
grief

For his own self, and his own Queen, and
realm,

Must needs be thrice as great as any of
ours.

For me, I thank the saints, I am not
great.

For if there ever come a grief to me
I cry my cry in silence, and have done.
None knows it, and my tears have brought
me good :

But even were the griefs of little ones
As great as those of great ones, yet this
grief

Is added to the griefs the great must bear,
That howsoever much they may desire
Silence, they cannot weep behind a cloud :
As even here they talk at Almesbury
About the good King and his wicked
Queen,

And were I such a King with such a Queen,
Well might I wish to veil her wickedness,
But were I such a King, it could not be.'

Then to her own sad heart mutter'd the
Queen,
'Will the child kill me with her innocent
talk ?'

But openly she answer'd, 'Must not I,
If this false traitor have displaced his lord,
Grieve with the common grief of all the
realm ?'

'Yea,' said the maid, 'this is all
woman's grief,
That *she* is woman, whose disloyal life
Hath wrought confusion in the 'Table
Round

Which good King Arthur founded, years
ago,
With signs and miracles and wonders,
there
At Camelot, ere the coming of the Queen.'

Then thought the Queen within herself
again,
'Will the child kill me with her foolish
prate ?'

But openly she spake and said to her,
'O little maid, shut in by nunnery walls,

What canst thou know of Kings and
Tables Round,
Or what of signs and wonders, but the
signs
And simple miracles of thy nunnery ?'

To whom the little novice garrulously,
'Yea, but I know : the land was full of
signs
And wonders ere the coming of the Queen.
So said my father, and himself was knight
Of the great Table—at the founding of it ;
And rode thereto from Lyonesse, and
he said

That as he rode, an hour or maybe twain
After the sunset, down the coast, he heard
Strange music, and he paused, and
turning—there,
All down the lonely coast of Lyonesse,
Each with a beacon-star upon his head,
And with a wild sea-light about his feet,
He saw them—headland after headland
flame

Far on into the rich heart of the west :
And in the light the white mermaiden
swam,
And strong man-breasted things stood
from the sea,
And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the
land,

To which the little elves of chasm and cleft
Made answer, sounding like a distant horn.
So said my father—yea, and furthermore,
Next morning, while he past the dim-lit
woods,

Himself beheld three spirits mad with joy
Come dashing down on a tall wayside
flower,
That shook beneath them, as the thistle
shakes

When three gray linnets wrangle for the
seed :
And still at evenings on before his horse

The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and broke

Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd and broke

Flying, for all the land was full of life.

And when at last he came to Camelot,

A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand

Swung round the lighted lantern of the hall ;

And in the hall itself was such a feast

As never man had dream'd ; for every knight

Had whatsoever meat he long'd for served

By hands unseen ; and even as he said

Down in the cellars merry bloated things
Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on the butts

While the wine ran : so glad were spirits and men

Before the coming of the sinful Queen.'

Then spake the Queen and somewhat bitterly,

'Were they so glad? ill prophets were they all,

Spirits and men : could none of them foresee,

Not even thy wise father with his signs

And wonders, what has fall'n upon the realm?'

To whom the novice garrulously again,

'Yea, one, a bard ; of whom my father said,

Full many a noble war-song had he sung,

Ev'n in the presence of an enemy's fleet,

Between the steep cliff and the coming wave ;

And many a mystic lay of life and death
Had chanted on the smoky mountain-tops,

When round him bent the spirits of the hills

With all their dewy hair blown back like flame :

So said my father—and that night the bard
Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang the King

As wellnigh more than man, and rail'd at those

Who call'd him the false son of Gorlois :
For there was no man knew from whence he came ;

But after tempest, when the long wave broke

All down the thundering shores of Bude and Bos,

There came a day as still as heaven, and then

They found a naked child upon the sands
Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea ;

And that was Arthur ; and they foster'd him

Till he by miracle was approven King :

And that his grave should be a mystery
From all men, like his birth ; and could he find

A woman in her womanhood as great
As he was in his manhood, then, he sang,
The twain together well might change the world.

But even in the middle of his song
He falter'd, and his hand fell from the harp,

And pale he turn'd, and reel'd, and would have fall'n,

But that they stay'd him up ; nor would he tell

His vision ; but what doubt that he foresaw
This evil work of Lancelot and the Queen?'

Then thought the Queen, 'Lo ! they have set her on,

Our simple-seeming Abbess and her nuns,
To play upon me,' and bow'd her head nor spake.

Whereat the novice crying, with clasp'd hands,
Shame on her own garrulity garrulously,
Said the good nuns would check her gadding tongue

Full often, 'and, sweet lady, if I seem
To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,
Unmannerly, with prattling and the tales
Which my good father told me, check me too

Nor let me shame my father's memory, one
Of noblest manners, tho' himself would say
Sir Lancelot had the noblest; and he died,
Kill'd in a tilt, come next, five summers back,

And left me; but of others who remain,
And of the two first-famed for courtesy—
And pray you check me if I ask amiss—
But pray you, which had noblest, while you moved
Among them, Lancelot or our lord the King?'

Then the pale Queen look'd up and answer'd her,
'Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,
Was gracious to all ladies, and the same
In open battle or the tilting-field
Forbore his own-advantage, and the King
In open battle or the tilting-field
Forbore his own advantage, and these two
Were the most nobly-manner'd men of all;
For manners are not idle, but the fruit
Of loyal nature, and of noble mind.'

'Yea,' said the maid, 'be manners such fair fruit?
Then Lancelot's needs must be a thousand-fold
Less noble, being, as all rumour runs,
The most disloyal friend in all the world.'

To which a mournful answer made the Queen:

'O closed about by narrowing nunnery-walls,

What knowest thou of the world, and all its lights

And shadows, all the wealth and all the woe?

If ever Lancelot, that most noble knight,
Were for one hour less noble than himself,
Pray for him that he scape the doom of fire,

And weep for her who drew him to his doom.'

'Yea,' said the little novice, 'I pray for both;
But I should all as soon believe that his,
Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the King's,
As I could think, sweet lady, yours would be
Such as they are, were you the sinful Queen.'

So she, like many another babbler, hurt
Whom she would soothe, and harm'd
where she would heal;

For here a sudden flush of wrathful heat
Fired all the pale face of the Queen, who cried,

'Such as thou art be never maiden more
For ever! thou their tool, set on to plague.
And play upon, and harry me, petty spy
And traitress.' When that storm of anger brake

From Guinevere, aghast the maiden rose,
White as her veil, and stood before the Queen

As tremulously as foam upon the beach
Stands in a wind, ready to break and fly,
And when the Queen had added 'Get thee hence,'

Fled frighted. Then that other left alone

Sigh'd, and began to gather heart again,
Saying in herself, 'The simple, fearful child
Meant nothing, but my own too-fearful
guilt,

Simpler than any child, betrays itself.
But help me, heaven, for surely I repent.
For what is true repentance but in
thought—

Not ev'n in inmost thought to think again
The sins that made the past so pleasant
to us :

And I have sworn never to see him more,
To see him more.'

And ev'n in saying this,
Her memory from old habit of the mind
Went slipping back upon the golden days
In which she saw him first, when Lancelot
came,
Reputed the best knight and goodliest
man,

Ambassador, to lead her to his lord
Arthur, and led her forth, and far ahead
Of his and her retinue moving, they,
Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on love
And sport and tilts and pleasure, (for the
time

Was maytime, and as yet no sin was
dream'd,)

Rode under groves that look'd a paradise
Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth
That seem'd the heavens upbreking
thro' the earth,

And on from hill to hill, and every day
Beheld at noon in some delicious dale
The silk pavilions of King Arthur raised
For brief repast or afternoon repose
By couriers gone before ; and on again,
Till yet once more ere set of sun they saw
The Dragon of the great Pendragonship,
That crown'd the state pavilion of the
King,

Blaze by the rushing brook or silent well.

But when the Queen immersed in such
a trance,

And moving thro' the past unconsciously,
Came to that point where first she saw
the King

Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd to
find

Her journey done, glanced at him, thought
him cold,

High, self-contain'd, and passionless, not
like him,

'Not like my Lancelot'—while she
brooded thus

And grew half-guilty in her thoughts
again,

There rode an armed warrior to the doors.
A murmuring whisper thro' the nunnery
ran,

Then on a sudden a cry, 'The King.'
She sat

Stiff-stricken, listening ; but when armed
feet

Thro' the long gallery from the outer doors
Rang coming, prone from off her scat she
fell,

And grovell'd with her face against the
floor :

There with her milkwhite arms and
shadowy hair

She made her face a darkness from the
King :

And in the darkness heard his armed feet
Pause by her ; then came silence, then a
voice,

Monotonous and hollow like a Ghost's
Denouncing judgment, but tho' changed,
the King's :

'Liest thou here so low, the child of one
I honour'd, happy, dead before thy shame?
Well is it that no child is born of thee.

The children born of thee are sword and
fire,

Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,
 The craft of kindred and the Godless hosts
 Of heathen swarming o'er the Northern
 Sea ;
 Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my
 right arm
 The mightiest of my knights, abode with
 me,
 Have everywhere about this land of Christ
 In twelve great battles ruining overthrown.
 And knowest thou now from whence I
 come—from him,
 From waging bitter war with him : and he,
 That did not shun to smite me in worse
 way,
 Had yet that grace of courtesy in him left,
 He spared to lift his hand against the King
 Who made him knight : but many a
 knight was slain ;
 And many more, and all his kith and kin
 Clave to him, and abode in his own land.
 And many more when Modred raised
 revolt,
 Forgetful of their troth and fealty, clave
 To Modred, and a remnant stays with me.
 And of this remnant will I leave a part,
 True men who love me still, for whom I
 live,
 To guard thee in the wild hour coming on,
 Lest but a hair of this low head be harm'd.
 Fear not : thou shalt be guarded till my
 death.
 Howbeit I know, if ancient prophccies
 Have err'd not, that I march to meet my
 doom.
 Thou hast not made my life so sweet to
 me,
 That I the King should greatly care to
 live ;
 For thou hast spoilt the purpose of my life.
 Bear with me for the last time while I show,
 Ev'n for thy sake, the sin which thou hast
 sinn'd.

For when the Roman left us, and their law
 Relax'd its hold upon us, and the ways
 Were fill'd with rapine, here and there a
 deed
 Of prowess done redress'd a random
 wrong.
 But I was first of all the kings who drew
 The knighthood-errant of this realm and
 all
 The realms together under me, their
 Head,
 In that fair Order of my Table Round,
 A glorious company, the flower of men,
 To serve as model for the mighty world,
 And be the fair beginning of a time.
 I made them lay their hands in mine and
 swear
 To reverence the King, as if he were
 Their conscience, and their conscience as
 their King,
 To break the heathen and uphold the
 Christ,
 To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
 To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
 To honour his own word as if his God's,
 To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
 To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
 And worship her by years of noble deeds,
 Until they won her ; for indeed I knew
 Of no more subtle master under heaven
 Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
 Not only to keep down the base in man,
 But teach high thought, and amiable
 words
 And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
 And love of truth, and all that makes a
 man.
 And all this throve before I wedded thee,
 Believing, "lo mine helpmate, one to feel
 My purpose and rejoicing in my joy."
 Then came thy shameful sin with Lancelot ;
 Then came the sin of Tristram and Isolt ;

Then others, following these my mightiest
 knights,
 And drawing foul ensample from fair
 names,
 Sinn'd also, till the loathsome opposite
 Of all my heart had destined did obtain,
 And all thro' thee ! so that this life of mine
 I guard as God's high gift from scathe
 and wrong,
 Not greatly care to lose ; but rather think
 How sad it were for Arthur, should he live,
 To sit once more within his lonely hall,
 And miss the wonted number of my
 knights,
 And miss to hear high talk of noble deeds
 As in the golden days before thy sin.
 For which of us, who might be left, could
 speak
 Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance at
 thee ?
 And in thy bowers of Camelot or of Usk
 Thy shadow still would glide from room
 to room,
 And I should evermore be vexed with thee
 In hanging robe or vacant ornament,
 Or ghostly footfall echoing on the stair.
 For think not, tho' thou wouldst not love
 thy lord,
 Thy lord has wholly lost his love for thee.
 I am not made of so slight elements.
 Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy
 shame.
 I hold that man the worst of public foes
 Who either for his own or children's sake,
 To save his blood from scandal, lets the
 wife
 Whom he knows false, abide and rule the
 house :
 For being thro' his cowardice allow'd
 Her station, taken everywhere for pure,
 She like a new disease, unknown to men,
 Creeps, no precaution used, among the
 crowd,

Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes, and
 saps
 The fealty of our friends, and stirs the
 pulse
 With devil's leaps, and poisons half the
 young.
 Worst of the worst were that man he that
 reigns !
 Better the King's waste hearth and aching
 heart
 Than thou reseated in thy place of light,
 The mockery of my people, and their
 bane.'

He paused, and in the pause she crept
 an inch
 Nearer, and laid her hands about his feet.
 Far off a solitary trumpet blew.
 Then waiting by the doors the warhorse
 neigh'd
 As at a friend's voice, and he spake again :

' Yet think not that I come to urge thy
 crimes,
 I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,
 I, whose vast pity almost makes me die
 To see thee, laying there thy golden head,
 My pride in happier summers, at my feet.
 The wrath which forced my thoughts on
 that fierce law,
 The doom of treason and the flaming
 death,
 (When first I learnt thee hidden here) is
 past.
 The pang—which while I weigh'd thy
 heart with one
 Too wholly true to dream untruth in thee,
 Made my tears burn—is also past—in
 part.
 And all is past, the sin is sinn'd, and I,
 Lo ! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
 Forgives : do thou for thine own soul the
 rest.

But how to take last leave of all I loved?
O golden hair, with which I used to play
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded form,
And beauty such as never woman wore,
Until it came a kingdom's curse with
thee—

I cannot touch thy lips, they are not mine,
But Lancelot's: nay, they never were the
King's.

I cannot take thy hand; that too is flesh,
And in the flesh thou hast sinn'd; and
mine own flesh,

Here looking down on thine polluted, cries
"I loathe thee:" yet not less, O Guine-
vere,

For I was ever virgin save for thee,
My love thro' flesh hath wrought into my
life

So far, that my doom is, I love thee still.
Let no man dream but that I love thee still.
Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,
And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,
Hereafter in that world where all are pure
We two may meet before high God, and
thou

Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine,
and know

I am thine husband—not a smaller soul,
Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me
that,

I charge thee, my last hope. Now must
I hence.

Thro' the thick night I hear the trumpet
blow:

They summon me their King to lead mine
hosts

Far down to that great battle in the west,
Where I must strike against the man they
call

My sister's son—no kin of mine, who
leagues

With Lords of the White Horse, heathen,
and knights,

Traitors—and strike him dead, and meet
myself

Death, or I know not what mysterious
doom.

And thou remaining here wilt learn the
event;

But hither shall I never come again,
Never lie by thy side; see thee no more—
Farewell!

And while she grovelling at his feet,
She felt the King's breath wander o'er her
neck,

And in the darkness o'er her fallen head,
Perceived the waving of his hands that
blest,

Then, listening till those armed steps
were gone,

Rose the pale Queen, and in her anguish
found

The casement: 'peradventure,' so she
thought,

'If I might see his face, and not be seen.'
And lo, he sat on horseback at the door!
And near him the sad nuns with each a
light

Stood, and he gave them charge about the
Queen,

To guard and foster her for evermore.
And while he spake to these his helm was
lower'd,

To which for crest the golden dragon
clung

Of Britain; so she did not see the face,
Which then was as an angel's, but she saw,
Wet with the mists and smitten by the
lights,

The Dragon of the great Pendragonship
Blaze, making all the night a steam of fire.
And even then he turn'd; and more and
more

The moony vapour rolling round the King,

Who seem'd the phantom of a Giant in it,
Enwound him fold by fold, and made him
gray

And grayer, till himself became as mist
Before her, moving ghostlike to his doom.

Then she stretch'd out her arm and
cried aloud

'Oh Arthur !' there her voice brake
suddenly,

Then—as a stream that spouting from a
cliff

Fails in mid air, but gathering at the base
Re-makes itself, and flashes down the
vale—

Went on in passionate utterance :

'Gone—my lord !
Gone thro' my sin to slay and to be slain !
And he forgave me, and I could not speak.
Farewell ? I should have answer'd his
farewell.

His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord
the King,

My own true lord ! how dare I call him
mine ?

The shadow of another cleaves to me,
And makes me one pollution : he, the
King,

Call'd me polluted : shall I kill myself ?
What help in that ? I cannot kill my sin,
If soul be soul ; nor can I kill my shame ;
No, nor by living can I live it down.

The days will grow to weeks, the weeks
to months,

The months will add themselves and make
the years,

The years will roll into the centuries,
And mine will ever be a name of scorn.
I must not dwell on that defeat of fame.
Let the world be ; that is but of the world
What else ? what hope ? I think there was
a hope,

Except he mock'd me when he spake of
hope ;

His hope he call'd it ; but he never mocks,
For mockery is the fume of little hearts.
And blessed be the King, who hath for-
given

My wickedness to him, and left me hope
That in mine own heart I can live down
sin

And be his mate hereafter in the heavens
Before high God. Ah great and gentle
lord,

Who wast, as is the conscience of a saint
Among his warring senses, to thy
knights—

To whom my false voluptuous pride, that
took

Full easily all impressions from below,
Would not look up, or half-despised the
height

To which I would not or I could not
climb—

I thought I could not breathe in that fine
air

That pure severity of perfect light—
I wanted warmth and colour which I
found

In Lancelot—now I see thee what thou
art,

Thou art the highest and most human too,
Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there
none

Will tell the King I love him tho' so late ?
Now—ere he goes to the great Battle ?
none :

Myself must tell him in that purer life,
But now it were too daring. Ah my
God,

What might I not have made of thy fair
world,

Had I but loved thy highest creature
here ?

It was my duty to have loved the highest :

It surely was my profit had I known :
It would have been my pleasure had I
seen.

We needs must love the highest when we
see it,
Not Lancelot, nor another.'

Here her hand

Grasp'd, made her vail her eyes : she
look'd and saw

The novice, weeping, suppliant, and said
to her,

'Yea, little maid, for am I not forgiven ?'

Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns

All round her, weeping ; and her heart
was loosed

Within her, and she wept with these and
said,

'Ye know me then, that wicked one,
who broke

The vast design and purpose of the King.

O shut me round with narrowing nunnery-
walls,

Meek maidens, from the voices crying
"shame."

I must not scorn myself : he loves me still.

Let no one dream but that he loves me
still.

So let me, if you do not shudder at me,

Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with you ;

Wear black and white, and be a nun like
you,

Fast with your fasts, not feasting with
your feasts ;

Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at
your joys,

But not rejoicing ; mingle with your rites ;

Pray and be pray'd for ; lie before your
shrines ;

Do each low office of your holy house ;

Walk your dim cloister, and distribute dole

To poor sick people, richer in His eyes

Who ransom'd us, and haler too than I ;

And treat their loathsome hurts and heal
mine own ;

And so wear out in almsdeed and in prayer

The sombre close of that voluptuous day,

Which wrought the ruin of my lord the
King.'

She said : they took her to themselves ;
and she

Still hoping, fearing 'is it yet too late ?'

Dwelt with them, till in time their Abbess
died.

Then she, for her good deeds and her
pure life,

And for the power of ministration in her,

And likewise for the high rank she had
borne,

Was chosen Abbess, there, an Abbess, lived

For three brief years, and there, an
Abbess, past

To where beyond these voices there is
peace.

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

THAT story which the bold Sir Bedivere,
First made and latest left of all the
knights,

Told, when the man was no more than a
voice

In the white winter of his age, to
those

With whom he dwelt, new faces, other
minds.

For on their march to westward,
Bedivere,

Who slowly paced among the slumbering
host,

Heard in his tent the moanings of the
King:

'I found Him in the shining of the stars,
I mark'd Him in the flowering of His
fields,

But in His ways with men I find Him not.
I waged His wars, and now I pass and die.
O me! for why is all around us here
As if some lesser god had made the world,
But had not force to shape it as he would,
Till the High God behold it from beyond,
And enter it, and make it beautiful?
Or else as if the world were wholly fair,
But that these eyes of men are dense and
dim,

And have not power to see it as it is:
Perchance, because we see not to the
close;—

For I, being simple, thought to work His
will,

And have but stricken with the sword in
vain;

And all whereon I lean'd in wife and
friend

Is traitor to my peace, and all my realm
Reels back into the beast, and is no more.

My God, thou hast forgotten me in my
death:

Nay—God my Christ—I pass but shall
not die.'

Then, ere that last weird battle in the
west,

There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain
kill'd

In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain
blown

Along a wandering wind, and past his ear
Went shrilling, 'Hollow, hollow all
delight!

Hail, King! to-morrow thou shalt pass
away.

Farewell! there is an isle of rest for thee.
And I am blown along a wandering wind,
And hollow, hollow, hollow all delight.'
And fainter onward, like wild birds that
change

Their season in the night and wail their
way

From cloud to cloud, down the long wind
the dream

Shrill'd; but in going mingled with dim
cries

Far in the moonlit haze among the hills,
As of some lonely city sack'd by night,
When all is lost, and wife and child with
wail

Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke and
call'd,

'Who spake? A dream. O light upon
the wind,

Thine, Gawain, was the voice—are these
dim cries

Thine? or doth all that haunts the waste
and wild

Mourn, knowing it will go along with me?'

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere and
spake:

'O me, my King, let pass whatever will,
Elves, and the harmless glamour of the
field;

But in their stead thy name and glory cling
To all high places like a golden cloud

For ever: but as yet thou shalt not pass.
Light was Gawain in life, and light in
death

Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;
And care not thou for dreams from him,
but rise—

I hear the steps of Modred in the west,
And with him many of thy people, and
knights

Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but
grosser grown

Than heathen, spitting at their vows and thee.

Right well in heart they know thee for the King.

Arise, go forth and conquer as of old.'

Thenspake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'Far other is this battle in the west

Whereto we move, than when we strove in youth,

And brake the petty kings, and fought with Rome,

Or thrust the heathen from the Roman wall,

And shook him thro' the north. Ill doom is mine

To war against my people and my knights.
The king who fights his people fights himself.

And they my knights, who loved me once, the stroke

That strikes them dead is as my death to me.

Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way
Thro' his blind haze, which ever since I saw

One lying in the dust at Almesbury,
Hath folded in the passes of the world.'

Then rose the King and moved his host by night,

And ever push'd Sir Modred, league by league,

Back to the sunset bound of Lyonesse—
A land of old upheaven from the abyss

By fire, to sink into the abyss again;
Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,

And the long mountains ended in a coast
Of ever-shifting sand, and far away

The phantom circle of a moaning sea.
There the pursuer could pursue no more,

And he that fled no further fly the King;

And there, that day when the great light of heaven

Burn'd at his lowest in the rolling year,
On the waste sand by the waste sea they closed.

Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight
Like this last, dim, weird battle of the west.

A deathwhite mist slept over sand and sea:

Whereof the chill, to him who breathed it, drew

Down with his blood, till all his heart was cold

With formless fear; and ev'n on Arthur fell

Confusion, since he saw not whom he fought.

For friend and foe were shadows in the mist,

And friend slew friend not knowing whom he slew;

And some had visions out of golden youth,

And some beheld the faces of old ghosts
Look in upon the battle; and in the mist

Was many a noble deed, many a base,
And chance and craft and strength in single fights,

And ever and anon with host to host
Shocks, and the splintering spear, the

hard mail hewn,
Shield-breakings, and the clash of brands,

the crash
Of battleaxes on shatter'd helms, and shrieks

After the Christ, of those who falling down
Look'd up for heaven, and only saw the

mist;
And shouts of heathen and the traitor

knights,
Oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous blas-

phemies,

Sweat, writhings, anguish, labouring of
the lungs
In that close mist, and cryings for the
light,
Moans of the dying, and voices of the
dead.

Last, as by some one deathbed after wail
Of suffering, silence follows, or thro' death
Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that
shore,

Save for some whisper of the seething seas,
A dead hush fell ; but when the dolorous
day

Grew dearer toward twilight falling,
came

A bitter wind, clear from the North, and
blew

The mist aside, and with that wind the tide
Rose, and the pale King glanced across
the field

Of battle : but no man was moving there ;
Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,
Nor yet of heathen ; only the wan wave
Brake in among dead faces, to and fro
Swaying the helpless hands, and up and
down

Tumbling the hollow helmets of the
fallen,

And shiver'd brands that once had fought
with Rome,

And rolling far along the gloomy shores
The voice of days of old and days to be.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,
And whiter than the mist that all day long
Had held the field of battle was the King :

'Hearest thou this great voice that
shakes the world,
And wastes the narrow realm whereon we
move,
And beats upon the faces of the dead,

My dead, as tho' they had not died for
me?—

O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n
Confusion, till I know not what I am,
Nor whence I am, nor whether I be King.
Behold, I seem but King among the dead.'

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere :
'My King,
King everywhere ! and so the dead have
kings,

There also will I worship thee as King.
Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live
Who love thee ; but who hates thee, he
that brought

The heathen back among us, yonder
stands,

Modred, unharm'd, the traitor of thine
house.'

Then spake the King : 'My house hath
been my doom.

But call not thou this traitor of my house
Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with
me.

My house are rather they who swear my
vows,

Yea, even while they brake them, own'd
me King.

And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,
When all the purport of my throne hath
fail'd,

That quick or dead thou holdest me for
King.

King am I, whatsoever be their cry ;
And one last act of kinghood shalt thou
see

Yet, ere I pass.' And uttering this the
King

Made at the man : then Modred smote
his liege

Hard on that helm which many a heathen
sword

Had beaten thin ; while Arthur at one
 blow,
 Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,
 Slew him, and all but slain himself, he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
 Among the mountains by the winter sea ;
 Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
 Had fall'n in Lyonesse about their lord,
 King Arthur. Then, because his wound
 was deep,

The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land :
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
 Laya great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-
 vere :

' The sequel of to-day unselders all
 The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
 Whereof this world holds record. Such
 a sleep

They sleep—the men I loved. I think
 that we

Shall never more, at any future time,
 Delight our souls with talk of knightly
 deeds,

Walking about the gardens and the halls
 Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
 I perish by this people which I made,—
 Tho' Merlin sware that I should come
 again

To rule once more ; but, let what will be,
 be,

I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
 That without help I cannot last till morn.
 Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
 Which was my pride : for thou remem-
 berest how

In those old days, one summer noon, an
 arm

Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-
 derful,

Holding the sword—and how I row'd
 across

And took it, and have worn it, like a king ;
 And, wheresoever I am sung or told
 In aftertime, this also shall be known :
 But now delay not : take Excalibur,
 And fling him far into the middle mere :
 Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring
 me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :
 ' It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
 thus,
 Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the
 helm—

A little thing may harm a wounded man ;
 Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
 Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee
 word.'

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he
 stept,
 And in the moon athwart the place of
 tombs,

Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
 Old knights, and over them the sea-wind
 sang

Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He,
 stepping down

By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
 Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excali-
 bur,

And o'er him, drawing it, the winter
 moon,

Brightened the skirts of a long cloud,
 ran forth

And sparkled keen with frost against the
 hilt :

For all the haft twinkled with diamond
sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled as he
stood,

This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the
marge.

So strode he back slow to the wounded
King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
' Hast thou perform'd my mission which
I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast
heard? '

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-
vere :

' I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag. '

To whom replied King Arthur, faint
and pale :

' Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy
name,
Not rendering true answer, as besem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight :
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again,
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me
word. '

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the
mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in
thought ;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he
smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud :

' And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of
many men.

What good should follow this, if this were
done ?

What harm, undone? Deep harm to
disobey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king
demand

An act unprofitable, against himself?

The King is sick, and knows not what
he doeth.

What record, what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt? But were this
kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty
kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, " King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the
Lake.

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the
deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills. "

So might some old man speak in the after-
time

To all the people, giving reverence.
But now mine honour and much fame
were lost. '

So spake he, clouded with his own
conceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded
King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing
heavily :

'What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast
heard ?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-
vere :

'I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'

To whom replied King Arthur, much
in wrath :

'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is me !
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bew'd the will. I see thee what
thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious
hilt ;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee
hence :

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee 'with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and
ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly,
plunged

Among the bulrush beds, and clutch'd
the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The
great brand

Made lightnings in the splendour of the
moon,

And flashing round and round, and
whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter
shock

By night, with noises of the Northern Sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd
him

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere.

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing
thicker breath :

'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or
seen ?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the
gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheel-
ing him ;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful,

That caught him by the hilt, and
brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere.'

And answer made King Arthur,
breathing hard :

'My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I
were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words ;
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear,
'Quick, quick !
I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him,
as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang

Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them ; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold : and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in the barge.'
So to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against a brow
Striped with dark blood : for all his face was white.
And, cloud-like, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the spring-
ing east ;

And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops

Of onset ; and the light and lustrous curls—

That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust ;

Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the King ;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,

From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged

Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere :

'Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go ?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes ?

For now I see the true old times are dead,

When every morning brought a noble chance,

And every chance brought out a noble knight.

Such times have been not since the light that led

The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.

But now the whole Round Table is dissolved

Which was an image of the mighty world,
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,

Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'

And slowly answer'd Arthur from the barge :

'The old order changeth, yielding place to new,

And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done

May He within himself make pure ! but thou,

If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer

Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer

Both for themselves and those who call them friend ?

For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest—if indeed I go
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)—

To the island-valley of Avilion ;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail

Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan

That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes
 the flood
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir
 Bedivere
 Revolving many memories, till the hull
 Look'd one black dot against the verge of
 dawn,
 And on the mere the wailing died away.

But when that moan had past for ever-
 more,
 The stillness of the dead world's winter
 dawn
 Amazed him, and he groan'd, 'The King
 is gone.'
 And therewithal came on him the weird
 rhyme,
 'From the great deep to the great deep
 he goes.'

Whereat he slowly turn'd and slowly
 clomb
 The last hard footstep of that iron crag ;
 Thence mark'd the black hull moving yet,
 and cried,
 'He passes to be King among the dead,
 And after healing of his grievous wound
 He comes again ; but—if he come no
 more—

O me, be yon dark Queens in yon black
 boat,
 Who shriek'd and wail'd, the three
 whereat we gazed
 On that high day, when, clothed with
 living light,
 They stood before his throne in silence,
 friends
 Of Arthur, who should help him at his
 need ?'

Then from the dawn it seem'd there
 came, but faint
 As from beyond the limit of the world,
 Like the last echo born of a great cry,
 Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
 Around a king returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about,
 and clomb
 Ev'n to the highest he could climb, and
 saw,
 Straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand,
 Or thought he saw, the speck that bare
 the King,
 Down that long water opening on the deep
 Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go
 From less to less and vanish into light.
 And the new sun rose bringing the new
 year.

TO THE QUEEN.

O LOYAL to the royal in thyself,
 And loyal to thy land, as this to thee—
 Bear witness, that rememberable day,
 When, pale as yet, and fever-worn, the
 Prince
 Who scarce had pluck'd his flickering life
 again
 From halfway down the shadow of the
 grave,

Past with thee thro' thy people and their
 love,
 And London roll'd one tide of joy thro' all
 Her trebled millions, and loud leagues of
 man
 And welcome ! witness, too, the silent cry,
 The prayer of many a race and creed,
 and clime—
 Thunderless lightnings striking under sea

Queens in yon black
 wail'd, the three
 azed
 when, clothed with
 is throne in silence,
 ould help him at his
 awn it seem'd there
 nt
 limit of the world,
 orn of a great cry,
 ir city were one voice
 ing from his wars.
 re he moved about,
 e could climb, and
 eath an arch of hand,
 the speck that bare
 opening on the deep
 ass on and on, and go
 vanish into light.
 e bringing the new
 y people and their
 e tide of joy thro' all
 and loud leagues of
 s, too, the silent cry,
 a race and creed,
 s striking under sea

From sunset and sunrise of all thy realm,
 And that true North, whereof we lately
 heard
 A strain to shame us 'keep you to your-
 selves ;
 So loyal is too costly ! friends—your love
 Is but a burthen : loose the bond, and go.'
 Is this the tone of empire ? here the faith
 That made us rulers ? this, indeed, her
 voice
 And meaning, whom the roar of Hougou-
 mont
 Left mightiest of all peoples under heaven ?
 What shock has fool'd her since, that she
 should speak
 So feebly ? wealthier—wealthier—hour
 by hour !
 The voice of Britain, or a sinking land,
 Some third-rate isle half-lost among her
 seas ?
 There rang her voice, when the full city
 peal'd
 Thee and thy Prince ! The loyal to their
 crown
 Are loyal to their own far sons, who love
 Our ocean-empire with her boundless
 homes
 For ever-broadening England, and her
 throne
 In our vast Orient, and one isle, one isle,
 That knows not her own greatness : if she
 knows
 And dreads it we are fall'n. — But thou,
 my Queen,
 Not for itself, but thro' thy living love
 For one to whom I made it o'er his grave
 Sacred, accept this old imperfect tale,
 New-old, and shadowing Sense at war
 with Soul
 Rather than that gray king, whose name,
 a ghost,
 Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from
 mountain peak,
 And cleaves to cairn and cromlech still ;
 or him
 Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's,
 one
 Touch'd by the adulterous finger of a time
 That hover'd between war and wanton-
 ness,
 And crownings and dethronements : take
 withal
 Thy poet's blessing, and his trust that
 Heaven
 Will blow the tempest in the distance back
 From thine and ours : for some are scared,
 who mark,
 Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,
 Waverings of every vane with every wind,
 And wordy trucklings to the transient
 hour,
 And fierce or careless looseners of the
 faith,
 And Softness breeding scorn of simple
 life,
 Or Cowardice, the child of lust for gold,
 Or Labour, with a groan and not a voice,
 Or Art with poisonous honey stol'n from
 France,
 And that which knows, but careful for itself,
 And that which knows not, ruling that
 which knows
 To its own harm : the goal of this great
 world
 Lies beyond sight : yet—if our slowly-
 grown
 And crown'd Republic's crowning
 common-sense,
 That saved her many times, not fail—
 their fears
 Are morning shadows huger than the
 shapes
 That cast them, not those gloomier which
 forego
 The darkness of that battle in the West,
 Where all of high and holy dies away.

QUEEN MARY:

A DRAMA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

QUEEN MARY.

PHILIP, *King of Naples and Sicily, afterwards King of Spain.*

THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH.

REGINALD POLE, *Cardinal and Papal Legate.*

SIMON RENARD, *Spanish Ambassador.*

LE SIRUR DE NOAILLES, *French Ambassador.*

THOMAS CRANNER, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*

SIR NICHOLAS HEATH, *Archbishop of York; Lord Chancellor after Gardiner.*

EDWARD COURTENAY, *Earl of Devon.*

LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, *afterwards Lord Howard, and Lord High Admiral.*

LORD WILLIAMS OF THANE.

LORD PAGET.

LORD PETRE.

STEPHEN GARDINER, *Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor.*

EDMUND BONNER, *Bishop of London.*

THOMAS THIRLBY, *Bishop of Ely.*

SIR THOMAS WYATT

SIR THOMAS STAFFORD

} *Insurrectionary Leaders.*

SIR RALPH BAGENHALL.

SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD.

SIR WILLIAM CECIL.

SIR THOMAS WHITE, *Lord Mayor of London.*

THE DUKE OF ALVA

THE COUNT DE FERIA } *attending on Philip.*

PETER MARTYR.

FATHER COLE.

FATHER BOURNE.

VILLA GARCIA.

SOTO.

CAPTAIN BRETT

ANTHONY KNYVETT } *Adherents of Wyatt.*

PETERS, *Gentleman of Lord Howard.*

ROGER, *Servant to Noailles.*

WILLIAM, *Servant to Wyatt.*

STEWARD OF HOUSEHOLD to the Princess Elizabeth.

OLD NOKES and NOKES.

MARCHIONESS OF EXETER, *Mother of Courtenay.*

LADY CLARENCE.

LADY MAGDALEN DACRES } *Ladies in Waiting to the Queen.*

ALICE.

MAID OF HONOUR to the Princess Elizabeth.

JOAN

TH } *two Country Wives.*

Lords and other Attendants, Members of the Privy Council, Members of Parliament, Two Gentlemen, Aldermen, Citizens, Peasants, Ushers, Messengers, Guards, Pages, Gospellers, Marshalmen, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—ALDGATE RICHLY DECORATED.

CROWD. MARSHALMEN

Marshalman. Stand back, ep clear lane! When will her Majesty pass, sayst thou? why now, even now; wherefore draw back your heads and your horns before I break them, and make what noise you will with your tongues, so it be not treason. Long live Queen

Mary, the lawful and legitimate daughter of Harry the Eighth! Shout, knaves!

Citizens. Long live Queen Mary!

First Citizen. That's a hard word, legitimate; what does it mean?

Second Citizen. It means a bastard.

Third Citizen. Nay, it means true-born.

First Citizen. Why, didn't the Parliament make her a bastard?

Second Citizen. No; it was the Lady Elizabeth.

Third Citizen. That was after, man ; that was after.

First Citizen. Then which is the bastard ?

Second Citizen. Troth, they be both bastards by Act of Parliament and Council.

Third Citizen. Ay, the Parliament can make every true-born man of us a bastard. Old Nokes, can't it make thee a bastard ? thou shouldst know, for thou art as white as three Christmasses.

Old Nokes (dreamily). Who's a-passing ? King Edward or King Richard ?

Third Citizen. No, old Nokes.

Old Nokes. It's Harry !

Third Citizen. It's Queen Mary.

Old Nokes. The blessed Mary's a-passing !

[Falls on his knees.]

Nokes. Let father alone, my masters ! he's past your questioning.

Third Citizen. Answer thou for him, then ! thou'rt no such cockerel thyself, for thou was born i' the tail end of old Harry the seventh.

Nokes. Eh ! that was afore bastard-making began. I was born true man at five in the forenoon i' the tail of old Harry, and so they can't make me a bastard.

Third Citizen. But if Parliament can make the Queen a bastard, why, it follows all the more that they can make thee one, who art fray'd i' the knees, and out at elbow, and bald o' the back, and bursten at the toes, and down at heels.

Nokes. I was born of a true man and a ring'd wife, and I can't argue upon it ; but I and my old woman 'ud burn upon it, that would we.

Marshallman. What are you cackling of bastardy under the Queen's own nose ? I'll have you flogg'd and burnt too, by the Rood I will.

First Citizen. He swears by the Rood. Whew !

Second Citizen. Hark ! the trumpets.

[The Procession passes, Mary and Elizabeth riding side by side, and disappears under the gate.]

Citizens. Long live Queen Mary ! down with all traitors ! God save her Grace ; and death to Northumberland !

[Exeunt.]

Manent TWO GENTLEMEN.

First Gentleman. By God's light a noble creature, right royal !

Second Gentleman. She looks comelier than ordinary to-day ; but to my mind the Lady Elizabeth is the more noble and royal.

First Gentleman. I mean the Lady Elizabeth. Did you hear (I have a daughter in her service who reported it) that she met the Queen at Wanstead with five hundred horse, and the Queen (tho' some say they be much divided) took her hand, call'd her sweet sister, and kiss'd not her alone, but all the ladies of her following.

Second Gentleman. Ay, that was in her hour of joy ; there will be plenty to sunder and unsister them again : this Gardiner for one, who is to be made Lord Chancellor, and will pounce like a wild beast out of his cage to worry Cranmer.

First Gentleman. And furthermore, my daughter said that when there rose a talk of the late rebellion, she spoke even of Northumberland pitifully, and of the good Lady Jane as a poor innocent child who had but obeyed her father ; and furthermore, she said that no one in her time should be burnt for heresy.

Second Gentleman. Well, sir, I look for happy times.

First Gentleman. There is but one thing against them. I know not if you know.

Second Gentleman. I suppose you touch upon the rumour that Charles, the master of the world, has offer'd her his son Philip, the Pope and the Devil. I trust it is but a rumour.

First Gentleman. She is going now to the Tower to loose the prisoners there, and among them Courtenay, to be made Earl of Devon, of royal blood, of splendid feature, whom the council and all her people wish her to marry. May it be so, for we are many of us Catholics, but few Papists, and the Hot Gospellers will go mad upon it.

Second Gentleman. Was she not betroth'd in her babyhood to the Great Emperor himself?

First Gentleman. Ay, but he's too old.

Second Gentleman. And again to her consin Reginald Pole, now Cardinal; but I hear that he too is full of aches and broken before his day.

First Gentleman. O, the Pope could dispense with his Cardinalate, and his achage, and his breakage, if that were all: will you not follow the procession?

Second Gentleman. No; I have seen enough for this day.

First Gentleman. Well, I shall follow; if I can get near enough I shall judge with my own eyes whether her Grace incline to this splendid scion of Plantagenet.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A ROOM IN LAMBETH PALACE.

Cranmer. To Strasburg, Antwerp, Frankfort, Zurich, Worms,

Geneva, Basle—our Bishops from their sees

Or fled, they say, or flying—Poinet, Barlow, Bale, Scory, Coverdale; besides the Deans

Of Christchurch, Durham, Exeter, and Wells—

Ailmer and Bullingham, and hundreds more;

So they report: I shall be left alone.

No: Hooper, Ridley, Latimer will not fly.

Enter PETER MARTYR.

Peter Martyr. Fly, Cranmer! were there nothing else, your name Stands first of those who sign'd the Letters Patent

That gave her royal crown to Lady Jane. *Cranmer.* Stand first it may, but it was written last:

Those that are now her Privy Council, sign'd

Before me: nay, the Judges had pronounced

That our young Edward might bequeath the crown

Of England, putting by his father's will. Yet I stood out, till Edward sent for me. The wan boy-king, with his fast-fading eyes Fixt hard on mine, his frail transparent hand,

Damp with the sweat of death, and griping mine,

Whisper'd me, if I loved him, not to yield

His Church of England to the Papal wolf And Mary; then I could no more—I sign'd.

Nay, for bare shame of inconsistency, She cannot pass her traitor council by, To make me headless.

Bishops from their
or flying—Poinet,
dale; besides the
arham, Exeter, and
ham, and hundreds
all be left alone.
y, Latimer will not

R MARTYR.

Fly, Cranmer! were
else, your name
se who sign'd the
t
crown to Lady Jane.
first it may, but it
st:
her Privy Council,
the Judges had pro-
ward might bequeath
y by his father's will.
Edward sent for me.
th his fast-fading eyes
his frail transparent
veat of death, and
loved him, not to
nd to the Papal wolf
could no more—I

of inconsistency,
traitor council by,
s.

Peter Martyr. That might be forgiven.
I tell you, fly, my Lord. You do not own
The bodily presence in the Eucharist,
Their wafer and perpetual sacrifice:
Your creed will be your death.

Cranmer. Step after step,
Thro' many voices crying right and left,
Have I climb'd back into the primal
church,
And stand within the porch, and Christ
with me:

My flight were such a scandal to the faith,
The downfall of so many simple souls,
I dare not leave my post.

Peter Martyr. But you divorced
Queen Catharine and her father; hence,
her hate

Will burn till you are burn'd.

Cranmer. I cannot help it.
The Canonists and Schoolmen were with
me.

'Thou shalt not wed thy brother's wife,'

—'Tis written,

'They shall be childless.' True, Mary
was born,

But France would not accept her for a
bride

As being born from incest; and this
wrought

Upon the king; and child by child, you
know,

Were momentary sparkles out as quick
Almost as kindled; and he brought his
doubts

And fears to me. Peter, I'll swear for him
He *did* believe the bond incestuous.

But wherefore am I trenching on the time
That should already have seen your steps
a mile

From me and Lambeth? God be with
you! Go.

Peter Martyr. Ah, but how fierce a
letter you wrote against

Their superstition when they slander'd you
For setting up a mass at Canterbury
To please the Queen.

Cranmer. It was a wheedling monk
Set up the mass.

Peter Martyr. I know it, my good
Lord.

But you so bubbled over with hot terms
Of Satan, liars, blasphemy, Antichrist,
She never will forgive you. Fly, my
Lord, fly!

Cranmer. I wrote it, and God grant
me power to burn!

Peter Martyr. They have given me a
safe conduct: for all that

I dare not stay. I fear, I fear, I see you,
Dear friend, for the last time; farewell,
and fly.

Cranmer. Fly and farewell, and let
me die the death.

[*Exit Peter Martyr.*]

Enter OLD SERVANT.

O, kind and gentle master, the Queen's
Officers

Are here in force to take you to the Tower.

Cranmer. Ay, gentle friend, admit
them. I will go.

I thank my God it is too late to fly.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—ST. PAUL'S CROSS.

FATHER BOURNE *in the pulpit.* A crowd.
MARCHIONESS OF EXETER, COURTE-
NAY. The SIEUR DE NOAILLES and
his man ROGER *in front of the stage.*
Hubbub.

Noailles. Hast thou let fall those
papers in the palace?

Roger. Ay, sir.

Noailles. 'There will be no peace for
Mary till Elizabeth lose her head.'

Roger. Ay, sir,
Noailles. And the other, 'Long live Elizabeth the Queen!'

Roger. Ay, sir; she needs must tread upon them.

Noailles. Well.
 These beastly swine make such a grunting here,
 I cannot catch what Father Bourne is saying.

Roger. Quiet a moment, my masters; hear what the shaveling has to say for himself.

Crowd. Hush—hear!

Bourne. —and so this unhappy land, long divided in itself, and sever'd from the faith, will return into the one true fold, seeing that our gracious Virgin Queen hath—

Crowd. No pope! no pope!

Roger (to those about him, mimicking Bourne). —hath sent for the holy legate of the holy father the Pope, Cardinal Pole, to give us all that holy absolution which—

First Citizen. Old Bourne to the life!

Second Citizen. Holy absolution! holy Inquisition!

Third Citizen. Down with the Papist!
 [Hubbub.]

Bourne. —and now that your good bishop, Bonner, who hath lain so long under bonds for the faith— [Hubbub.]

Noailles. Friend Roger, steal thou in among the crowd,
 And get the swine to shout Elizabeth.
 Yon gray old Gospeller, sour as midwinter,
 Begin with him.

Roger (goes). By the mass, old friend, we'll have no pope here while the Lady Elizabeth lives.

Gospeller. Art thou of the true faith, fellow, that swearest by the mass?

Roger. Ay, that am I, new converted, but the old leaven sticks to my tongue yet.

First Citizen. He says right; by the mass we'll have no mass here.

Voices of the crowd. Peace! hear him; let his own words damn the Papist. From thine own mouth I judge thee—tear him down!

Bourne. —and since our Gracious Queen, let me call her our second Virgin Mary, hath begun to re-edify the true temple—

First Citizen. Virgin Mary! we'll have no virgins here—we'll have the Lady Elizabeth!

[Swords are drawn, a knife is hurled and sticks in the pulpit. The mob throng to the pulpit stairs.]

Marchioness of Exeter. Son Courtenay, wilt thou see the holy father Murder'd before thy face? up, son, and save him!

They love thee, and thou canst not come to harm.

Courtenay (in the pulpit). Shame, shame, my masters! are you English-born,

And set yourselves by hundreds against one?

Crowd. A Courtenay! a Courtenay!

[A train of Spanish servants crosses at the back of the stage.]

Noailles. These birds of passage come before their time:

Stave off the crowd upon the Spaniard there.

Roger. My masters, yonder's fatter game for you

Than this old gaping gurgyle: look you there—

The Prince of Spain coming to wed our Queen!

After him, boys! and pelt him from the city.

[They seize stones and follow the Spaniards. Exeunt on the other side Marchioness of Exeter and Attendants.]

Noailles (to Roger). Stand from me. If Elizabeth lose her head—

That makes for France.

And if her people, anger'd thereupon,
Arise against her and dethrone the Queen—
That makes for France.

And if I breed confusion anyway—
That makes for France.

Good-day, my Lord of Devon;

A bold heart yours to beard that raging mob!

Courtenay. My mother said, Go up; and up I went.

I knew they would not do me any wrong,
For I am mighty popular with them,
Noailles.

Noailles. You look'd a king.

Courtenay. Why not? I am king's blood.

Noailles. And in the whirl of change
may come to be one.

Courtenay. Ah!

Noailles. But does your gracious Queen
entreat you kinglike?

Courtenay. 'Fore God, I think she
entreats me like a child.

Noailles. You've but a dull life in this
maiden court,

I fear, my Lord?

Courtenay. A life of nods and yawns.

Noailles. So you would honour my
poor house to-night,

We might enliven you. Divers honest
fellows,

The Duke of Suffolk lately free'd from
prison,

Sir Peter Carew and Sir Thomas Wyatt,

Sir Thomas Stafford, and some more—we
play.

Courtenay. At what?

Noailles. The Game of Chess.

Courtenay. The Game of Chess!

I can play well, and I shall beat you there.

Noailles. Ay, but we play with Henry,
King of France,

And certain of his court.

His Highness makes his moves across the
Channel,

We answer him with ours, and there are
messengers

That go between us.

Courtenay. Why, such a game, sir,
were whole years a playing.

Noailles. Nay; not so long I trust.
That all depends

Upon the skill and swiftness of the players.

Courtenay. The King is skilful at it?

Noailles. Very, my Lord.

Courtenay. And the stakes high?

Noailles. But not beyond your means.

Courtenay. Well, I'm the first of
players. I shall win.

Noailles. With our advice and in our
company,

And so you well attend to the king's moves,
I think you may.

Courtenay. When do you meet?

Noailles. To-night.

Courtenay (aside). I will be there; the
fellow's at his tricks—

Deep—I shall fathom him. (Aloud.)

Good morning, *Noailles*.

[Exit *Courtenay*.]

Noailles. Good-day, my Lord. Strange
game of chess! a King

That with her own pawns plays against a
Queen,

Whose play is all to find herself a King.

Ay; but this fine blue-blooded *Courtenay*
seems

Too princely for a pawn. Call him a Knight,
That, with an ass's, not an horse's head,
Skips every way, from levity or from fear.
Well, we shall use him somehow, so that
Gardiner

And Simon Renard spy not out our game
Too early. Roger, thinkest thou that
anyone

Suspected thee to be my man?

Roger.

Not one, sir.

Noailles. No! the disguise was perfect.

Let's away.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

ELIZABETH. *Enter* COURTENAY.

Courtenay. So yet am I,

Unless my friends and mirrors lie to me,
A goodlier-looking fellow than this Philip.
Pah!

The Queen is ill advised: shall I turn
traitor?

They've almost talked me into it: yet the
word

Affrights me somewhat; to be such a one
As Harry Bolingbroke hath a lure in it.
Good now, my Lady Queen, tho' by your
age,

And by your looks you are not worth the
having,

Yet by your crown you are.

[*Seeing Elizabeth.*

The Princess there?

If I tried her and la—she's amorous.

Have we not heard of her in Edward's
time,

Her freaks and frolics with the late Lord
Admiral?

I do believe she'd yield. I should be still
A party in 'the state; and then, who
knows—

Elizabeth. What are you musing on,
my Lord of Devon?

Courtenay. Has not the Queen—

Elizabeth. Done what, Sir?

Courtenay. —made you follow

The Lady Suffolk and the Lady Lennox?—

You,

The heir presumptive.

Elizabeth. Why do you ask? you
know it.

Courtenay. You needs must bear it
hardly.

Elizabeth. No, indeed!

I am utterly submissive to the Queen.

Courtenay. Well, I was musing upon
that; the Queen

Is both my foe and yours: we should be
friends.

Elizabeth. My Lord, the hatred of
another to us

Is no true bond of friendship.

Courtenay. Might it not
Be the rough preface of some closer
bond?

Elizabeth. My Lord, you late were
loosed from out the Tower,

Where, like a butterfly in a chrysalis,
You spent your life; that broken, out you
flutter

Thro' the new world, go zigzag, now
would settle

Upon this flower, now that; but all things
here

At court are known; you have solicited
The Queen, and been rejected.

Courtenay. Flower, she!
Half faded! but you, cousin, are fresh and
sweet

As the first flower no bee has ever tried.

Elizabeth. Are you the bee to try me?
why, but now

I called you butterfly.

Courtenay. You did me wrong,

I love not to be called a butterfly :

Why do you call me butterfly ?

Elizabeth. Why do you go so gay then ?

Courtenay. Velvet and gold.

This dress was made me as the Earl of Devon

To take my seat in ; looks it not right royal ?

Elizabeth. So royal that the Queen forbade you wearing it.

Courtenay. I wear it then to spite her.

Elizabeth. My Lord, my Lord ;

I see you in the Tower again. Her Majesty

Hears you affect the Prince—prelates kneel to you.—

Courtenay. I am the noblest blood in Europe, Madam,

A Courtenay of Devon, and her cousin.

Elizabeth. She hears you make your boast that after all

She means to wed you. Folly, my good Lord.

Courtenay. How folly ? a great party in the state

Wills me to wed her.

Elizabeth. Failing her, my Lord,

Doth not as great a party in the state

Will you to wed me ?

Courtenay. Even so, fair lady.

Elizabeth. You know to flatter ladies.

Courtenay. Nay, I meant

True matters of the heart.

Elizabeth. My heart, my Lord,

Is no great party in the state as yet.

Courtenay. Great, said you ? nay, you

shall be great. I love you,

Lay my life in your hands. Can you be close ?

Elizabeth. Can you, my Lord ?

Courtenay. Close as a miser's casket.

Listen :

The King of France, Noailles the Ambassador,

The Duke of Suffolk and Sir Peter Carew, Sir Thomas Wyatt, I myself, some others, Have sworn this Spanish marriage shall not be.

If Mary will not hear us—well—conjecture—

Were I in Devon with my wedded bride, The people there so worship me—Your ear ;

You shall be Queen.

Elizabeth. You speak too low, my Lord ;

I cannot hear you.

Courtenay. I'll repeat it.

Elizabeth. No ! Stand further off, or you may lose your head.

Courtenay. I have a head to lose for your sweet sake.

Elizabeth. Have you, my Lord ? Best keep it for your own.

Nay, pout not, cousin.

Not many friends are mine, except indeed Among the many. I believe you mine ;

And so you may continue mine, farewell, And that at once.

Enter MARY, behind.

Mary. Whispering—!—agued together To bar me from my Philip.

Courtenay. Pray—consider—

Elizabeth (seeing the Queen). Well, that's a noble horse of yours, my Lord.

I trust that he will carry you well to-day, And heal your headache.

Courtenay. You are wild ; what headache ?

Heartache, perchance ; not headache.

Elizabeth (aside to Courtenay). Are you blind ?

[Courtenay sees the Queen and exit. Exit Mary.]

Enter LORD WILLIAM HOWARD.

Howard. Was that my Lord of Devon?
do not you

Be seen in corners with my Lord of
Devon.

He hath fallen out of favour with the
Queen.

She fears the Lords may side with you
and him

Against her marriage; therefore is he
dangerous.

And if this Prince of fluff and feather
come

To woo you, niece, he is dangerous every-
way.

Elizabeth. Not very dangerous that
way, my good uncle.

Howard. But your own state is full of
danger here.

The disaffected, heretics, reformers,
Look to you as the one to crown their
ends.

Mix not yourself with any plot I pray
you;

Nay, if by chance you hear of any such,
Speak not thereof—no, not to your best
friend,

Lest you should be confounded with it.
Still—

Perinde ac cadaver—as the priest says,
You know your Latin—quiet as a dead
body.

What was my Lord of Devon telling you?

Elizabeth. Whether he told me any-
thing or not,

I follow your good counsel, gracious uncle.
Quiet as a dead body.

Howard. You do right well.
I do not care to know; but this I charge
you,

Tell Courtenay nothing. The Lord
Chancellor

(I count it as a kind of virtue in him,
He hath not many), as a mastiff dog
May love a puppy cur for no more reason
Than that the twain have been tied up
together,

Thus Gardiner—for the two were fellow-
prisoners

So many years in yon accursed Tower—
Hath taken to this Courtenay. Look to
it, niece,

He hath no fence when Gardiner ques-
tions him;

All oozes out; yet him—because they
know him

The last White Rose, the last Plantagenet
(Nay, there is Cardinal Pole, too), the
people

Claim as their natural leader—ay, some
say,

That you shall marry him, make him King
belike.

Elizabeth. Do they say so, good
uncle?

Howard. Ay, good niece!

You should be plain and open with me,
niece.

You should not play upon me.

Elizabeth. No, good uncle.

Enter GARDINER.

Gardiner. The Queen would see your
Grace upon the moment.

Elizabeth. Why, my lord Bishop?

Gardiner. I think she means to coun-
sel your withdrawing

To Ashridge, or some other country house.

Elizabeth. Why, my lord Bishop?

Gardiner. I do but bring the message,
know no more.

Your Grace will hear her reasons from
herself.

Elizabeth. 'Tis mine own wish fulfill'd
before the word

of virtue in him,
, as a mastiff dog
cur for no more reason
ain have been tied up

r the two were fellow-

yon accursed Tower—
Courtenay. Look to

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Ay, good niece!

tin and open with me,

ay upon me.

No, good uncle.

GARDINER.

e Queen would see your

a the moment.

y, my lord Bishop?

ink she means to coun-

thdrawing

me other country house.

y, my lord Bishop?

ore.

hear her reasons from

mine own wish fulfill'd

word

Was spoken, for in truth I had meant to
crave

Permission of her Highness to retire
To Ashridge, and pursue my studies there.

Gardiner. Madam, to have the wish
before the word

Is man's good Fairy—and the Queen is
yours.

I left her with rich jewels in her hand,
Whereof 'tis like enough she means to
make

A farewell present to your Grace.

Elizabeth. My Lord,
I have the jewel of a loyal heart.

Gardiner. I doubt it not, Madam,
most loyal. [*Bows low and exit.*]

Howard. See,

This comes of parleying with my Lord of
Devon.

Well, well, you must obey; and I myself
Believe it will be better for your welfare.
Your time will come.

Elizabeth. I think my time will come.
Uncle,

I am of sovereign nature, that I know,
Not to be quell'd; and I have felt within
me

Stirrings of some great doom when God's
just hour

Peals—but this fierce old Gardiner—his
big baldness,

That irritable forelock which he rubs,
His buzzard beak and deep-incavern'd eyes
Half fright me.

Howard. You've a bold heart; keep
it so.

He cannot touch you save that you turn
traitor;

And so take heed I pray you—you are one
Who love that men should smile upon you,
niece.

They'd smile you into treason—some of
them.

Elizabeth. I spy the rock beneath the
smiling sea.

But if this Philip, the proud Catholic
prince,

And this bald priest, and she that hates
me, seek

In that lone house, to practise on my life,
By poison, fire, shot, stab—

Howard. They will not, niece.
Mine is the fleet and all the power at
sea—

Or will be in a moment. If they dared
To harm you, I would blow this Philip
and all

Your trouble to the dogstar and the devil.

Elizabeth. To the Pleiads, uncle; they
have lost a sister.

Howard. But why say that? what have
you done to lose her?

Come, come, I will go with you to the
Queen.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY with PHILIP's miniature. ALICE.

Mary (kissing the miniature). Most
goodly, Kinglike and an Emperor's
son,—

A king to be,—is he not noble, girl?

Alice. Goodly enough, your Grace,
and yet, methinks,

I have seen goodlier.

Mary. Ay; some waxen doll
Thy baby eyes have rested on, belike;

All red and white, the fashion of our
land.

But my good mother came (God rest her
soul)

Of Spain, and I am Spanish in myself,
And in my likings.

Alice. By your Grace's leave
Your royal mother came of Spain, but
took

To the English red and white. Your
royal father
(For so they say) was all pure lily and rose
In his youth, and like a lady.

Mary. O, just God !
Sweet mother, you had time and cause
enough

To sicken of his lilies and his roses.
Cast off, betray'd, defamed, divorced,
forlorn !

And then the King—that traitor past
forgiveness,

The false archbishop fawning on him,
married

The mother of Elizabeth—a heretic
Ev'n as *she* is ; but God hath sent me
here

To take such order with all heretics
That it shall be, before I die, as tho'
My father and my brother had not lived.
What wast thou saying of this Lady Jane,
Now in the Tower ?

Alice. Why, Madam, she was passing
Some chapel down in Essex, and with her
Lady Anne Wharton, and the Lady Anne
Bow'd to the Pyx ; but Lady Jane stood
up

Stiff as the very backbone of heresy.
And wherefore bow ye not, says Lady
Anne,

To him within there who made Heaven
and Earth ?

I cannot, and I dare not, tell your Grace
What Lady Jane replied.

Mary. But I will have it.

Alice. She said—pray pardon me, and
pity her—

She hath hearken'd evil counsel—ah ! she
said,

The baker made him.

Mary. Monstrous ! blasphemous !
She ought to burn. Hence, thou (*Exit*
Alice). No—being traitor

Her head will fall : shall it ? she is but a
child.

We do not kill the child for doing that
His father whipt him into doing—a head
So full of grace and beauty ! would that
mine

Were half as gracious ! O, my lord to be,
My love, for thy sake only.

I am eleven years older than he is,
But will he care for that ?

No, by the holy Virgin, being noble,
But love me only : then the bastard
sprout,

My sister, is far fairer than myself.
Will he be drawn to her ?

No, being of the true faith with myself.
Paget is for him—for to wed with Spain
Would treble England—Gardiner is
against him ;

The Council, people, Parliament against
him ;

But I will have him ! My hard father
hated me ;

My brother rather hated me than loved ;
My sister cowers and hates me. Holy
Virgin,

Plead with thy blessed son ; grant me my
prayer :

Give me my Philip ; and we two will lead
The living waters of the Faith again

Back thro' their widow'd channel here,
and watch

The parch'd banks rolling incense, as of
old,

To heaven, and kindled with the palms of
Christ !

Enter USHER.

Who waits, sir ?

Usher. Madam, the Lord Chancellor.

Mary. Bid him come in. (*Enter*
GARDINER.) Good morning, my
good Lord. [*Exit Usher.*

shall it? she is but a
 child for doing that
 m into doing—a head
 beauty! would that
 ! O, my lord to be,
 ke only.
 lder than he is,
 that?
 gin, being noble,
 y: then the bastard
 er than myself.
 o her?
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 m! My hard father
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 and hates me. Holy
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 ; and we two will lead
 of the Faith again
 widow'd channel here,
 rolling incense, as of
 dled with the palms of
 USHER.
 the Lord Chancellor.
 n come in. (*Entr*
) Good morning, my
 [*Exit Usher.*

Gardiner. That every morning of your
 Majesty
 May be most good, is every morning's
 prayer
 Of your most loyal subject, Stephen
 Gardiner.
Mary. Come you to tell me this, my
 Lord?
Gardiner. And more.
 Your people have begun to learn your
 worth.
 Your pious wish to pay King Edward's
 debts,
 Your lavish household curb'd, and the
 remission
 Of half that subsidy levied on the people,
 Make all tongues praise and all hearts
 beat for you.
 I'd have you yet more loved: the realm
 is poor,
 The exchequer at neap-tide: we might
 withdraw
 Part of our garrison at Calais.
Mary. Calais!
 Our one point on the main, the gate of
 France!
 I am Queen of England; take mine eyes,
 mine heart,
 But do not lose me Calais.
Gardiner. Do not fear it.
 Of that hereafter. I say your Grace is loved.
 That I may keep you thus, who am your
 friend
 And ever faithful counsellor, might I
 speak?
Mary. I can forespeak your speaking.
 Would I marry
 Prince Philip, if all England hate him?
 That is
 Your question, and I front it with
 another:
 Is it England, or a party? Now, your
 answer,
Gardiner. My answer is, I wear
 beneath my dress
 A shirt of mail: my house hath been
 assaulted,
 And when I walk abroad, the populace,
 With fingers pointed like so many
 daggers,
 Stab me in fancy, hissing Spain and
 Philip;
 And when I sleep, a hundred men-at-
 arms
 Guard my poor dreams for England.
 Men would murder me,
 Because they think me favourer of this
 marriage.
Mary. And that were hard upon you,
 my Lord Chancellor.
Gardiner. But our young Earl of
 Devon—
Mary. Earl of Devon?
 I freed him from the Tower, placed him
 at Court;
 I made him Earl of Devon, and—the
 fool—
 He wrecks his health and wealth on
 courtesans,
 And rolls himself in carrion like a dog.
Gardiner. More like a school-boy that
 hath broken bounds,
 Sickening himself with sweets.
Mary. I will not hear of him.
 Good, then, they will revolt: but I am
 Tudor,
 And shall control them.
Gardiner. I will help you, Madam,
 Even to the utmost. All the church is
 grateful.
 You have ousted the mock priest, re-
 pulpited
 The shepherd of St. Peter, raised the rood
 again,
 And brought us back the mass. I am all
 thanks

To God and to your Grace : yet I know
well,

Your people, and I go with them so far,
Will brook nor Pope nor Spaniard here
to play

The tyrant, or in commonwealth or
church.

Mary (showing the picture). Is this
the face of one who plays the
tyrant ?

Peruse it ; is it not goodly, ay, and
gentle ?

Gardiner. Madam, methinks a cold
face and a haughty.

And when your Highness talks of
Courtenay—

Ay, true—a goodly one. I would his
life

Were half as goodly (*aside*).

Mary. What is that you mutter ?

Gardiner. Oh, Madam, take it bluntly ;
marry Philip,

And be stepmother of a score of sons !

The prince is known in Spain, in Flanders,
ha !

For Philip—

Mary. You offend us ; you may leave
us.

You see thro' warping glasses.

Gardiner. If your Majesty—

Mary. I have sworn upon the body
and blood of Christ

I'll none but Philip.

Gardiner. Hath your Grace so sworn ?

Mary. Ay, Simon Renard knows it.

Gardiner. News to me !

It then remains for your poor Gardiner,
So you still care to trust him somewhat
less

Than Simon Renard, to compose the
event

In some such form as least may harm
your Grace.

Mary. I'll have the scandal sounded
to the mud.

I know it a scandal.

Gardiner. All my hope is now
It may be found a scandal.

Mary. You offend us.

Gardiner (aside). These princes are
like children, must be physick'd,

The bitter in the sweet. I have lost mine
office,

It may be, thro' mine honesty, like a fool.
[*Exit.*

Enter USHER.

Mary. Who waits ?

Usher. The Ambassador from France,
your Grace.

Mary. Bid him come in. Good
morning, Sir de Noailles.

[*Exit Usher.*

Noailles (entering). A happy morning
to your Majesty.

Mary. And I should some time have
a happy morning ;

I have had none yet. What says the
King your master ?

Noailles. Madam, my master hears
with much alarm,

That you may marry Philip, Prince of
Spain—

Foreseeing, with what'er unwillingness,
That if this Philip be the titular king
Of England, and at war with him, your
Grace

And kingdom will be suck'd into the war,
Ay, tho' you long for peace ; wherefore,
my master,

If but to prove your Majesty's goodwill,
Would fain have some fresh treaty drawn
between you.

Mary. Why some fresh treaty ?
wherefore should I do it ?

Sir, if we marry, we shall still maintain
All former treaties with his Majesty.

the scandal sounded

All my hope is now
candal.

You offend us.
These princes are
must be physick'd,
ect. I have lost mine

e honesty, like a fool.

[*Exit*.

USHER.

ts?
assador from France,

n come in. Good
de Noailles.

[*Exit* Usher.

). A happy morning
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ould some time have
ning;

et. What says the
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n, my master hears
arm,

ry Philip, Prince of

ate'er unwillingness,
e the titular king

t war with him, your

e suck'd into the war,
or peace; wherefore,

e Majesty's goodwill,
ne fresh treaty drawn

ome fresh treaty?
ould I do it?

e shall still maintain
with his Majesty.

SCENE V.

QUEEN MARY.

549

Our royal word for that! and your good
master,

Pray God he do not be the first to break
them,

Must be content with that; and so, fare-
well.

Noailles (*going, returns*). I would your
answer had been other, Madam,

For I foresee dark days.
Mary. And so do I, sir;

Your master works against me in the dark.
I do believe he help Northumberland

Against me.
Noailles. Nay, pure phantasy, your

Grace.
Why should he move against you?

Mary. Will you hear why?
Mary of Scotland,—for I have not own'd

My sister, and I will not,—after me
Is heir of England; and my royal father,

To make the crown of Scotland one with
ours,

Had mark'd her for my brother Edward's
bride;

Ay, but your king stole her a babe from
Scotland

In order to betroth her to your Dauphin.
See then:

Mary of Scotland, married to your
Dauphin,

Would make our England, France;
Mary of England, joining hands with Spain,

Would be too strong for France.
Yea, were there issue born to her, Spain

and we,
One crown, might rule the world. There

lies your fear.
That is your drift. You play at hide and

seek.
Show me your faces!

Noailles. Madam, I am amazed:
French, I must needs wish all good things

for France.

That must be pardon'd me; but I protest
Your Grace's policy hath a farther flight
Than mine into the future. We but seek
Some settled ground for peace to stand
upon.

Mary. Well, we will leave all this,
sir, to our council.

Have you seen Philip ever?
Noailles. Only once.

Mary. Is this like Philip?
Noailles. Ay, but nobler-looking.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of
the Emperor?

Noailles. No, surely.
Mary. I can make allowance for thee,

Thou speakest of the enemy of thy king.
Noailles. Make no allowance for the

naked truth.
He is every way a lesser man than Charles;

Stone-hard, ice-cold—no dash of daring
in him.

Mary. If cold, his life is pure.
Noailles. Why (*smiling*), no, indeed.

Mary. Sayst thou?
Noailles. A very wanton life indeed

(*smiling*).
Mary. Your audience is concluded,

sir. [*Exit* Noailles.
You cannot

Learn a man's nature from his natural foe.
Enter USHER.

Who waits?
Usher. The Ambassador of Spain,

your Grace. [*Exit*.
Enter SIMON RENARD.

Mary. Thou art ever welcome, Simon
Renard. Hast thou

Brought me the letter which thine
Emperor promised

Long since, a formal offer of the hand
Of Philip?

<p><i>Renard.</i> Nay, your Grace, it hath not reach'd me. I know not wherefore—some mischance of flood, And broken bridge, or spavin'd horse, or wave And wind at their old battle : he must have written. <i>Mary.</i> But Philip never writes me one poor word, Which in his absence had been all my wealth. Strange in a wooer ! <i>Renard.</i> Yet I know the Prince, So your king-parliament suffer him to land, Yeans to set foot upon your island shore. <i>Mary.</i> God change the pebble which Is kingly foot First presses into some more costly stone Than ever blinded eye. I'll have one mark it And bring it me. I'll have it burnish'd firelike ; I'll set it round with gold, with pearl, with diamond. Let the great angel of the church come with him ; Stand on the deck and spread his wings for sail ! God lay the waves and strow the storms at sea, And here at land among the people ! O <i>Renard,</i> I am much beset, I am almost in despair. Paget is ours. Gardiner perchance is ours ; But for our heretic Parliament— <i>Renard.</i> O Madam, You fly your thoughts like kites. My master, Charles, Had you go softly with your heretics here, Until your throne had ceased to tremble. Then</p>	<p>Spit them like larks for aught I care. Besides, When Henry broke the carcase of your church To pieces, there were many wolves among you Who dragg'd the scatter'd limbs into their den. The Pope would have you make them render these ; So would your cousin, Cardinal Pole ; ill counsel ! These let them keep at present ; stir not yet This matter of the Church lands. At his coming Your star will rise. <i>Mary.</i> My star ! a baleful one. I see but the black night, and hear the wolf. What star ? <i>Renard.</i> Your star will be your princely son, Heir of this England and the Netherlands ! And if your wolf the while should howl for more, We'll dust him from a bag of Spanish gold. I do believe I have dusted some already, That, soon or late, your parliament is ours. <i>Mary.</i> Why do they talk so foully of your Prince, <i>Renard ?</i> <i>Renard.</i> The lot of Princes. To sit high Is to be lied about. <i>Mary.</i> They call him cold, Haughty, ay, worse. <i>Renard.</i> Why, doubtless, Philip shows Some of the bearing of your blue blood— still All within measure—nay, it well becomes him.</p>
---	--

ks for aught I care.

the carcase of your

e many wolves among

atter'd limbs into their

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in, Cardinal Pole; ill

o at present; stir not

Church lands. At

star! a baleful one.

night, and hear the

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ur parliament is ours.

hey talk so foully of

of Princes. To sit

They call him cold,

ubtless, Philip shows

of your blue blood—

ay, it well becomes

Mary. Hath he the large ability of his father?

Renard. Nay, some believe that he will go beyond him.

Mary. Is this like him?

Renard. Ay, somewhat; but your Philip

Is the most princelike Prince beneath the sun.

This is a daul to Philip.

Mary. Of a pure life?

Renard. As an angel among angels.

Yea, by Heaven,

The text—Your Highness knows it, 'Whosoever

Looketh after a woman,' would not graze

The Prince of Spain. You are happy in him there,

Chaste as your Grace!

Mary. I am happy in him there.

Renard. And would be altogether happy, Madam,

So that your sister were but look'd to closer.

You have sent her from the court, but then she goes,

I warrant, not to hear the nightingales,

But hatch you some new treason in the woods.

Mary. We have our spies abroad to catch her tripping,

And then if caught, to the Tower.

Renard. The Tower! the block!

The word has turn'd your Highness pale; the thing

Was no such scarecrow in your father's time.

I have heard, the tongue yet quiver'd with the jest

When the head leapt—so common! I do think

To save your crown that it must come to this.

Mary. No, Renard; it must never come to this.

Renard. Not yet; but your old Traitors of the Tower—

Why, when you put Northumberland to death

The sentence having past upon them all, Spared you the Duke of Suffolk, Guildford Dudley,

Ev'n that young girl who dared to wear your crown?

Mary. Dared? nay, not so; the child obey'd her father.

Spite of her tears her father forced it on her.

Renard. Good Madam, when the Roman wish'd to reign,

He slew not him alone who wore the purple,

But his assessor in the throne, perchance A child more innocent than Lady Jane.

Mary. I am English Queen, not Roman Emperor.

Renard. Yet too much mercy is a want of mercy,

And wastes more life. Stamp out the fire, or this

Will smoulder and re-flame, and burn the throne

Where you should sit with Philip: he will not come

Till she be gone.

Mary. Indeed, if that were true—

For Philip comes, one hand in mine, and one

Steadying the tremulous pillars of the Church—

But no, no, no. Farewell. I am somewhat faint

With our long talk. Tho' Queen, I am not Queen

Of mine own heart, which every now and then



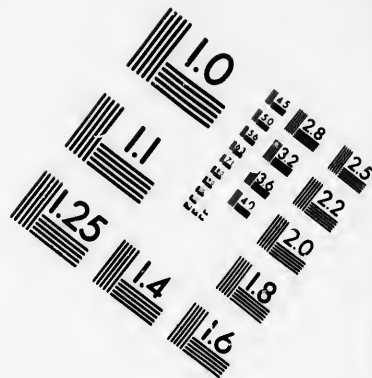
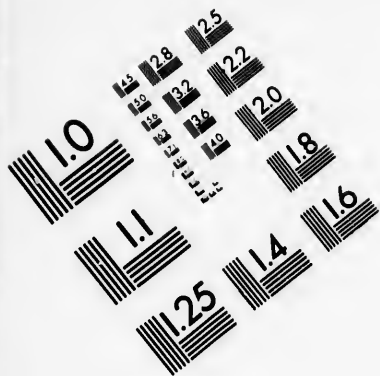
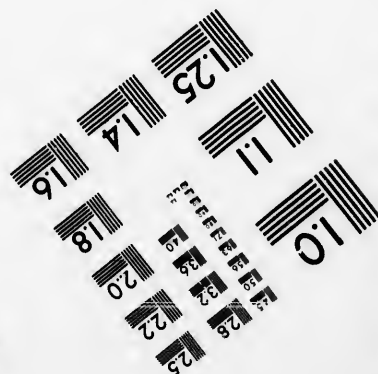
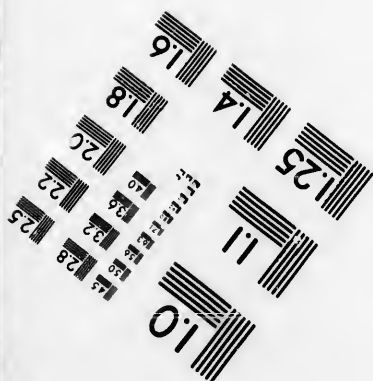
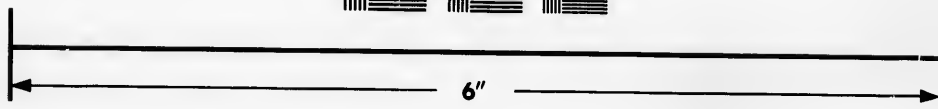
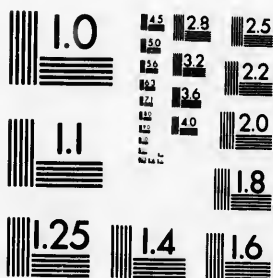


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Beats me half dead: yet stay, this golden chain—

My father on a birthday gave it me,
And I have broken with my father—take
And wear it as memorial of a morning
Which found me full of foolish doubts,
and leaves me

As hopeful.

Renard (aside). Whew—the folly of
all follies

Is to be love-sick for a shadow. (*Aloud*)
Madam,

This chains me to your service, not with
gold,

But dearest links of love. Farewell, and
trust me,

Philip is yours. [*Exit.*]

Mary. Mine—but not yet all mine.

Enter USHER.

Usher. Your Council is in Session,
please your Majesty.

Mary. Sir, let them sit. I must have
time to breathe.

No, say I come. (*Exit Usher.*) I won
by boldness once.

The Emperor counsell'd me to fly to
Flanders.

I would not; but a hundred miles I rode,
Sent out my letters, call'd my friends
together,

Struck home and won.

And when the Council would not crown
me—thought

To bind me first by oaths I could not keep,
And keep with Christ and conscience—
was it boldness

Or weakness that won there? when I,
their Queen,

Cast myself down upon my knees before
them,

And those hard men brake into woman
tears,

Ev'n Gardiner, all amazed, and in that
passion

Gave me my Crown.

Enter ALICE.

Girl; hast thou ever heard
Slanders against Prince Philip in our
Court?

Alice. What slanders? I, your Grace;
no, never.

Mary. Nothing?

Alice. Never, your Grace.

Mary. See that you neither hear them
nor repeat!

Alice (aside). Good Lord! but I have
heard a thousand such.

Ay, and repeated them as often—mum!
Why comes that old fox-Fleming back
again?

Enter RENARD.

Renard. Madam, I scarce had left
your Grace's presence
Before I chanced upon the messenger
Who brings that letter which we waited
for—

The formal offer of Prince Philip's hand.
It craves an instant answer, Ay or No?

Mary. An instant Ay or No! the
Council sits.

Give it me quick.

Alice (stepping before her). Your High-
ness is all trembling.

Mary. Make way.

[*Exit into the Council Chamber.*]

Alice. O, Master Renard, Master
Renard,

If you have falsely painted your fine
Prince;

Praised, where you should have blamed
him, I pray God

No woman ever love you, Master Renard.

amazed, and in that

rn.

ALICE.

; hast thou ever heard
Prince Philip in our

unders? I, your Grace;

Nothing?

your Grace.

you neither hear them

ood Lord! but I have
usand such.

hem as often—mum!
old fox-Fleming back

RENARD.

n, I scarce had left
presence
on the messenger
etter which we waited

Prince Philip's hand.
answer, Ay or No?
ant Ay or No! the

re her). Your High-
mbling.

y.
the Council Chamber.
er Renard, Master

y painted your fine

should have blamed
od

you, Master Renard.

It breaks my heart to hear her moan at
night

As tho' the nightmare never left her bed.

Renard. My pretty maiden, tell me,
did you ever

Sigh for a beard?

Alice. That's not a pretty question.

Renard. Not prettily put? I mean,
my pretty maiden,

A pretty man for such a pretty maiden.

Alice. My Lord of Devon is a pretty
man.

I hate him. Well, but if I have, what
then?

Renard. Then, pretty maiden, you
should know that whether

A wind be warm or cold, it serves to fan
A kindled fire.

Alice. According to the song.

His friends would praise him, I believed 'em,
His foes would blame him, and I scorn'd 'em,
His friends—as Angels I received 'em,
His foes—the Devil had suborn'd 'em.

Renard. Peace, pretty maiden.

I hear them stirring in the Council
Chamber.

Lord Paget's 'Ay' is sure—who else?
and yet,

They are all too much at odds to close at
once

In one full-throated No! Her Highness
comes.

Enter MARY.

Alice. How deathly pale!—a chair,
your Highness.

[Bringing one to the Queen.

Renard. Madam,

The Council?

Mary. Ay! My Philip is all mine.

[Sinks into chair, half fainting.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—ALINGTON CASTLE.

Sir Thomas Wyatt. I do not hear from
Carew or the Duke

Of Suffolk, and till then I should not move.

The Duke hath gone to Leicester; Carew
stirs

In Devon: that fine porcelain Courtenay,
Eave that he fears he might be crack'd in
using,

(I have known a semi-madman in my time
So fancy-ridd'n) should be in Devon too.

Enter WILLIAM.

News abroad, William?

William. None so new, Sir Thomas,
and none so old, Sir Thomas. No new
news that Philip comes to wed Mary, no
old news that all men hate it. Old Sir
Thomas would have hated it. The bells
are ringing at Maidstone. Doesn't your
worship hear?

Wyatt. Ay, for the Saints are come to
reign again.

Most like it is a Saint's-day. There's no
call

As yet for me; so in this pause, before
The mine be fired, it were a pious work
To string my father's sonnets, left about
Like loosely-scatter'd jewels, in fair order,
And head them with a lamer rhyme of
mine,

To grace his memory.

William. Ay, why not, Sir Thomas?
He was a fine courtier, he; Queen Anne
loved him. All the women loved him.
I loved him, I was in Spain with him.
I couldn't eat in Spain, I couldn't sleep
in Spain. I hate Spain, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. But thou could'st drink in
Spain if I remember.

William. Sir Thomas, we may grant the wine. Old Sir Thomas always granted the wine.

Wyatt. Hand me the casket with my father's sonnets.

William. Ay—sonnets—a fine courtier of the old Court, old Sir Thomas. *[Exit.]*

Wyatt. Courtier of many courts, he loved the more

His own gray towers, plain life and letter'd peace,

To read and rhyme in solitary fields,
The lark above, the nightingale below,
And answer them in song. The sire begets

Not half his likeness in the son. I fail
Where he was fullest: yet—to write it down. *[He writes.]*

Re-enter WILLIAM.

William. There *is* news, there *is* news, and no call for sonnet-sorting now, nor for sonnet-making either, but ten thousand men on Penenden Heath all calling after your worship, and your worship's name heard into Maidstone market, and your worship the first man in Kent and Christendom, for the Queen's down, and the world's up, and your worship a-top of it.

Wyatt. Inverted *Æsop*—mountain out of mouse.

Say for ten thousand ten—and pothouse knaves,

Brain-dizzied with a draught of morning ale.

Enter ANTONY KNYVETT.

William. Here's Antony Knyvett.

Knyvett. Look you, Master Wyatt, Tear up that woman's work there.

Wyatt. No; not these,
Dumb children of my father, that will speak

When I and thou and all rebellions lie
Dead bodies without voice. Song flies
you know

For ages.

Knyvett. Tut, your sonnet's a flying ant,

Wing'd for a moment.

Wyatt. Well, for mine own work,
[Tearing the paper.]

It lies there in six pieces at your feet;
For all that I can carry it in my head.

Knyvett. If you can carry your head upon your shoulders.

Wyatt. I fear you come to carry it off my shoulders,

And sonnet-making's safer.

Knyvett. Why, good Lord,
Write you as many sonnets as you will.

Ay, but not now; what, have you eyes,
ears, brains?

This Philip and the black-faced swarms
of Spain,

The hardest, cruellest people in the world,
Come locust upon us, eat us up.

Confiscate goods, money—Wyatt,
Wyatt,

Wake, or the stout old island will become
A rotten limb of Spain. They roar for
you

On Penenden Heath, a thousand of them
—more—

All arm'd, waiting a leader; there's no
glory

Like his who saves his country: and you
sit

Sing-songing here; but, if I'm any judge,
By God, you are as poor a poet, Wyatt,

As a good soldier.

Wyatt. You as poor a critic
As an honest friend: you stroke me on
one cheek,
Buffet the other. Come, you bluster,
Antony!

and all rebellions lie
hout voice. Song flies

your sonnet's a flying

ment.

ell, for mine own work,

[*Tearing the paper.*

pieces at your feet ;

carry it in my head.

you can carry your head
shoulders.

you come to carry it off
ers,

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s poor a poet, Wyatt,

You as poor a critic

d : you stroke me on

Come, you bluster,

You know I know all this. I must not
move

Until I hear from Carew and the Duke.

I fear the mine is fired before the time.

Knyvett (showing a paper). But here's
some Hebrew. Faith, I half
forgot it.

Look ; can you make it English ? A
strange youth

Suddenly thrust it on me, whisper'd,

'Wyatt,'

And whisking round a corner, show'd his
back

Before I read his face.

Wyatt. Ha ! Courtenay's cipher.

[*Reads.*

'Sir Peter Carew fled to France : it is
thought the Duke will be taken. I am
with you still ; but, for appearance sake,
stay with the Queen. Gardiner knows,
but the Council are all at odds, and the
Queen hath no force for resistance.
Move, if you move, at once.'

Is Peter Carew fled ? Is the Duke taken ?

Down scabbard, and out sword ! and let
Rebellion

Roar till throne rock, and crown fall.

No ; not that ;

But we will teach Queen Mary how to reign.

Who are those that shout below there ?

Knyvett.

Why, some fifty
That follow'd me from Penenden Heath
in hope

To hear you speak.

Wyatt. Open the window, Knyvett ;
The mine is fired, and I will speak to them.

Men of Kent ; England of England ;
you that have kept your old customs
upright, while all the rest of England
bow'd theirs to the Norman, the cause
that hath brought us together is not the
cause of a county or a shire, but of this

England, in whose crown our Kent is the
fairest jewel. Philip shall not wed Mary ;
and ye have called me to be your leader.
I know Spain. I have been there with
my father ; I have seen them in their own
land ; have marked the haughtiness of
their nobles ; the cruelty of their priests.
If this man marry our Queen, however
the Council and the Commons may fence
round his power with restriction, he will
be King, King of England, my masters ;
and the Queen, and the laws, and the
people, his slaves. What ? shall we have
Spain on the throne and in the parlia-
ment ; Spain in the pulpit and on the
law-bench ; Spain in all the great offices
of state ; Spain in our ships, in our forts,
in our houses, in our beds ?

Crowd. No ! no ! no Spain !

William. No Spain in our beds—that
were worse than all. I have been there
with old Sir Thomas, and the beds I
know. I hate Spain.

A Peasant. But, Sir Thomas, must
we levy war against the Queen's Grace ?

Wyatt. No, my friend ; war for the
Queen's Grace—to save her from herself
and Philip—war against Spain. And
think not we shall be alone—thousands
will flock to us. The Council, the Court
itself, is on our side. The Lord Chancel-
lor himself is on our side. The King of
France is with us ; the King of Denmark
is with us ; the world is with us—war
against Spain ! And if we move not now,
yet it will be known that we have moved ;
and if Philip come to be King, O, my
God ! the rope, the rack, the thumbscrew,
the stake, the fire. If we move not now,
Spain moves, bribes our nobles with her
gold, and creeps, creeps snake-like about
our legs till we cannot move at all ; and
ye know, my masters, that wherever

Spain hath ruled she hath wither'd all beneath her. Look at the New World—a paradise made hell; the red man, that good helpless creature, starved, maim'd, flogg'd, flay'd, burn'd, boil'd, buried alive, worried by dogs; and here, nearer home, the Netherlands, Sicily, Naples, Lombardy. I say no more—only this, their lot is yours. Forward to London with me! forward to London! If ye love your liberties or your skins, forward to London!

Crowd. Forward to London! A Wyatt! a Wyatt!

Wyatt. But first to Rochester, to take the guns
From out the vessels lying in the river.
Then on.

A Peasant. Ay, but I fear we be too few, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. Not many yet. The world as yet, my friend,
Is not half-waked; but every parish tower

Shall clang and clash alarum as we pass,
And pour along the land, and swoll'n and fed
With indraughts and side-currents, in full force

Roll upon London.

Crowd. A Wyatt! a Wyatt! Forward!

Knyvett. Wyatt, shall we proclaim Elizabeth?

Wyatt. I'll think upon it, Knyvett.

Knyvett. Or Lady Jane?

Wyatt. No, poor soul; no.

Ah, gray old castle of Alington, green field
Beside the brimming Medway, it may chance

That I shall never look upon you more.

Knyvett. Come, now, you're sonnetting again.

Wyatt. Not I.
I'll have my head set higher in the state;

Or—if the Lord God will it—on the stake.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—GUILDHALL.

SIR THOMAS WHITE (The Lord Mayor),
LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, SIR
RALPH BAGENHALL, ALDERMEN and
CITIZENS.

White. I trust the Queen comes hither
with her guards.

Howard. Ay, all in arms.

[*Several of the citizens move hastily out of the hall.*]

Why do they hurry out there?

White. My Lord, cut out the rotten
from your apple,

Your apple eats the better. Let them go.
They go like those old Pharisees in John
Convicted by their conscience, arrant
cowards,

Or tamperers with that treason out of Kent.
When will her Grace be here?

Howard. In some few minutes.
She will address your guilds and companies.

I have striven in vain to raise a man for
her.

But help her in this exigency, make
Your city loyal, and be the mightiest man
This day in England.

White. I am Thomas White.
Few things have fail'd to which I set my
will.

I do my most and best.

Howard. You know that after
The Captain Brett, who went with your
train bands

To fight with Wyatt, had gone over to him
With all his men, the Queen in that
distress

Sent Cornwallis and Hastings to the
traitor,

od will it—on the stake.

[*Exeunt.*]

I.—GUILDHALL.

ITE (The Lord Mayor),
AM HOWARD, SIR
HALL, ALDERMEN and

the Queen comes hither
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I am Thomas White.
d to which I set my

est.

You know that after
who went with your

had gone over to him
the Queen in that

l Hastings to the

Feigning to treat with him about her
marriage—

Know too what Wyatt said.

White. He'd sooner be,
While this same marriage question was
being argued,

Trusted than trust—the scoundrel—and
demanded

Possession of her person and the Tower.

Howard. And four of her poor
Council too, my Lord,

As hostages.

White. I know it. What do and say
Your Council at this hour?

Howard. I will trust you.
We fling ourselves on you, my Lord.

The Council,
The Parliament as well, are troubled
waters;

And yet like waters of the fen they know
not

Which way to flow. All hangs on her
address,

And upon you, Lord Mayor.

White. How look'd the city
When now you past it? Quiet?

Howard. Like our Council,
Your city is divided. As we past,
Some hail'd, some hiss'd us. There were
citizens

Stood each before his shut-up booth, and
look'd

As grim and grave as from a funeral.

And here a knot of ruffians all in rags,

With execrating execrable eyes,

Glared at the citizen. Here was a young
mother,

Her face on flame, her red hair all blown
back,

She shrilling 'Wyatt,' while the boy she
held

Mimick'd and piped her 'Wyatt,' as red
as she

In hair and cheek; and almost elbowing
her,

So close they stood, another, mute as
death,

And white as her own milk; her babe in
arms

Had felt the faltering of his mother's heart,
And look'd as bloodless. Here a pious

Catholic,

Mumbling and mixing up in his scared
prayers

Heaven and earth's Maries; over his
bow'd shoulder

Scowl'd that world-hated and world-
hating beast,

A haggard Anabaptist. Many such
groups.

The names of Wyatt, Elizabeth, Cour-
tenay,

Nay the Queen's right to reign—'fore God,
the rogues—

Were freely buzz'd among them. So I
say

Your city is divided, and I fear

One scruple, this or that way, of success

Would turn it thither. Wherefore now
the Queen

In this low pulse and palsy of the state,
Bad me to tell you that she counts on you

And on myself as her two hands; on you,

In your own city, as her right, my Lord,
For you are loyal.

White. Am I Thomas White?
One word before she comes. Elizabeth—

Her name is much abused among these
traitors.

Where is she? She is loved by all of us.
I scarce have heart to mingle in this

matter,

If she should be mishandled.

Howard. No; she shall not.

The Queen had written her word to come
to court:

Methought I smelt out Renard in the letter,

And fearing for her, sent a secret missive,
Which told her to be sick. Happily or not,

It found her sick indeed.

White. God send her well ;
Here comes her Royal Grace.

Enter Guards, MARY, and GARDINER.

SIR THOMAS WHITE leads her to a raised seat on the dais.

White. I, the Lord Mayor, and these
our companies ;

And guilds of London, gathered here,
besech

Your Highness to accept our lowliest
thanks

For your most princely presence ; and we
pray

That we, your true and loyal citizens,
From your own royal lips, at once may
know

The wherefore of this coming, and so learn
Your royal will, and do it.—I, Lord
Mayor

Of London, and our guilds and companies.

Mary. In mine own person am I come
to you,

To tell you what indeed ye see and know,
How traitorously these rebels out of Kent
Have made strong head against ourselves
and you.

They would not have me wed the Prince
of Spain ;

That was their pretext—so they spake at
first—

But we sent divers of our Council to them,
And by their answers to the question ask'd,
It doth appear this marriage is the least
Of all their quarrel.

They have betrayed the treason of their
hearts :

Seek to possess our person, hold our
Tower,

Place and displace our councillors, and use
Both us and them according as they will.
Now what am I ye know right well—your
Queen ;

To whom, when I was wedded to the realm
And the realm's laws (the spousal ring
whereof,

Not ever to be laid aside, I wear
Upon this finger), ye did promise full
Allegiance and obedience to the death.
Ye know my father was the rightful heir
Of England, and his right came down to
me,

Corroborate by your acts of Parliament :
And as ye were most loving unto him,
So doubtless will ye show yourselves to me.
Wherefore, ye will not brook that anyone
Should seize our person, occupy our state,
More specially a traitor so presumptuous
As this same Wyatt, who hath tamper'd
with

A public ignorance, and, under colour
Of such a cause as hath no colour, seeks
To bend the laws to his own will, and yield
Full scope to persons rascal and forlorn,
To make free spoil and havock of your
goods.

Now as your Prince, I say,
I, that was never mother, cannot tell
How mothers love their children ; yet,
methinks,

A prince as naturally may love his people
As these their children ; and be sure your
Queen

So loves you, and so loving, needs must
deem

This love by you return'd as heartily ;
And thro' this common knot and bond of
love,

Doubt not they will be speedily over-
thrown.

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will be speedily over-

As to this marriage, ye shall understand
We made thereto no treaty of ourselves,
And set no foot theretoward unadvised
Of all our Privy Council ; furthermore,
This marriage had the assent of those to
whom

The king, my father, did commit his trust ;
Who not alone esteem'd it honourable,
But for the wealth and glory of our realm,
And all our loving subjects, most expe-
dient.

As to myself,

I am not so set on wedlock as to choose
But where I list, nor yet so amorous
That I must needs be husbanded ; I thank
God,

I have lived a virgin, and I noway doubt
But that with God's grace, I can live so
still.

Yet if it might please God that I should
leave

Some fruit of mine own body after me,
To be your king, ye would rejoice thereat,
And it would be your comfort, as I trust ;
And truly, if I either thought or knew
This marriage should bring loss or danger
to you,

My subjects, or impair in any way
This royal state of England, I would never
Consent thereto, nor marry while I live ;
Moreover, if this marriage should not
seem,

Before our own High Court of Parliament,
To be of rich advantage to our realm,
We will refrain, and not alone from this,
Likewise from any other, out of which
Looms the least chance of peril to our
realm.

Wherefore be bold, and with your lawful
Prince

Stand fast against our enemies and yours,
And fear them not. I fear them not. My
Lord,

I leave Lord William Howard in your city,
To guard and keep you whole and safe
from all

The spoil and sackage aim'd at by these
rebels,

Who mouth and foam against the Prince
of Spain.

Voices. Long live Queen Mary !

Down with Wyatt !

The Queen !

White. Three voices from our guilds
and companies !

You are shy and proud like Englishmen,
my masters,

And will not trust your voices. Under-
stand :

Your lawful Prince hath come to cast
herself

On loyal hearts and bosoms, hoped to fall
Into the wide-spread arms of fealty,
And finds you statues. Speak at once—
and all !

For whom ?

Our sovereign Lady by King Harry's will ;
The Queen of England—or the Kentish
Squire ?

I know you loyal. Speak ! in the name
of God !

The Queen of England or the rabble of
Kent ?

The reeking dungfork master of the mace !
Your havings wasted by the scythe and
spade—

Your rights and charters hobnail'd into
slush—

Your houses fired—your gutters bubbling
blood—

Acclamation. No ! No ! The Queen !
the Queen !

White. Your Highness hears

This burst and bass of loyal harmony,
And how we each and all of us abhor
The venomous, bestial, devilish revolt

Of Thomas Wyatt. Hear us now make oath

To raise your Highness thirty thousand men,

And arm and strike as with one hand, and brush

This Wyatt from our shoulders, like a flea
That might have leapt upon us unawares.
Swear with me, noble fellow-citizens, all,
With all your trades, and guilds, and companies.

Citizens. We swear!

Mary. We thank your Lordship and your loyal city.

[*Exit Mary attended.*]

White. I trust this day, thro' God, I have saved the crown.

First Alderman. Ay, so my Lord of Pembroke in command
Of all her force be safe; but there are doubts.

Second Alderman. I hear that Gardiner, coming with the Queen,
And meeting Pembroke, bent to his saddle-bow,

As if to win the man by flattering him.
Is he so safe to fight upon her side?

First Alderman. If not, there's no man safe.

White. Yes, Thomas White. I am safe enough; no man need flatter me.

Second Alderman. Nay, no man need; but did you mark our Queen?
The colour freely play'd into her face,
And the half sight which makes her look so stern,

Seem'd thro' that dim dilated world of hers,

To read our faces; I have never seen her so queenly or so goodly.

White. Courage, sir,
That makes or man or woman look their goodliest.

Die like the torn fox dumb, but never whine

Like that poor heart, Northumberland, at the block.

Eagenhall. The man had children, and he whined for those.

Methinks most men are but poor-hearted, else

Should we so doat on courage, were it commoner?

The Queen stands up, and speaks for her own self;

And all men cry, She is queenly, she is goodly.

Yet she's no goodlier; tho' my Lord Mayor here,

By his own rule, he hath been so bold to-day,

Should look more goodly than the rest of us.

White. Goodly? I feel most goodly heart and hand,

And strong to throw ten Wyatts and all Kent.

Ha! ha! sir; but you jest; I love it: a jest

In time of danger shows the pulses even.
Be merry! yet, Sir Ralph, you look but sad.

I dare avouch you'd stand up for yourself,
Tho' all the world should bay like winter wolves.

Eagenhall. Who knows? the man is proven by the hour.

White. The man should make the hour, not this the man;

And Thomas White will prove this Thomas Wyatt,

And he will prove an Iden to this Cade,
And he will play the Walworth to this Wat;

Come, sirs, we prate; hence all—gather your men—

Myself must bustle. Wyatt comes to Southwark ;
 I'll have the drawbridge hewn into the Thames,
 And see the citizens arm'd. Good day ;
 good day. [*Exit White.*
Bagenhall. One of much outdoor bluster.

Howard. For all that,
 Most honest, brave, and skilful ; and his wealth

A fountain of perennial alms—his fault
 So thoroughly to believe in his own self.

Bagenhall. Yet thoroughly to believe
 in one's own self,

So one's own self be thorough, were to do
 Great things, my Lord.

Howard. It may be.

Bagenhall. I have heard
 One of your Council flee and jeer at him.

Howard. The nursery-cocker'd child
 will jeer at aught

That may seem strange beyond his nursery.
 The statesman that shall jeer and flee at men,

Makes enemies for himself and for his king ;

And if he jeer not seeing the true man

Behind his folly, he is thrice the fool ;

And if he see the man and still will jeer,

He is child and fool, and traitor to the State.

Who is he ? let me shun him.

Bagenhall. Nay, my Lord,
 He is damn'd enough already.

Howard. I must set
 The guard at Ludgate. Fare you well,
 Sir Ralph.

Bagenhall. 'Who knows ?' I am for
 England. But who knows,
 That knows the Queen, the Spaniard, and
 the Pope,
 Whether I be for Wyatt, or the Queen ?
 [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—LONDON BRIDGE.

Enter SIR THOMAS WYATT and BRETT.

Wyatt. Brett, when the Duke of
 Norfolk moved against us
 Thou cried'st 'A Wyatt !' and flying to
 our side

Left his all bare, for which I love thee,
 Brett.

Have for thine asking aught that I can give,
 For thro' thine help we are come to
 London Bridge ;

But how to cross it balks me. I fear we
 cannot.

Brett. Nay, hardly, save by boat,
 swimming, or wings.

Wyatt. Last night I climb'd into the
 gate-house, Brett,

And scared the gray old porter and his wife.

And then I crept along the gloom and saw
 They had hewn the drawbridge down into

the river.

It roll'd as black as death ; and that same
 tide

Which, coming with our coming, seem'd
 to smile

And sparkle like our fortune as thou
 saidest,

Ran sunless down, and moan'd against
 the piers.

But o'er the chasm I saw Lord William
 Howard

By torchlight, and his guard ; four guns
 gap'd at me,

Black, silent mouths : had Howard spied
 me there

And made them speak, as well he might
 have done,

Their voice had left me none to tell you
 this.

What shall we do ?

Brett. On somehow. To go back
 Were to lose all.

Wyatt. On over London Bridge
We cannot : stay we cannot ; there is
ordnance

On the White Tower and on the Devil's
Tower,
And pointed full at Southwark ; we must
round
By Kingston Bridge.

Brett. Ten miles about.

Wyatt. Ev'n so.
But I have notice from our partisans
Within the city that they will stand by us
If Ludgate can be reach'd by dawn to-
morrow.

Enter one of WYATT's men.

Man. Sir Thomas, I've found this
paper ; pray your worship read it ; I
know not my letters ; the old priests
taught me nothing.

Wyatt (reads). 'Whosoever will ap-
prehend the traitor Thomas Wyatt shall
have a hundred pounds for reward.'

Man. Is that it ? That's a big lot of
money.

Wyatt. Ay, ay, my friend ; not read
it ? 'tis not written
Half plain enough. Give me a piece of
paper !

[Writes 'THOMAS WYATT' large.]
There, any man can read that.

[Sticks it in his cap.]

Brett. But that's foolhardy.

Wyatt. No ! boldness, which will
give my followers boldness.

Enter MAN with a prisoner.

Man. We found him, your worship, a
plundering o' Bishop Winchester's house ;
he says he's a poor gentleman.

Wyatt. Gentleman ! a thief ! Go
hang him. Shall we make
Those that we come to serve our sharpest
foes ?

Brett. Sir Thomas—

Wyatt. Hang him, I say.

Brett. Wyatt, but now you promised
me a boon.

Wyatt. Ay, and I warrant this fine
fellow's life.

Brett. Ev'n so ; he was my neighbour
once in Kent.

He's poor enough, has drunk and gambled
out

All that he had, and gentleman he was.
We have been glad together ; let him live.

Wyatt. He has gambled for his life,
and lost, he hangs.

No, no, my word's my word. Take thy
poor gentleman !

Gamble thyself at once out of my sight,
Or I will dig thee with my dagger. Away !
Women and children !

Enter a Crowd of WOMEN and Children.

First Woman. O Sir Thomas, Sir
Thomas, pray you go away, Sir Thomas,
or you'll make the White Tower a black
'un for us this blessed day. He'll be the
death on us ; and you'll set the Devil's
Tower a-spitting, and he'll smash all our
bits o' things worse than Philip o' Spain.

Second Woman. Don't ye now go to
think that we be for Philip o' Spain.

Third Woman. No, we know that ye
be come to kill the Queen, and we'll
pray for you all on our bended knees.
But o' God's mercy don't ye kill the
Queen here, Sir Thomas ; look ye, here's
little Dickon, and little Robin, and little
Jenny—though she's but a side-cousin—
and all on our knees, we pray you to kill
the Queen further off, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. My friends, I have not come
to kill the Queen
Or here or there : I come to save you all,
And I'll go further off.

Thomas—
Hang him, I say,
but now you promised

and I warrant this fine

he was my neighbour
t.
has drunk and gambled

and gentleman he was.
together; let him live.
gambled for his life,
hangs.

by my word. Take thy
man!

once out of my sight,
with my dagger. Away!
en!

WOMEN and Children.

O Sir Thomas, Sir
go away, Sir Thomas,
White Tower a black
sed day. He'll be the
you'll set the Devil's
and he'll smash all our
e than Philip o' Spain.
Don't ye now go to
or Philip o' Spain.

No, we know that ye
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Queen
I come to save you all,
off.

Crowd. Thanks, Sir Thomas, we be
beholden to you, and we'll pray for you
on our bended knees till our lives' end.

Wyatt. Be happy, I am your friend.
To Kingston, forward! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—ROOM IN THE GATE-
HOUSE OF WESTMINSTER PALACE.

MARY, ALICE, GARDINER, RENARD,
LADIES.

Gardiner. Their cry is. Philip never
shall be king.

Mary. Lord Pembroke in command
of all our force
Will front their cry and shatter them into
dust.

Alice. Was not Lord Pembroke with
Northumberland?
O madam, if this Pembroke should be
false?

Mary. No, girl; most brave and loyal,
brave and loyal.
His breaking with Northumberland broke
Northumberland.

At the park gate he hovers with our
guards.
These Kentish ploughmen cannot break
the guards.

Enter MESSENGER.

Messenger. Wyatt, your Grace, hath
broken thro' the guards
And gone to Ludgate.

Gardiner. Madam, I much fear
That all is lost; but we can save your
Grace.

The river still is free. I do beseech you,
There yet is time, take boat and pass to
Windsor.

Mary. I pass to Windsor and I lose
my crown.

Gardiner. Pass, then, I pray your
Highness, to the Tower.

Mary. I shall but be their prisoner in
the Tower.

Cries without. The traitor! treason!
Pembroke!

Ladies. Treason! treason!

Mary. Peace.

False to Northumberland, is he false to me?
Bear witness, Renard, that I live and die
The true and faithful bride of Philip—A
sound

Of feet and voices thickening hither—
blows—

Hark, there is battle at the palace gates,
And I will out upon the gallery.

Ladies. No, no, your Grace; see there
the arrows flying.

Mary. I am Harry's daughter, Tudor,
and not fear.

[*Goes out on the gallery.*]

The guards are all driven in, skulk into
corners

Like rabbits to their holes. A gracious
guard

Truly; shame on them! they have shut
the gates!

Enter SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

Southwell. The porter, please your
Grace, hath shut the gates
On friend and foe. Your gentlemen-at-
arms,

If this be not your Grace's order, cry
To have the gates set wide again, and they
With their good battleaxes will do you right
Against all traitors.

Mary. They are the flower of
England; set the gates wide.

[*Exit Southwell.*]

Enter COURTENAY.

Courtenay. All lost, all lost, all
yielded! A barge, a barge!
The Queen must to the Tower.

Mary. Whence come you, sir?

Courtenay. From Charing Cross; the rebels broke us there, And I sped hither with what haste I might To save my royal cousin.

Mary. Where is Pembroke?

Courtenay. I left him somewhere in the thick of it.

Mary. Left him and fled; and thou that would'st be King,

And hast nor heart nor honour. I myself Will down into the battle and there bide The upshot of my quarrel, or die with those That are no cowards and no Courtenays.

Courtenay. I do not love your Grace should call me coward.

Enter another MESSENGER.

Messenger. Over, your Grace, all crush'd; the brave Lord William Thrust him from Ludgate, and the traitor flying To Temple Bar, there by Sir Maurice Berkeley Was taken prisoner.

Mary. To the Tower with him!

Messenger. 'Tis said he told Sir Maurice there was one Cognisant of this, and party thereunto, My Lord of Devon.

Mary. To the Tower with him!

Courtenay. O la, the Tower, the Tower, always the Tower, I shall grow into it—I shall be the Tower.

Mary. Your Lordship may not have so long to wait.

Remove him!

Courtenay. La, to whistle out my life, And carve my coat upon the walls again!

[*Exit Courtenay guarded.*]

Messenger. Also this Wyatt did confess the Princess Cognisant thereof, and party thereunto.

Mary. What? whom—whom did you say?

Messenger. Elizabeth, Your Royal sister.

Mary. To the Tower with her! My foes are at my feet and I am Queen. [*Gardiner and her Ladies kneel to her.* *Gardiner (rising).* There let them lie, your footstool! (*Aside.*) Can I strike

Elizabeth?—not now and save the life Of Devon: if I save him, he and his Are bound to me—may strike hereafter.

(*Aloud.*) Madam, What Wyatt said, or what they said he said, Cries of the moment and the street—

Mary. He said it. *Gardiner.* Your courts of justice will determine that.

Renard (advancing). I trust by this your Highness will allow Some spice of wisdom in my telling you, When last we talk'd, that Philip would not come Till Guildford Dudley and the Duke of Suffolk,

And Lady Jane had left us.

Mary. They shall die.

Renard. And your so loving sister?

Mary. She shall die. My foes are at my feet, and Philip King.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE CONDUIT IN GRACE-CHURCH,

Painted with the Nine Worthies, among them King Henry VIII. holding a book, on it inscribed 'Verbum Dei.'

Enter SIR RALPH BAGENHALL and SIR THOMAS STAFFORD.

Bagenhall. A hundred here and hundreds hang'd in Kent.

whom—whom did you

Elizabeth,

to the Tower with *her* !
feet and I am Queen.
her Ladies kneel to her.
(*y.*) There let them lie,
ool ! (*Aside.*) Can I

ow and save the life
ve him, he and his
—may strike hereafter.
Madam,
or what they said he said,
nt and the street—

He said it.
r courts of justice will
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(*ing.*) I trust by this
ness will allow
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udley and the Duke of
d left us.

They shall die.
your so loving sister ?

She shall die.
feet, and Philip King.

[*Exeunt.*

T III.

CONDUIT IN GRACE-
URCH,

*Nine Worthies, among
y VIII. holding a book,
Verbum Dei.*

BAGENHALL and SIR
STAFFORD.

hundred here an
ng'd in Kent.

SCENE I.

QUEEN MARY.

565

The tigress had unsheath'd her nails at
last,

And Renard and the Chancellor sharpen'd
them.

In every London street a gibbet stood.

They are down to-day. Here by this
house was one ;

The traitor husband dangled at the door,
And when the traitor wife came out for
bread

To still the petty treason therewithin,
Her cap would brush his heels.

Stafford. It is Sir Ralph,
And muttering to himself as heretofore.

Sir, see you aught up yonder ?
Bagenhall. I miss something.

The tree that only bears dead fruit is gone.
Stafford. What tree, sir ?

Bagenhall. Well, the tree in
Virgil, sir,

That bears not its own apples.

Stafford. What ! the gallows ?

Bagenhall. Sir, this dead fruit was
ripening overmuch,

And had to be removed lest living Spain
Should sicken at dead England.

Stafford. Not so dead,
But that a shock may rouse her.

Bagenhall. I believe
Sir Thomas Stafford ?

Stafford. I am ill disguised.
Bagenhall. Well, are you not in peril
here ?

Stafford. I think so.
I came to feel the pulse of England,
whether

It beats hard at this marriage. Did you
see it ?

Bagenhall. Stafford, I am a sad man
and a serious.

Far liefer had I in my country hall
Been reading some old book, with mine
old hound

Couch'd at my hearth, and mine old flask
of wine

Beside me, than have seen it : yet I saw it.

Stafford. Good, was it splendid ?

Bagenhall. Ay, if Dukes, and Earls,
And Counts, and sixty Spanish cavaliers,
Some six or seven Bishops, diamonds,
pearls,

That royal commonplace too, cloth of gold,
Could make it so.

Stafford. And what was Mary's dress ?

Bagenhall. Good faith, I was too
sorry for the woman

To mark the dress. She wore red shoes !

Stafford. Red shoes !

Bagenhall. Scarlet, as if her feet were
wash'd in blood,

As if she had waded in it.

Stafford. Were your eyes
So bashful that you look'd no higher ?

Bagenhall. A diamond,

And Philip's gift, as proof of Philip's love,
Who hath not any for any,—tho' a true
one,

Blazed false upon her heart.

Stafford. But this proud Prince—

Bagenhall. Nay, he is King, you
know, the King of Naples.

The father ceded Naples, that the son

Being a King, might wed a Queen—O he

Flamed in brocade—white satin his trunk-
hose,

Inwrought with silver,—on his neck a
collar,

Gold, thick with diamonds ; hanging
down from this

The Golden Fleece—and round his knee,
misplaced,

Our English Garter, studded with great
emeralds,

Rubies, I know not what. Have you had
enough

Of all this gear ?

Stafford. Ay, since you hate the telling it,

How look'd the Queen ?

Bagenhall. No fairer for her jewels.
And I could see that as the new-made couple

Came from the Minster, moving side by side
Beneath one canopy, ever and anon

She cast on him a vassal smile of love,
Which Philip with a glance of some distaste,

Or so methought, return'd. I may be wrong, sir.

This marriage will not hold.

Stafford. I think with you.
The King of France will help to break it.

Bagenhall. France !
We once had half of France, and hurl'd our battles

Into the heart of Spain ; but England now
Is but a ball chuck'd between France and Spain,

His in whose hand she drops ; Harry of Bolingbroke

Had holpen Richard's tottering throne to stand,

Could Harry have foreseen that all our nobles

Would perish on the civil slaughter-field,
And leave the people naked to the crown,

And the crown naked to the people ; the crown

Female, too ! Sir, no woman's regimen
Can save us. We are fallen, and as I

think,

Never to rise again.

Stafford. You are too black-blooded.
I'd make a move myself to hinder that :

I know some lusty fellows there in France.

Bagenhall. You would but make us weaker, Thomas Stafford.
Wyatt was a good soldier, yet he fail'd,
And strengthen'd Philip.

Stafford. Did not his last breath
Clear Courtenay and the Princess from the charge

Of being his co-rebels ?

Bagenhall. Ay, but then
What such a one as Wyatt says is nothing :
We have no men among us. The new Lords

Are quieted with their sop of Abbeylands,
And ev'n before the Queen's face Gardiner buys them

With Philip's gold. All greed, no faith,
no courage !

Why, ev'n the haughty prince, Northumberland,

The leader of our Reformation, knelt
And blubber'd like a lad, and on the scaffold

Recanted, and resold himself to Rome.

Stafford. I swear you do your country wrong, Sir Ralph.

I know a set of exiles over there,
Dare-devils, that would eat fire and spit it out

At Philip's beard : they pillage Spain already.

The French king winks at it. An hour will come

When they will sweep her from the seas.
No men ?

Did not Lord Suffolk die like a true man ?
Is not Lord William Howard a true man ?

Yea, you yourself, altho' you are black-blooded :

And I, by God, believe myself a man.

Ay, even in the church there is a man—
Cranmer.

Fly would he not, when all men bad him fly.

And what a letter he wrote against the Pope !

There's a brave man, if any.

Bagenhall. Ay ; if it hold.

Did not his last breath
and the Princess from

ebels?

Ay, but then
s Wyatt says is nothing:
among us. The new

their sop of Abbeylands,
the Queen's face Gardiner

d. All greed, no faith,
e!

ughty prince, Northum-

Reformation, knelt
like a lad, and on the

old himself to Rome.
ear you do your country
Ralph.

iles over there,
would eat fire and spit

d: they pillage Spain

winks at it. An hour

weep her from the seas.

Folk die like a true man?
m Howard a true man?
altho' you are black-

elieve myself a man.
urch there is a man—

when all men bad him

he wrote against the

un, if any.

Ay; if it hold.

Crowd (coming on). God save their
Graces!

Stafford. Bagenhall, I see
The Tudor green and white. (*Trumpets.*)
They are coming now.

And here's a crowd as thick as herring-
shoals.

Bagenhall. Be limpets to this pillar,
or we are torn

Down the strong wave of brawlers.

Crowd. God save their Graces!

[*Procession of Trumpeters, Javelin-
men, &c.; then Spanish and
Flemish Nobles intermingled.*]

Stafford. Worth seeing, Bagenhall!
These black dog-Dons

Garb themselves bravely. Who's the
long-face there,

Looks very Spain of very Spain?

Bagenhall. The Duke
Of Alva, an iron soldier.

Stafford. And the Dutchman,
Now laughing at some jest?

Bagenhall. William of Orange,
William the Silent.

Stafford. Why do they call him so?

Bagenhall. He keeps, they say, some
secret that may cost

Philip his life.

Stafford. But then he looks so
merry.

Bagenhall. I cannot tell you why they
call him so.

[*The King and Queen pass, attended
by Peers of the Realm, Officers of
State, &c. Cannon shot off.*]

Crowd. Philip and Mary, Philip and
Mary!

Long live the King and Queen, Philip
and Mary!

Stafford. They smile as if content with
one another.

Bagenhall. A smile abroad is oft a
scowl at home.

[*King and Queen pass on. Procession.*]

First Citizen. I thought this Phillip
had been one of those black devils of
Spain, but he hath a yellow beard.

Second Citizen. Not red like Isca-
riot's.

First Citizen. Like a carrot's, as thou
say'st, and English carrot's better than
Spanish licorice; but I thought he was a
beast.

Third Citizen. Certain I had heard
that every Spaniard carries a tail like a
devil under his trunk-hose.

Tailor. Ay, but see what trunk-hoses!
Lord! they be fine; I never stitch'd none
such. They make amends for the tails.

Fourth Citizen. Tut! every Spanish
priest will tell you that all English heretics
have tails.

Fifth Citizen. Death and the Devil—
if he find I have one—

Fourth Citizen. Lo! thou hast call'd
them up! here they come—a pale horse
for Death and Gardiner for the Devil.

*Enter GARDINER (turning back from the
procession).*

Gardiner. Knave, wilt thou wear thy
cap before the Queen?

Man. My lord, I stand so squeezed
among the crowd

I cannot lift my hands unto my head.

Gardiner. Knock off his cap there,
some of you about him!

See there be others that can use their
hands.

Thou art one of Wyatt's men?

Man. No, my Lord, no.

Gardiner. Thy name, thou knave?

Man. I am nobody, my Lord.

Gardiner (shouting). God's passion !
knave, thy name ?

Man. I have ears to hear.

Gardiner. Ay, rascal, if I leave thee
ears to hear.

Find out his name and bring it to me (to
Attendant).

Attendant. Ay, my Lord.

Gardiner. Knave, thou shalt lose thine
ears and find thy tongue,

And shalt be thankful if I leave thee that.

[*Coming before the Conduit.*]
The conduit painted—the nine worthies

—ay !

But then what's here ? King Harry with
a scroll.

Ha—Verbum Dei—verbum—word of
God !

God's passion ! do you know the knave
that painted it ?

Attendant. I do, my Lord.

Gardiner. Tell him to paint it out,
And put some fresh device in lieu of it—

A pair of gloves, a pair of gloves, sir ;
ha ?

There is no heresy there.

Attendant. I will, my Lord ;
The man shall paint a pair of gloves. I

am sure

(Knowing the man) he wrought it igno-
rantly,

And not from any malice.

Gardiner. Word of God
In English ! over this the brainless loons
That cannot spell Esaias from St. Paul,
Make themselves drunk and mad, fly out
and flare

Into rebellions. I'll have their bibles
burnt.

The bible is the priest's. Ay ! fellow,
what !

Stand staring at me ! shout, you gaping
rogue !

Man. I have, my Lord, shouted till I
am hoarse.

Gardiner. What hast thou shouted,
knave ?

Man. Long live Queen Mary !

Gardiner. Knave, there be two.

There be both King and Queen,

Philip and Mary. Shout !

Man. Nay, but, my Lord,

The Queen comes first, Mary and Philip.

Gardiner. Shout, then,

Mary and Philip !

Man. Mary and Philip !

Gardiner. Now,

Thou hast shouted for thy pleasure, shout
for mine !

Philip and Mary !

Man. Must it be so, my Lord ?

Gardiner. Ay, knave.

Man. Philip and Mary !

Gardiner. I distrust thee.

Thine is a half voice and a lean assent.
What is thy name ?

Man. Sanders.

Gardiner. What else ?

Man. Zerubbabel.

Gardiner. Where dost thou live ?

Man. In Cornhill.

Gardiner. Where, knave, where ?

Man. Sign of the Talbot.

Gardiner. Come to me to-morrow.—

Rascal !—this land is like a hill of fire,

One crater opens when another shuts.

But so I get the laws against the heretic,

Spite of Lord Paget and Lord William

Howard,

And others of our Parliament, revived,

I will show fire on my side—stake and
fire—

Sharp work and short. The knaves are
easily cow'd.

Follow their Majesties.

[*Exit. The crowd following.*]

...e, my Lord, shouted till I
...e.
What hast thou shouted,

Long live Queen Mary !
Knave, there be two.
both King and Queen,
Shout !

Nay, but, my Lord,
es first, Mary and Philip,
Shout, then,

Mary and Philip !
Now,
ed for thy pleasure, shout

Must it be so, my Lord ?
y, knave.

Philip and Mary !
I distrust thee.
ice and a lean assent.
?
Sanders.

What else ?
Zerubbabel.
ere dost thou live ?
In Cornhill.
Where, knave, where ?
the Talbot.

me to me to-morrow.—
d is like a hill of fire,
when another shuts,
ws against the heretic,
get and Lord William

Parliament, revived,
my side—stake and

ort. The knives are

ies.
The crowd following.

Bagenhall. As proud as Becket.
Stafford. You would not have him
murder'd as Becket was ?

Bagenhall. No—murder fathers murder : but I say
There is no man—there was one woman
with us—

It was a sin to love her married, dead
I cannot choose but love her.

Stafford. Lady Jane ?
Crowd (going off). God save their
Graces !

Stafford. Did you see her die ?
Bagenhall. No, no ; her innocent
blood had blinded me.

You call me too black-blooded—true
enough

Her dark dead blood is in my heart with
mine.

If ever I cry out against the Pope
Her dark dead blood that ever moves with
mine

Will stir the living tongue and make the
cry.

Stafford. Yet doubtless you can tell
me how she died ?

Bagenhall. Seventeen—and knew
eight languages—in music
Peerless—her needle perfect, and her
learning

Beyond the churchmen ; yet so meek, so
modest,

So wife-life humble to the trivial boy
Mismatch'd with her for policy ! I have
heard

She would not take a last farewell of him,
She fear'd it might unman him for his end.
She could not be unmann'd—no, nor
outwoman'd—

Seventeen—a rose of grace !
Girl never breathed to rival such a rose ;
Rose never blew that equall'd such a bud.

Stafford. Pray you go on.

Bagenhall. She came upon the
scaffold,
And said she was condemn'd to die for
treason ;

She had but follow'd the device of those
Her nearest kin : she thought they knew
the laws.

But for herself, she knew but little law,
And nothing of the titles to the crown ;
She had no desire for that, and wrung
her hands,

And trusted God would save her thro' the
blood
Of Jesus Christ alone.

Stafford. Pray you go on.

Bagenhall. Then knelt and said the
Miserere Mei—

But all in English, mark you ; rose again,
And, when the headsman pray'd to be
forgiven,

Said ' You will give me my true crown
at last,

But do it quickly ; ' then all wept but
she,

Who changed not colour when she saw
the block,

But ask'd him, childlike : ' Will you take
it off

Before I lay me down ? ' ' No, madam,'
he said,

Gasping ; and when her innocent eyes
were bound,

She, with her poor blind hands feeling—
' where is it ?

Where is it ? '—You must fancy that
which follow'd,

If you have heart to do it !

Crowd (in the distance). God save their
Graces !

Stafford. Their Graces, our disgraces !
God confound them !

Why, she's grown bloodier ! when I last
was here,

This was against her conscience—would
be murder !

Bagenhall. The 'Thou shalt do no
murder,' which God's hand

Wrote on her conscience, Mary rubb'd
out pale—

She could not make it white—and over
that,

Traced in the blackest text of Hell—
'Thou shalt !'

And sign'd it—Mary !

Stafford. Philip and the Pope

Must have sign'd too. I hear this
Legate's coming

To bring us absolution from the Pope.

The Lords and Commons will bow down
before him—

You are of the house? what will you do,
Sir Ralph ?

Bagenhall. And why should I be
bolder than the rest,

Or honestier than all ?

Stafford. But, sir, if I—

And oversea they say this state of yours
Hath no more mortice than a tower of
cards ;

And that a puff would do it—then if I
And others made that move I touch'd
upon,

Back'd by the power of France, and
landing here,

Came with a sudden splendour, shout, and
show,

And dazzled men and deafen'd by some
bright

Loud venture, and the people so
unquiet—

And I the race of murder'd Bucking-
ham—

Not for myself, but for the kingdom—
Sir,

I trust that you would fight along with
us.

Bagenhall. No ; you would fling your
lives into the gulf.

Stafford. But if this Philip, as he's
like to do,

Left Mary a wife-widow here alone,
Set up a viceroy, sent his myriads hither
To seize upon the forts and fleet, and
make us

A Spanish province ; would you not fight
then ?

Bagenhall. I think I should fight
then.

Stafford. I am sure of it.

Hist ! there's the face coming on here of
one

Who knows me. I must leave you.
Fare you well,

You'll hear of me again.

Bagenhall. Upon the scaffold.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—ROOM IN WHITEHALL
PALACE.

MARY. *Enter PHILIP and
CARDINAL POLE.*

Pole. Ave Maria, gratia plena, Bene-
dicta tu in mulieribus.

Mary. Loyal and royal cousin,
humblest thanks.

Had you a pleasant voyage up the river ?

Pole. We had your royal barge, and
that same chair,

Or rather throne of purple, on the deck.
Our silver cross sparkled before the prow,
The ripples twinkled at their diamond-
dance,

The boats that follow'd, were as glowing-
gay

As regal gardens ; and your flocks of
swans,

As fair and white as angels ; and your
shores

No ; you would fling your
to the gulf.
ut if this Philip, as he's
lo,
fe-widow here alone,
y, sent his myriads hither
the forts and fleet, and
ince ; would you not fight
I think I should fight
am sure of it.
he face coming on here of
ne. I must leave you.
well,
ne again.
Upon the scaffold.
[*Exeunt.*

-ROOM IN WHITEHALL
PALACE.

*Enter PHILIP and
DINAL POLE.*

aria, gratia plena, Bene-
in mulieribus.
val and royal cousin,
t thanks.
sant voyage up the river?
nd your royal barge, and
e chair,
e of purple, on the deck.
sparkled before the prow,
inkled at their diamond-
ollow'd, were a glowing-
ns ; and your flocks of
ite as angels ; and your

Wore in mine eyes the green of Paradise.
My foreign friends, who dream'd us
blanketed
In ever-closing fog, were much amazed
To find as fair a sun as might have flash'd
Upon their lake of Garda, fire the
Thames ;
Our voyage by sea was all but miracle ;
And here the river flowing from the sea,
Not toward it (for they thought not of
our tides),
Seem'd as a happy miracle to make
glide—
In quiet—home your banish'd country-
man.
Mary. We heard that you were sick
in Flanders, cousin.
Pole. A dizziness.
Mary. And how came you
round again?
Pole. The scarlet thread of Rahab
saved her life ;
And mine, a little letting of the blood.
Mary. Well? now?
Pole. Ay, cousin, as the
heathen giant
Had but to touch the ground, his force
return'd—
Thus, after twenty years of banishment,
Feeling my native land beneath my foot,
I said thereto : 'Ah, native land of mine,
Thou art much beholden to this foot of
mine,
That hastes with full commission from
the Pope
To absolve thee from thy guilt of heresy.
Thou hast disgraced me and attainted me,
And mark'd me ev'n as Cain, and I return
As Peter, but to bless thee : make me well.'
Methinks the good land heard me, for to-
day
My heart beats twenty, when I see you,
cousin.

Ah, gentle cousin, since your Herod's
death,
How oft hath Peter knock'd at Mary's
gate !
And Mary would have risen and let him
in,
But, Mary, there were those within the
house
Who would not have it.
Mary. True, good cousin Pole ;
And there were also those without the
house
Who would not have it.
Pole. I believe so, cousin.
State-policy and church-policy are con-
joint,
But Janus-faces looking diverse ways.
I fear the Emperor much misvalued me.
But all is well ; 'twas ev'n the will of
God,
Who, waiting till the time had ripen'd,
now,
Makes me his mouth of holy greeting.
'Hail,
Daughter of God, and savor of the faith.
Sit benedictus fructus ventris tui !'
Mary. Ah, heaven !
Pole. Unwell, your Grace?
Mary. No, cousin, happy—
Happy to see you ; never yet so happy
Since I was crown'd.
Pole. Sweet cousin, you forget
That long low minster where you gave
your hand
To this great Catholic King.
Philip. Well said, Lord Legate.
Mary. Nay, not well said ; I thought
of you, my liege,
Ev'n as I spoke.
Philip. Ay, Madam ; my Lord Paget
Waits to present our Council to the Legate.
Sit down here, all ; Madam, between us
you.

Pole. Lo, now you are enclosed with
boards of cedar,
Our little sister of the Song of Songs !
You are doubly fenced and shielded sitting
here
Between the two most high-set thrones
on earth,
The Emperor's highness happily symbol'd
by
The King your husband, the Pope's
Holiness
By mine own self.

Mary. True, cousin, I am happy.
When will you that we summon both our
houses

To take this absolution from your lips,
And be regather'd to the Papal fold ?

Pole. In Britain's calendar the bright-
est day

Beheld our rough forefathers break their
Gods,

And clasp the faith in Christ ; but after
that

Might not St. Andrew's be her happiest
day ?

Mary. Then these shall meet upon
St. Andrew's day.

Enter PAGET, who presents the Council.
Dumb show.

Pole. I am an old man wearied with
my journey,
Ev'n with my joy. Permit me to with-
draw.

To Lambeth ?

Philip. Ay, Lambeth has ousted
Cranmer.

It was not meet the heretic swine should
live

In Lambeth.

Mary. There or anywhere, or at all.

Philip. We have had it swept and
garnish'd after him.

Pole. Not for the seven devils to enter
in ?

Philip. No, for we trust they parted
in the swine.

Pole. True, and I am the Angel of the
Pope.

Farewell, your Graces.

Philip. Nay, not here—to me ;
I will go with you to the waterside.

Pole. Not be my Charon to the counter
side ?

Philip. No, my Lord Legate, the
Lord Chancellor goes.

Pole. And unto no dead world ; but
Lambeth palace,

Henceforth a centre of the living faith.

[*Exeunt Philip, Pole, Paget, &c.*

Manet Mary.

Mary. He hath awaked ! he hath
awaked !

He stirs within the darkness !

Oh, Philip, husband ! now thy love to mine
Will cling more close, and those bleak

manners thaw,

That make me shamed and tongue-tied in
my love.

The second Prince of Peace—

The great unborn defender of the Faith,
Who will avenge me of mine enemies—

He comes, and my star rises.

The stormy Wyatts and Northumberlands,

The proud ambitions of Elizabeth,

And all her fieriest partisans—are pale

Before my star !

The light of this new learning wanes and
dies :

The ghosts of Luther and Zuingleius fade
Into the deathless hell which is their doom

Before my star !

His sceptre shall go forth from Ind to Ind !

His sword shall hew the heretic peoples
down !

for the seven devils to enter

o, for we trust they parted
swine.

e, and I am the Angel of the

r Graces.

Nay, not here—to me;
you to the waterside.

be my Charon to the counter

o, my Lord Legate, the
hancellor goes.

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t Philip, Pole, Paget, &c.

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rn defender of the Faith,

ge me of mine enemies—

my star rises.

atts and Northumberlands,

sitions of Elizabeth,

rest partisans—are pale

!

s new learning wanes and

luther and Zuinglius fade

ss hell which is their doom

!

! go forth from Ind to Ind!

hew the heretic peoples

His faith shall clothe the world that will
be his,

Like universal air and sunshine! Open,
Ye everlasting gates! The King is here!—
My star, my son!

Enter PHILIP, DUKE OF ALVA, &c.

Oh, Philip, come with me;
Good news have I to tell you, news to
make

Both of us happy—ay, the Kingdom too.
Nay come with me—one moment!

Philip (to Alva). More than that:
There was one here of late—William the
Silent

They call him—he is free enough in talk,
But tells me nothing. You will be, we
trust,

Sometime the viceroy of those provinces—
He must deserve his surname better.

Alva. Ay, sir;

Inherit the Great Silence.

Philip. True; the provinces
Are hard to rule and must be hardly ruled;
Most fruitful, yet, indeed, an empty rind,
All hollow'd out with stinging heresies;
And for their heresies, Alva, they will
fight;

You must break them or they break you.

Alva (brondly). The first.

Philip. Good!

Well, Madam, this new happiness of mine?
[*Exeunt.*]

Enter THREE PAGES.

First Page. News, mates! a miracle,
a miracle! news!

The bells must ring; Te Deums must be
sung;

The Queen hath felt the motion of her
babe!

Second Page. Ay; but see here!

First Page. See what?

Second Page. This paper, Dickon.

I found it fluttering at the palace gates:—
'The Queen of England is delivered of a
dead dog!'

Third Page. These are the things
that madden her. Fie upon it!

First Page. Ay; but I hear she hath
a dropsy, lad,

Or a high-dropsy, as the doctors call it.

Third Page. Fie on her dropsy, so
she have a dropsy!

I know that she was ever sweet to me.

First Page. For thou and thine are
Roman to the core.

Third Page. So thou and thine must
be. Take heed!

First Page. Not I,
And whether this flash of news be false
or true,

So the wine run, and there be revelry,
Content am I. Let all the steeples
clash,

Till the sun dance, as upon Easter Day.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—GREAT HALL IN WHITEHALL.

*At the far end a dais. On this three
chairs, two under one canopy for MARY
and PHILIP, another on the right of
these for POLE. Under the dais on
POLE'S side, ranged along the wall,
sit all the Spiritual Peers, and along
the wall opposite, all the Temporal.
The Commons on cross benches in
front, a line of approach to the dais
between them. In the foreground, SIR
RALPH BAGENHALL and other Mem-
bers of the Commons.*

First Member. St. Andrew's day; sit
close, sit close, we are friends.
Is reconciled the word? the Pope again?

It must be thus ; and yet, cocksbody !
 how strange
 That Gardiner, once so one with all of us
 Against this foreign marriage, should
 have yielded
 So utterly !—strange ! but stranger still
 that he,
 So fierce against the Headship of the
 Pope,
 Should play the second actor in this
 pageant
 That brings him in ; such aameleon he !
Second Member. This Gardiner turn'd
 his coat in Henry's time ;
 The serpent that hath slough'd will
 slough again.
Third Member. Tut, then we all are
 serpents.
Second Member. Speak for yourself.
Third Member. Ay, and for Gardiner !
 being English citizen,
 How should he bear a bridegroom out of
 Spain ?
 The Queen would have him ! being
 English churchman
 How should he bear the headship of the
 Pope ?
 The Queen would have it ! Statesmen
 that are wise
 Shape a necessity, as a sculptor clay,
 To their own model.
Second Member. Statesmen that are
 wise
 Take truth herself for model. What say
 you ? [*To Sir Ralph Bagenhall.*
Bagenhall. We talk and talk.
First Member. Ay, and what use to
 talk ?
 Philip's no sudden alien—the Queen's
 husband,
 He's here, and king, or will be—yet
 cocksbody !
 So hated here ! I watch'd a hive of late ;

My seven-years' friend was with me, my
 young boy ;
 Out crept a wasp, with hal' the swarm
 behind.
 ' Philip ! ' says he. I had to cuff the rogue
 For infant treason.
Third Member. But they say that bees,
 If any creeping life invade their hive
 Too gross to be thrust out, will build him
 round,
 And bind him in from harming of their
 combs.
 And Philip by these articles is bound
 From stirring hand or foot to wrong the
 realm.
Second Member. By bonds of beeswax,
 like your creeping thing ;
 But your wise bees had stung him first
 to death.
Third Member. Hush, hush !
 You wrong the Chancellor : the clauses
 added
 To that same treaty which the emperor
 sent us
 Were mainly Gardiner's : that no foreigner
 Hold office in the household, fleet, forts,
 army ;
 That if the Queen should die without a
 child,
 The bond between the kingdoms be
 dissolved ;
 That Philip should not mix us any way
 With his French wars—
Second Member. Ay, ay, but what
 security,
 Good sir, for this, if Philip.—
Third Member. Peace—the Queen,
 Philip, and Pole. [*All rise, and stand.*
Enter MARY, PHILIP, and POLE.
 [*Gardiner conducts them to the three
 chairs of state. Philip sits on the
 Queen's left, Pole on her right.*

Gardiner. Our short-lived sun, before
his winter plunge,
Laughs at the last red leaf, and Andrew's
Day.

Mary. Should not this day be held in
after years
More solemn than of old?

Philip. Madam, my wish
Echoes your Majesty's.

Pole. It shall be so.

Gardiner. Mine echoes both your
Graces'; (aside) but the Pope—
Can we not have the Catholic church as well
Without as with the Italian? if we cannot,
Why then the Pope.

My lords of the upper house,
And ye, my masters, of the lower house,
Do ye stand fast by that which ye
resolved?

Voices. We do.

Gardiner. And be you all one mind to
supplicate
The Legate here for pardon, and acknow-
ledge

The primacy of the Pope?

Voices. We are all one mind.

Gardiner. Then must I play the vassal
to this Pole.

[Aside.

*[He draws a paper from under his
robes and presents it to the King
and Queen, who look through it
and return it to him; then ascends
a tribune, and reads.*

We, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal,
And Commons here in Parliament
assembled,

Presenting the whole body of this realm
Of England, and dominions of the same,
Do make most humble suit unto your
Majesties,

In our own name and that of all the state,
That by your gracious means and inter-
cession

Our supplication be exhibited
To the Lord Cardinal Pole, sent here as
Legate

From our most Holy Father Julius, Pope,
And from the apostolic see of Rome;
And do declare our penitence and grief
For our long schism and disobedience,
Either in making laws and ordinances
Against the Holy Father's primacy,
Or else by doing or by speaking aught
Which might impugn or prejudice the
same;

By this our supplication promising,
As well for our own selves as all the
realm,

That now we be and ever shall be quick,
Under and with your Majesties' autho-
rities,

To do to the utmost all that in us lies
Towards the abrogation and repeal
Of all such laws and ordinances made;
Whereon we humbly pray your Majesties,
As persons undefiled with our offence,
So to set forth this humble suit of ours
That we the rather by your intercession
May from the apostolic see obtain,
Thro' this most reverend Father, absolu-
tion,

And full release from danger of all
censures

Of Holy Church that we be fall'n into,
So that we may, as children penitent,
Be once again received into the bosom
And unity of Universal Church;
And that this noble realm thro' after
years

May in this unity and obedience
Unto the holy see and reigning Pope
Serve God and both your Majesties.

Voices.

Amen. [All sit.

*[He again presents the petition to the
King and Queen, who hand it
reverentially to Pole.*

Pole (sitting). This is the loveliest day
that ever smiled
On England. All her breath should,
Incenselike,
Rise to the heavens in grateful praise of
Him

Who now recalls her to His ancient fold.
Lo ! once again God to this realm hath
given

A token of His more especial Grace ;
For as this people were the first of all
The islands call'd into the dawning church
Out of the dead, deep night of heathendom,
So now are these the first whom God
hath given

Grace to repent and sorrow for their
schism ;

And if your penitence be not mockery,
Oh how the blessed angels who rejoice
Over one saved do triumph at this hour
In the reborn salvation of a land
So noble.

[*A pause.*
For ourselves we do protest
That our commission is to heal, not harm ;
We come not to condemn, but reconcile ;
We come not to compel, but call again ;
We come not to destroy, but edify ;
Nor yet to question things already done ;
These are forgiven—matters of the past—
And range with jetsam and with offal
thrown

Into the blind sea of forgetfulness. [*A pause.*
Ye have reversed the attainder laid on us
By him who sack'd the house of God ;
and we,

Amplifier than any field on our poor earth
Can render thanks in fruit for being sown,
Do here and now repay you sixty-fold,
A hundred, yea, a thousand thousand-fold,
With heaven for earth.

[*Rising and stretching forth his hands.*
All kneel but Sir Ralph Bagenhall,
who rises and remains standing.

The Lord who hath redeem'd us
With His own blood, and wash'd us from
our sins,

To purchase for Himself a stainless bride ;
He, whom the Father hath appointed
Head

Of all his church, He by His mercy
absolve you ! [*A pause.*

And we by that authority Apostolic
Given unto us, his Legate, by the
Pope,

Our Lord and Holy Father, Julius,
God's Vicar and Vicegerent upon earth,
Do here absolve you and deliver you
And every one of you, and all the
realm

And its dominions from all heresy,
All schism, and from all and every
censure,

Judgment, and pain accruing thereupon ;
And also we restore you to the bosom
And unity of Universal Church.

[*Turning to Gardiner.*
Our letters of commission will declare
this plainlier.

[*Queen heard sobbing. Cries of*
Amen ! Amen ! Some of the
Members embrace one another. All
but Sir Ralph Bagenhall pass out
into the neighbouring chapel, whence
is heard the Te Deum.

Bagenhall. We strove against the
papacy from the first,
In William's time, in our first Edward's
time,

And in my master Henry's time ; but
now,

The unity of Universal Church,
Mary would have it ; and this Gardiner
follows ;

The unity of Universal Hell,
Philip would have it ; and this Gardiner
follows !

Lord who hath redeem'd us
 blood, and wash'd us from
 Himself a stainless bride ;
 the Father hath appointed

urch, He by His mercy
 you ! *[A pause.]*
 authority Apostolic
 us, his Legate, by the

Holy Father, Julius,
 Vicegerent upon earth,
 e you and deliver you
 e of you, and all the

ons from all heresy,
 and from all and every

pain accruing thereupon ;
 store you to the bosom
 universal Church.

[Turning to Gardiner.]
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 alier.

ard sobbing. *Cries of*
Amen ! Some of the
embrace one another. All
Ralph Bagenhall pass out
neighbouring chapel, whence
he Te Deum.

We strove against the
 om the first,
 ne, in our first Edward's

ster Henry's time ; but

iversal Church,
 e it ; and this Gardiner

iversal Hell,
 ve it ; and this Gardiner

A Parliament of imitative apes !
 Sheep at the gap which Gardiner takes,
 who not

Believes the Pope, nor any of them
 believe—

These spaniel-Spaniard English of the
 time,

Who rub their fawning noses in the dust,
 For that is Philip's gold-dust, and adore
 This Vicar of their Vicar. Would I had
 been

Born Spaniard ! I had held my head up
 then.

I am ashamed that I am Bagenhall,
 English.

Enter OFFICER.

Officer. Sir Ralph Bagenhall !

Bagenhall. What of that ?

Officer. You were the one sole man in
 either house

Who stood upright when both the houses
 fell.

Bagenhall. The houses fell !

Officer. I mean the houses knelt
 before the Legate.

Bagenhall. Do not scrimp your
 phrase,

But stretch it wider ; say when England
 fell.

Officer. I say you were the one sole
 man who stood.

Bagenhall. I am the one sole man in
 either house,

Perchance in England, loves her like a son.

Officer. Well, you one man, because
 you stood upright,

Her Grace the Queen commands you to
 the Tower.

Bagenhall. As traitor, or as heretic,
 or for what ?

Officer. If any man in any way would
 be

The one man, he shall be so to his cost.

Bagenhall. What ! will she have my
 head ?

Officer. A round fine likelier.

Your pardon. *[Calling to Attendant.]*

By the river to the Tower. *[Exit.]*

SCENE IV.—WHITEHALL. A ROOM
 IN THE PALACE.

MARY, GARDINER, POLE, PAGET,
 BONNER, &c.

Mary. The King and I, my Lords,
 now that all traitors

Against our royal state have lost the heads
 Wherewith they plotted in their treason-
 ous malice,

Have talk'd together, and are wellagreed
 That those old statutes touching Lollard-
 ism

To bring the heretic to the stake, should be
 No longer a dead letter, but requicken'd.

One of the Council. Why, what hath
 fluster'd Gardiner ? how he rubs

His forelock !

Paget. I have changed a word with
 him

In coming, and may change a word again.

Gardiner. Madam, your Highness is
 our sun, the King

And you together our two suns in one ;
 And so the beams of both may shine upon
 us,

The faith that seem'd to droop will feel
 your light,

Lift head, and flourish ; yet not light
 alone,

There must be heat—there must be heat
 enough

To scorch and wither heresy to the root.

For what saith Christ ? 'Compel them
 to come in.'

And what saith Paul ? 'I would they
 were cut off

That trouble you.' Let the dead letter live !
Trace it in fire, that all the louts to whom
Their A B C is darkness, clowns and
grooms

May read it ! so you quash rebellion too,
For heretic and traitor are all one :
Two vipers of one breed—an amphisbœna,
Each enl a sting: Let the dead letter burn !

Paget. Yet there be some disloyal
Catholics,

And many heretics loyal ; heretic throats
Cried no God-bless-her to the Lady Jane,
But shouted in Queen Mary. So there be
Some traitor-heretic, there is axe and cord.
To take the lives of others that are loyal,
And by the churchman's pitiless doom of
fire,

Were but a thankless policy in the crown,
Ay, and against itself ; for there are many.

Mary. If we could burn out heresy,
my Lord Paget,
We reck not tho' we lost this crown of
England—

Ay ! tho' it were ten Englands !

Gardiner. Right, your Grace.
Paget, you are all for this poor life of ours,
And care but little for the life to be.

Paget. I have some time, for curious-
ness, my Lord,
Watch'd children playing at *their* life to
be,

And cruel at it, killing helpless flies ;
Such is our time—all times for aught I
know.

Gardiner. We kill the heretics that
sting the soul—

They, with right reason, flies that prick
the flesh.

Paget. They had not reach'd right
reason ; little children !

They kill'd but for their pleasure and the
power

They felt in killing.

Gardiner. A spice of Satan, ha !
Why, good ! what then ? granted !—we
are fallen creatures ;

Look to your Bible, *Paget* ! we are fallen.

Paget. I am but of the laity, my Lord
Bishop,

And may not read your Bible, yet I found
One day, a wholesome scripture, ' Little
children,

Love one another.'

Gardiner. Did you find a scripture,
' I come not to bring peace but a sword ?'

The sword

Is in her Grace's hand to smite with.
Paget,

You stand up here to fight for heresy,
You are more than guess'd at as a heretic,
And on the steep-up track of the true faith
Your lapses are far seen.

Paget. The faultless *Gardiner* !
Mary. You brawl beyond the ques-

tion ; speak, Lord Legate !

Pole. Indeed, I cannot follow with
your Grace :

Rather would say—the shepherd doth
not kill

The sheep that wander from his flock, but
sends

His careful dog to bring them to the fold.
Look to the Netherlands, wherein have
been

Such holocausts of heresy ! to what end ?
For yet the faith is not established there.

Gardiner. The end's not come.

Pole. No—nor this way
will come,

Seeing there lie two ways to every end,
A better and a worse—the worse is here
To persecute, because to persecute
Makes a faith hated, and is furthermore
No perfect witness of a perfect faith
In him who persecutes : when men are tost
On tides of strange opinion, and not sure

A spice of Satan, ha !
 what then ? granted !—we
 en creatures ;
 Bible, Paget ! we are fallen.
 m but of the laity, my Lord
 read your Bible, yet I found
 wholesome scripture, ' Little
 n,
 ther.'

Did you find a scripture,
 o bring peace but a sword ?'
 word
 ce's hand to smite with.

here to fight for heresy,
 than guess'd at as a heretic,
 ep-up track of the true faith
 e far seen.

The faultless Gardiner !
 a brawl beyond the ques-
 peak, Lord Legate !
 ed, I cannot follow with
 race :

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 wander from his flock, but

g to bring them to the fold.
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The end's not come.

No—nor this way

me,

e two ways to every end,

worse—the worse is here

because to persecute

ated, and is furthermore

ness of a perfect faith

secutes : when men are tost

ange opinion, and not sure

Of their own selves, they are wroth with
 their own selves,
 And thence with others ; then, who lights
 the faggot ?

Not the full faith, no, but the lurking
 doubt,

Old Rome, that first made martyrs in the
 Church,

Trembled for her own gods, for these
 were trembling--

But when did our Rome tremble ?

Paget.

Did she not

In Henry's time and Edward's ?

Pole.

What, my Lord !

The Church on Peter's rock ? never ! I
 have seen

A pine in Italy that cast its shadow
 Athwart a cataract ; firm stood the pine—

The cataract shook the shadow. To my
 mind,

The cataract typed the headlong plunge
 and fall

Of heresy to the pit : the pine was Rome.

You see, my Lords,

It was the shadow of the Church that
 trembled ;

Your church was but the shadow of a
 church,

Wanting the Papal mitre.

Gardiner (muttering). Here be tropes.

Pole. And tropes are good to clothe a
 naked truth,

And make it look more seemly.

Gardiner.

Tropes again !

Pole. You are hard to please. Then

without tropes, my Lord,

An overmuch severeness, I repeat,

When faith is wavering makes the waverer
 pass

Into more settled hatred of the doctrines

Of those who rule, which hatred by-and-by

Involves the ruler (thus there springs to
 light

That Centaur of a monstrous Common-
 weal,

The traitor-heretic) then tho' some may
 quail,

Yet others are that dare the stake and fire,
 And their strong torment bravely borne,

begets

An admiration and an indignation,

And hot desire to imitate ; so the plague

Of schism spreads ; were there but three
 or four

Of these misleaders, yet I would not say

Burn ! and we cannot burn whole towns ;

they are many,

As my Lord Paget says.

Gardiner. Yet my Lord Cardinal—

Pole. I am your Legate ; please you
 let me finish.

Methinks that under our Queen's regimen

We might go softer than with crimson
 rowel

And streaming lash. When Herod—

Henry first

Began to batter at your English Church,

This was the cause, and hence the judg-
 ment on her.

She seethed with such adulteries, and the
 lives

Of many among your churchmen were so
 foul

That heaven wept and earth blush'd. I
 would advise

That we should thoroughly cleanse the
 Church within

Before these bitter statutes be requicken'd.

So after that when she once more is seen

White as the light, the spotless bride of
 Christ,

Like Christ himself on Tabor, possibly

The Lutheran may be won to her again ;

Till when, my Lords, I counsel tolerance.

Gardiner. What, if a mad dog bit
 your hand, my Lord,

Would you not chop the bitten finger off,
Lest your whole body should madden
with the poison?

I would not, were I Queen, tolerate the
heretic,

No, not an hour. The ruler of a land
Is bounden by his power and place to see
His people be not poison'd. Tolerate
them!

Why? do they tolerate you? Nay, many
of them

Would burn—have burnt each other;
call they not

The one true faith, a loathsome idol-
worship?

Beware, Lord Legate, of a heavier crime
Than heresy is itself; beware, I say,
Lest men accuse you of indifference
To all faiths, all religion; for you know
Right well that you yourself have been
supposed

Tainted with Lutheranism in Italy.

Pole (angr'd). But you, my Lord,
beyond all supposition,

In clear and open day were congruent
With that vile Cranmer in the accursed lie
Of good Queen Catherine's divorce—the
spring

Of all those evils that have flow'd upon
us;

For you yourself have truckled to the
tyrant,

And done your best to bastardise our
Queen,

For which God's righteous judgment fell
upon you

In your five years of imprisonment, my
Lord,

Under young Edward. Who so bolster'd
up

The gross King's headship of the Church,
or more

Denied the Holy Father!

Gardiner.

Ha! what! eh?

But you, my Lord, a polish'd gentleman,
A bookman, flying from the heat and
tussle,

You lived among your vines and oranges,
In your soft Italy yonder! You were
sent for,

You were appeal'd to, but you still
preferr'd

Your learned leisure. As for what I did
I suffer'd and repented. You, Lord
Legate

And Cardinal-Deacon, have not now to
learn

That ev'n St. Peter in his time of fear
Denied his Master, ay, and thrice, my
Lord.

Pole. But not for five-and-twenty
years, my Lord.

Gardiner. Ha! good! it seems then
I was summon'd hither

But to be mock'd and baited. Speak,
friend Bonner,

And tell this learned Legate he lacks zeal.
The Church's evil is not as the King's,
Cannot be heal'd by stroking. The mad
bite

Must have the cantery—tell him—and at
once.

What would'st thou do had'st thou his
power, thou

That layest so long in heretic bonds with
me;

Would'st thou not burn and blast them
root and branch?

Bonner. Ay, after you, my Lord.

Gardiner. Nay, God's passion, before
me! speak!

Bonner. I am on fire until I see them
flame.

Gardiner. Ay, the psalm-singing
weavers, cobblers, scum—

But this most noble prince Plantagenet,

Ha! what! eh?
 ord, a polish'd gentleman,
 lying from the heat and
 ng your vines and oranges,
 t Italy yonder! You were
 peal'd to, but you still
 isure. As for what I did
 I repented. You, Lord
 Deacon, have not now to
 eter in his time of fear
 ster, ay, and thrice, my
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 y Lord.
 Ha! good! it seems then
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 k'd and baited. Speak,
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 autery—tell him—and at
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 ng in heretic bonds with
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 branch?
 Ay, after you, my Lord.
 y, God's passion, before
 k!
 a on fire until I see them
 y, the psalm-singing
 obblers, scum—
 ole prince Plantagenet,

Our good Queen's cousin—dallying over seas
 Even when his brother's, nay, his noble mother's,
 Head fell—
Pole. Peace, madman!
 Thou stirrest up a grief thou can'st not fathom.
 Thou Christian Bishop, thou Lord Chancellor
 Of England! no more rein upon thine anger
 Than any child! Thou mak'st me much ashamed
 That I was for a moment wroth at thee.
Mary. I come for counsel and ye give me feuds,
 Like dogs that set to watch their master's gate,
 Fall, when the thief is ev'n within the walls,
 To worrying one another. My Lord Chancellor,
 You have an old trick of offending us;
 And but that you are art and part with us
 In purging heresy, well we might, for this
 Your violence and much roughness to the Legate,
 Have shut you from our counsels.
 Cousin Pole,
 You are fresh from brighter lands.
 Retire with me.
 His Highness and myself (so you allow us)
 Will let you learn in peace and privacy
 What power this cooler sun of England hath
 In breeding godless vermin. And pray Heaven
 That you may see according to our sight.
 Come, cousin.
[Exeunt Queen and Pole, &c.]
Gardiner. Pole has the Plantagenet face,
 But not the force made them our mightiest kings,
 Fine eyes—but melancholy, irresolute—
 A fine beard, Bonner, a very full fine beard.
 But a weak mouth, an indeterminate—ha?
Bonner. Well, a weak mouth, perchance.
Gardiner. And not like thine
 To gorge a heretic whole, roasted or raw.
Bonner. I'd do my best, my Lord;
 but yet the Legate
 Is here as Pope and Master of the Church,
 And if he go not with you—
Gardiner. Tut, Master Bishop,
 Our bashful Legate, saw'st not how he flush'd?
 Touch him upon his old heretical talk,
 He'll burn a diocese to prove his orthodoxy.
 And let him call me truckler. In those times,
 Thou knowest we had to dodge, or duck, or die;
 I kept my head for use of Holy Church;
 And see you, we shall have to dodge again,
 And let the Pope trample our rights, and plunge
 His foreign fist into our island Church
 To plump the leaner pouch of Italy.
 For a time, for a time.
 Why? that these statutes may be put in force,
 And that his fan may thoroughly purge his floor.
Bonner. So then you hold the Pope—
Gardiner. I hold the Pope!
 What do I hold him? what do I hold the Pope?
 Come, come, the morsel stuck—this Cardinal's fault—
 I have gulped it down. I am wholly for the Pope,
 Utterly and altogether for the Pope,
 The Eternal Peter of the changeless chair,
 Crown'd slave of slaves, and mitred king of kings,

God upon earth ! what more ? what would
you have ?
Hence, let's be gone.

Enter USHER.

Usher. Well that you be not gone,
My Lord. The Queen, most wroth at
first with you,
Is now content to grant you full forgive-
ness,
So that you crave full pardon of the
Legate.

I am sent to fetch you.

Gardiner. Doth Pole yield, sir, ha !
Did you hear 'em ? were you by ?

Usher. I cannot tell you,
His bearing is so courtly-delicate ;
And yet methinks he falters : their two
Graces

Do so dear-cousin and royal-cousin him,
So press on him the duty which as Legate
He owes himself, and with such royal
smiles—

Gardiner. Smiles that burn men.
Bonner, it will be carried.

He falters, ha ? 'fore God, we change and
change ;

Men now are bow'd and old, the doctors
tell you,

At three-score years ; then if we change
at all

We needs must do it quickly ; it is an age
Of brief life, and brief purpose, and brief
patience,

As I have shown to-day. I am sorry for it
If Pole be like to turn. Our old friend
Cranmer,

Your more especial love, hath turn'd so
often,

He knows not where he stands, which, if
this pass,

We two shall have to teach him ; let 'em
look to it,

Cranmer and Hooper, Ridley and Latimer,
Rogers and Ferrar, for their time is come,
Their hour is hard at hand, their 'dies
Ira,'

Their 'dies Illa,' which will test their sect.
I feel it but a duty—you will find in it
Pleasure as well as duty, worthy Bonner,—
To test their sect. Sir, I attend the Queen
To crave most humble pardon—of her
most

Royal, Infallible, Papal Legate-cousin.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE V.—WOODSTOCK.

ELIZABETH, LADY IN WAITING.

Elizabeth. So they have sent poor
Courtney over sea.

Lady. And banish'd us to Woodstock,
and the fields.

The colours of our Queen are green and
white,

These fields are only green, they make
me gape.

Elizabeth. There's whitethorn, girl.

Lady. Ay, for an hour in May.

But court is always May, buds out in
masques,

Breaks into feather'd merriments, and
flowers

In silken pageants. Why do they keep
us here ?

Why still suspect your Grace ?

Elizabeth. Hard upon both.

[Writes on the window with a diamond.]

Much suspected, of me

Nothing proven can be.

Quoth Elizabeth, prisoner.

Lady. What hath your Highness
written ?

Elizabeth. A true rhyme.

Lady. Cut with a diamond ; so to last
like truth.

Elizabeth. Ay, if truth last.

Lady. But truth, they say, will out,
So it must last. It is not like a word,
That comes and goes in uttering.

Elizabeth. Truth, a word !
The very Truth and very Word are one.
But truth of story, which I glanced at, girl,
Is like a word that comes from olden days,
And passes thro' the peoples: every tongue
Alters it passing, till it spells and speaks
Quite other than at first.

Lady. I do not follow.

Elizabeth. How many names in the
long sweep of time
That so foreshortens greatness, may but
hang

On the chance mention of some fool that
once

Brake bread with us, perhaps: and my
poor chronicle

Is but of glass. Sir Henry Bedingsfield
May split it for a spite.

Lady. God grant it last,
And witness to your Grace's innocence,
Till doomsday melt it.

Elizabeth. Or a second fire,
Like that which lately crackled underfoot
And in this very chamber, fuse the glass,
And char us back again into the dust
We spring from. Never peacock against
rain

Scream'd as you did for water.

Lady. And I got it.
I woke Sir Henry—and he's true to you—
I read his honest horror in his eyes.

Elizabeth. Or true to you?

Lady. Sir Henry Bedingsfield !
I will have no man true to me, your Grace,
But one that pares his nails; to me? the
clown !

Elizabeth. Out, girl! you wrong a
noble gentleman.

Lady. For, like his cloak, his man-
ners want the nap

And gloss of court; but of this fire he says,
Nay swears, it was no wicked wilfulness,
Only a natural chance.

Elizabeth. A chance—perchance
One of those wicked wilfuls that men
make,

Nor shame to call it nature. Nay, I know
They hunt my blood. Save for my daily
range

Among the pleasant fields of Holy Writ
I might despair. But there hath some
one come ;

The house is all in movement. Hence,
and see. [*Exit Lady.*]

Milkmaid (singing without).

Shame upon you, Robin,

Shame upon you now !

Kiss me would you? with my hands

Milking the cow?

Daisies grow again,

Kinecups blow again,

And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow.

Robin came behind me,

Kiss'd me well I vow ;

Cuff him could I? with my hands

Milking the cow?

Swallows fly again,

Cuckoos cry again,

And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow.

Come, Robin, Robin,

Come and kiss me now ;

Help it can I? with my hands

Milking the cow?

Ringdoves coo again,

All things woo again.

Come behind and kiss me milking the cow !

Elizabeth. Right honest and red-
cheek'd ; Robin was violent,

And she was crafty—a sweet violence,
And a sweet craft. I would I were a
milkmaid,

To sing, love, marry, churn, brew, bake,
and die,

Then have my simple headstone by the
church,

And all things lived and ended honestly.

I could not if I would. I am Harry's daughter:
 Gardiner would have my head. They are not sweet,
 The violence and the craft that do divide
 The world of nature; what is weak must lie;
 The lion needs but roar to guard his young;
 The lapwing lies, says 'here' when they are there.
 Threaten the child; 'I'll scourge you if you did it.'
 What weapon hath the child, save his soft tongue,
 To say 'I did not?' and my rod's the block.
 I never lay my head upon the pillow
 But that I think, 'Wilt thou lie there to-morrow?'
 How oft the falling axe, that never fell,
 Hath shock'd me back into the daylight truth
 That it may fall to-day! Those damp, black, dead
 Nights in the Tower; dead—with the fear of death
 Too dead ev'n for a death-watch! Toll of a bell,
 Stroke of a clock, the scurrying of a rat
 Affrighted me, and then delighted me,
 For there was life—And there was life in death—
 The little murder'd princes, in a pale light,
 Rose hand in hand, and whisper'd, 'come away!'
 The civil wars are gone for evermore:
 Thou last of all the Tudors, come away!
 With us is peace!' The last? It was a dream;
 I must not dream, not wink, but watch.
 She has gone,
 Maid Marian to her Robin—by-and-by

Both happy! a fox may filch a hen by night,
 And make a morning outcry in the yard;
 But there's no Renard here to 'catch her tripping.'
 Catch me who can; yet, sometime I have wish'd
 That I were caught, and kill'd away at once
 Out of the flutter. The gray rogue, Gardiner,
 Went on his knees, and pray'd me to confess
 In Wyatt's business, and to cast myself
 Upon the good Queen's mercy; ay, when, my Lord?
 God save the Queen! My jailor—
Enter SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD.
Bedingfield. One, whose bolts,
 That jail you from free life, bar you from death.
 There haunt some Papist ruffians here—about
 Would murder you.
Elizabeth. I thank you heartily, sir,
 But I am royal, tho' your prisoner,
 And God hath blest or cursed me with a nose—
 Your boots are from the horses.
Bedingfield. Ay, my Lady.
 When next there comes a missive from the Queen
 It shall be all my study for one hour
 To rose and lavender my horsiness,
 Before I dare to glance upon your Grace.
Elizabeth. A missive from the Queen:
 last time she wrote,
 I had like to have lost my life: it takes my breath:
 O God, sir, do you look upon your boots,
 Are you so small a man? Help me: what think you,
 Is it life or death?

fox may filch a hen by night,
 morning outcry in the yard;
 Renard here to 'catch her
 can; yet, sometime I have
 ought, and kill'd away at
 utter. The gray rogue,
 nces, and pray'd me to
 ness, and to cast myself
 Queen's mercy; ay, when,
 ?
 een! My jailor—
 HENRY BEDINGFIELD.
 One, whose bolts,
 m free life, bar you from
 ne Papist ruffians here-
 ou.
 I thank you heartily, sir,
 ho' your prisoner,
 best or cursed me with a
 om the horses.
 Ay, my Lady.
 comes a missive from
 study for one hour
 nder my horsiness,
 lance upon your Grace.
 missive from the Queen:
 ne wrote,
 lost my life: it takes
 a look upon your boots,
 a man? Help me:
 you,

Bedingfield. I thought not on my
 boots;
 The devil take all boots were ever made
 Since man went barefoot. See, I lay it
 here,
 For I will come no nearer to your Grace;
[Laying down the letter.]
 And, whether it bring you bitter news or
 sweet,
 And God hath given your Grace a nose,
 or not,
 I'll help you, if I may.
Elizabeth. Your pardon, then;
 It is the heat and narrowness of the cage
 That makes the captive testy; with free
 wing
 The world were all one Araby. Leave
 me now,
 Will you, companion to myself, sir?
Bedingfield. Will I?
 With most exceeding willingness, I will;
 You know I never come till I be call'd.
[Exit.]
Elizabeth. It lies there folded: is there
 venom in it?
 A snake—and if I touch it, it may sting.
 Come, come, the worst!
 Best wisdom is to know the worst at once.
[Re-enters:]
 'It is the King's wish, that you
 should wed Prince Philibert of Savoy.
 You are to come to Court on the instant;
 and think of this in your coming.
 'MARY THE QUEEN.'
 Think! I have many thoughts;
 I think there may be birdlime here for me;
 I think they fain would have me from the
 realm;
 I think the Queen may never bear a
 child;
 I think that I may be some time the
 Queen,

Then, Queen indeed: no foreign prince
 or priest
 Should fill my throne, myself upon the
 steps.
 I think I will not marry anyone,
 Specially not this landless Philibert
 Of Savoy; but, if Philip menace me,
 I think that I will play with Philibert,—
 As once the Holy Father did with mine,
 Before my father married my good
 mother,—
 For fear of Spain.
Enter LADY.
Lady. O Lord! your Grace, your
 Grace,
 I feel so happy: it seems that we shall
 fly
 These bald, blank fields, and dance into
 the sun
 That shines on princes.
Elizabeth. Yet, a moment since,
 I wish'd myself the milkmaid singing
 here,
 To kiss and cuff among the birds and
 flowers—
 A right rough life and healthful.
Lady. But the wench
 Hath her own troubles; she is weeping
 now;
 For the wrong Robin took her at her
 word.
 Then the cow kick'd, and all her milk
 was spilt.
 Your Highness such a milkmaid?
Elizabeth. I had kept
 My Robins and my cows in sweeter
 order
 Had I been such.
Lady (slyly). And had your Grace a
 Robin?
Elizabeth. Come, come, you are chill
 here; you want the sun

That shines at court ; make ready for the journey.

Pray God, we 'scape the sunstroke.
Ready at once. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VI.—LONDON. A ROOM IN
THE PALACE.

LORD PETRE and LORD WILLIAM
HOWARD.

Petre. You cannot see the Queen.

Renard denied her,
Ev'n now to me.

Howard. Their Flemish go-between
And all-in-all. I came to thank her
Majesty

For freeing my friend Bagenhall from the
Tower ;

A grace to me ! Mercy, that herb-of-grace,
Flowers now but seldom.

Petre. Only now perhaps.
Because the Queen hath been three days
in tears

For Philip's going—like the wild hedge-
rose

Of a soft winter, possible, not probable,
However you have prov'n it.

Howard. I must see her.

Enter RENARD.

Renard. My Lords, you cannot see
her Majesty.

Howard. Why then the King ! for I
would have him bring it
Home to the leisure wisdom of his Queen,
Before he go, that since these statutes past,
Gardiner out-Gardiners Gardiner in his
heat,

Bonner cannot out-Bonner his own self—
Beast !—but they play with fire as chil-
dren do,

And burn the house. I know that these
are breeding

A fierce resolve and fixt heart-hate in men
Against the King, the Queen, the Holy
Father,

The faith itself. Can I not see him ?

Renard.

Not now.

And in all this, my Lord, her Majesty
Is flint of flint, you may strike fire from
her,

Not hope to melt her. I will give your
message.

[Exeunt Petre and Howard.]

Enter PHILIP (musing).

Philip. She will not have Prince
Philibert of Savoy,

I talk'd with her in vain—says she will
live

And die true maid—a goodly creature too.
Would *she* had been the Queen ! yet she
must have him ;

She troubles England : that she breathes
in England

Is life and lungs to every rebel birth
That passes out of embryo.

Simon Renard !—

This Howard, whom they fear, what was
he saying ?

Renard. What your imperial father
said, my liege,

To deal with heresy gentlier. Gardiner
burns,

And Bonner burns ; and it would seem
this people

Care more for our brief life in their wet
land,

Than yours in happier Spain. I told my
Lord

He should not vex her Highness ; she
would say

These are the means God works with,
that His church

May flourish.

Philip. Ay, sir, but in statesmanship

and fixt heart-hate in men
g, the Queen, the Holy

Can I not see him?
Not now,
my Lord, her Majesty
you may strike fire from

t her. I will give your

cent Petre and Howard.

PHILIP (*musings*).

will not have Prince
of Savoy,
in vain—says she will

l—a goodly creature too,
een the Queen! yet she
him;

land: that she breathes

to every rebel birth
of embryo.

Simon Renard!—
hom they fear, what was

at your imperial father
iege,

esy gentlier. Gardiner

ns; and it would seem

r brief life in their wet

ppier Spain. I told my

rex her Highness; she

means God works with,
church

ir, but in statesmanship

To strike too soon is oft to miss the blow.
Thou knowest I bad my chaplain, Castro,
preach

Against these burnings.

Renard. And the Emperor
Approved you, and when last he wrote,
declared

His comfort in your Grace that you were
bland

And affable to men of all estates,
In hope to charm them from their hate of
Spain.

Philip. In hope to crush all heresy
under Spain.

But, Renard, I am sicker staying here
Than any sea could make me passing hence.
Tho' I be ever deadly sick at sea.

So sick am I with biding for this child.
Is it the fashion in this clime for women
To go twelve months in bearing of a
child?

The nurses yawn'd, the cradle gap'd,
they led

Processions, chanted litanies, clash'd their
bells,

Shot off their lying cannon, and her
priests

Have preach'd, the fools, of this fair
prince to come.

Till, by St. James, I find myself the fool.
Why do you lift your eyebrow at me thus?

Renard. I never saw your Highness
moved till now.

Philip. So weary am I of this wet
land of theirs,

And every soul of man that breathes
therein.

Renard. My liege, we must not drop
the mask before

The masquerade is over—

Philip. —Have I dropt it?
I have but shown a loathing face to you,
Who knew it from the first.

Enter MARY.

Mary (*aside*). With Renard. Still
Parleying with Renard, all the day with
Renard,

And scarce a greeting all the day for me—
And goes to-morrow. [*Exit Mary.*]

Philip (*to Renard, who advances to him*). Well, sir, is there more?

Renard (*who has perceived the Queen*).
May Simon Renard speak a single
word?

Philip. Ay.

Renard. And be forgiven for it?

Philip. Simon Renard
Knows me too well to speak a single word
That could not be forgiven.

Renard. Well, my liege,
Your Grace hath a most chaste and loving
wife.

Philip. Why not? The Queen of
Philip should be chaste.

Renard. Ay, but, my Lord, you
know what Virgil sings,
Woman is various and most mutable.

Philip. She play the harlot! never.

Renard. No, sire, no,
Not dream'd of by the rabidest gospeller.
There was a paper thrown into the palace,
'The King hath wearied of his barren
bride.'

She came upon it, read it, and then rent it,
With all the rage of one who hates a
truth

He cannot but allow. Sire, I would
have you—

What should I say, I cannot pick my
words—

Be somewhat less—majestic to your
Queen.

Philip. Am I to change my manners,
Simon Renard,
Because these islanders are brutal beasts?
Or would you have me turn a sonneteer,

And warble those brief-sighted eyes of hers?

Renard. Brief-sighted tho' they be,
I have seen them, sire,
When you perchance were trifling royally
With some fair dame of court, suddenly
fill

With such fierce fire—had it been fire
indeed

It would have burnt both speakers.

Philip. Ay, and then?

Renard. Sire, might it not be policy
in some matter
Of small importance now and then to
cede

A point to her demand?

Philip. Well, I am going.

Renard. For should her love when
you are gone, my liege,
Witness these papers, there will not be
wanting
Those that will urge her injury—should
her love—

And I have known such women more
than one—

Veer to the counterpoint, and jealousy
Hath in it an alchemic force to fuse
Almost into one metal love and hate,—
And she impress her wrongs upon her
Council,

And these again upon her Parliament—
We are not loved here, and would be
then perhaps

Not so well holpen in our wars with
France,

As else we might be—here she comes.

Enter MARY.

Mary.

O Philip!

Nay, must you go indeed?

Philip.

Madam, I must.

Mary. The parting of a husband and
a wife

Is like the cleaving of a heart; one half
Will flutter here, one there.

Philip.

You say true, Madam.

Mary. The Holy Virgin will not have
me yet
Lose the sweet hope that I may bear a
prince.

If such a prince were born and you not
here!

Philip. I should be here if such a
prince were born.

Mary. But must you go?

Philip. Madam, you know my father,
Retiring into cloistral solitude
To yield the remnant of his years to
heaven,

Will shift the yoke and weight of all the
world

From off his neck to mine. We meet at
Brussels.

But since mine absence will not be for long,
Your Majesty shall go to Dover with me,
And wait my coming back.

Mary.

To Dover? no,
I am too feeble. I will go to Greenwich,
So you will have me with you; and there
watch

All that is gracious in the breath of heaven
Draw with your sails from our poor land,
and pass

And leave me, Philip, with my prayers
for you.

Philip. And doubtless I shall profit
by your prayers.

Mary. Methinks that would you tarry
one day more

(The news was sudden) I could mould
myself

To bear your going better; will you do it?

Philip. Madam, a day may sink or
save a realm.

Mary. A day may save a heart from
breaking too.

g of a heart ; one half
one there.
You say true, Madam.
oly Virgin will not have
ope that I may bear a
were born and you not
uld be here if such a
e born.
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Philip, with my prayers

doubtless I shall profit
ayers.

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g better ; will you do it?
n, a day may sink or
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may save a heart from
oo.

Philip. Well, Simon Renard, shall we
stop a day?

Renard. Your Grace's business will
not suffer, sire,

For one day more, so far as I can tell.

Philip. Then one day more to please
her Majesty.

Mary. The sunshine sweeps across
my life again.

O ! I knew you felt this parting, Philip,
As I do !

Philip. By St. James I do protest,
Upon the faith and honour of a Spaniard,
I am vastly grieved to leave your Majesty.
Simon, is supper ready?

Renard. Ay, my liege,
I saw the covers laying.

Philip. Let us have it. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY, CARDINAL POLE.

Mary. What have you there?

Pole. So please your Majesty,
A long petition from the foreign exiles
To spare the life of Cranmer. Bishop

Thirlby,
And my Lord Paget and Lord William
Howard,

Crave, in the same cause, hearing of your
Grace.

Hath he not written himself—infatuated—
To sue you for his life?

Mary. His life? Oh, no ;
Not sued for that—he knows it were in
vain.

But so much of the anti-papal leaven
Works in him yet, he hath pray'd me not
to sully

Mine own prerogative, and degrade the
realm

By seeking justice at a stranger's hand
Against my natural subject. King and
Queen,

To whom he owes his loyalty after God,
Shall these accuse him to a foreign prince?
Death would not grieve him more. I
cannot be

True to this realm of England and the
Pope

Together, says the heretic.

Pole. And there errs ;
As he hath ever err'd thro' vanity.

A secular kingdom is but as the body
Lacking a soul ; and in itself a beast.
The Holy Father in a secular kingdom
Is as the soul descending out of heaven
Into a body generate.

Mary. Write to him, then.

Pole. I will.

Mary. And sharply, Pole.

Pole. Here come the Cranmerites !

*Enter THIRLBY, LORD PAGET, LORD
WILLIAM HOWARD.*

Howard. Health to your Grace !
Good morrow, my Lord Cardinal ;

We make our humble prayer unto your
Grace

That Cranmer may withdraw to foreign
parts,

Or into private life within the realm.

In several bills and declarations, Madam,
He hath recanted all his heresies.

Paget. Ay, ay ; if Bonner have not
forged the bills. [*Aside.*]

Mary. Did not More die, and Fisher?
he must burn.

Howard. He hath recanted, Madam.

Mary. The better for him.
He burns in Purgatory, not in Hell.

Howard. Ay, ay, your Grace ; but it
was never seen

That any one recanting thus at full,

As Cranmer hath, came to the fire on earth.

Mary. It will be seen now, then.

Thirdly. O Madam, Madam !

I thus implore you, low upon my knees,
To reach the hand of mercy to my friend.
I have err'd with him ; with him I have
recanted.

What human reason is there why my
friend

Should meet with lesser mercy than my-
self ?

Mary. My Lord of Ely, this. After
a riot

We hang the leaders, let their following
go.

Cranmer is head and father of these here-
sies,

New learning as they call it ; yea, may
God

Forget me at most need when I forget
Her foul divorce—my sainted mother—
No !—

Howard. Ay, ay, but mighty doctors
doubted there.

The Pope himself waver'd ; and more
than one

Row'd in that galley—Gardiner to wit,
Whom truly I deny not to have been
Your faithful friend and trusty councillor.
Hath not your Highness ever read his
book,

His tractate upon True Obedience,
Writ by himself and Bonner ?

Mary. I will take
Such order with all bad, heretical books
That none shall hold them in his house
and live,

Henceforward. No, my Lord.

Howard. Then never read it.
The truth is here. Your father was a man
Of such colossal kinghood, yet so cour-
teous,

Except when wroth, you scarce could
meet his eye

And hold your own ; and were he wroth
indeed,

You held it less, or not at all. I say,
Your father had a will that beat men
down ;

Your father had a brain that beat men
down—

Fole. Not me, my Lord.

Howard. No, for you were not here ;
You sit upon this fallen Cranmer's throne ;
And it would more become you, my Lord
Legate,

To join a voice, so potent with her High-
ness,

To ours in plea for Cranmer than to stand
On naked self-assertion.

Mary. All your voices
Are waves on flint. The heretic must
burn.

Howard. Yet once he saved your
Majesty's own life ;
Stood out against the King in your behalf,
At his own peril.

Mary. I know not if he did ;
And if he did I care not, my Lord Howard.
My life is not so happy, no such boon,
That I should spare to take a heretic
priest's,
Who saved it or not saved. Why do you
vex me ?

Paget. Yet to save Cranmer were to
serve the Church,

Your Majesty's I mean ; he is effaced,
Self-blotted out ; so wounded in his
honour,

He can but creep down into some dark
hole

Like a hurt beast, and hide himself and
die ;

But if you burn him,—well, your High-
ness knows

roth, you scarce could
ye
u; and were he wroth
or not at all. I say,
a will that beat men
a brain that beat men

my Lord.
for you were not here;
allen Cranmer's throne;
e become you, my Lord

o potent with her High-
r Cranmer than to stand
ertion.

All your voices
at. The heretic must
once he saved your
wn life;
he King in your behalf,

I know not if he did;
not, my Lord Howard.
appy, no such boon,
are to take a heretic

ot saved. Why do you

ave Cranmer were to
urch,
mean; he is effaced,
so wounded in his

down into some dark

and hide himself and

un,—well, your High-

The saying, 'Martyr's blood—seed of
the Church.'

Mary. Of the true Church; but his is
none, nor will be.

You are too politic for me, my Lord Paget.
And if he have to live so loath'd a life,
It were more merciful to burn him now.

Thirby. O yet relent. O, Madam,
if you knew him

As I do, ever gentle, and so gracious,
With all his learning—

Mary. Yet a heretic still.
His learning makes his burning the more
just.

Thirby. So worship't of all those that
came across him;

The stranger at his hearth, and all his
house—

Mary. His children and his concubine,
belike.

Thirby. To do him any wrong was to
beget

A kindness from him, for his heart was
rich,

Of such fine mould, that if you sow'd
therein

The seed of Hate, it blossom'd Charity.

Pole. 'After his kind it costs him
nothing,' there's

An old world English adage to the point.
These are but natural graces, my good

Bishop,
Which in the Catholic garden are as

flowers,

But on the heretic dunghill only weeds.

Howard. Such weeds make dunghills
gracious.

Mary. Enough, my Lords.
It is God's will, the Holy Father's will,
And Philip's will, and mine, that he should
burn.

He is pronounced anathema.

Howard. Farewell, Madam,

God grant you ampler mercy at your call
Than you have shown to Cranmer.

[*Exeunt* Lords.

Pole. After this,

Your Grace will hardly care to overlook
This same petition of the foreign exiles
For Cranmer's life.

Mary. Make out the writ to-night.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—OXFORD. CRANMER IN
PRISON.

Cranmer. Last night, I dream'd the
faggots were alight,
And that myself was fasten'd to the stake,
And found it all a visionary flame,
Cool as the light in old decaying wood;
And then King Harry look'd from out a
cloud,
And bad me have good courage; and I
heard

An angel cry 'There is more joy in
Heaven,'—

And after that, the trumpet of the dead.

[*Trumpets without.*

Why, there are trumpets blowing now;
what is it?

Enter FATHER COLE.

Cole. Cranmer, I come to question
you again;

Have you remain'd in the true Catholic
faith

I left you in?

Cranmer. In the true Catholic faith,
By Heaven's grace, I am more and more
confirm'd.

Why are the trumpets blowing, Father
Cole?

Cole. Cranmer, it is decided by the
Council

That you to-day should read your recan-
tation

Before the people in St. Mary's Church.
And there be many heretics in the town,
Who loathe you for your late return to
Rome,

And might assail you passing through the
street,

And tear you piecemeal : so you have a
guard.

Cranmer. Or seek to rescue me. I
thank the Council.

Cole. Do you lack any money?

Cranmer. Nay, why should I?
The prison fare is good enough for me.

Cole. Ay, but to give the poor.

Cranmer. Hand it me, then!
I thank you.

Cole. For a little space, farewell;
Until I see you in St. Mary's Church.

[Exit Cole.]

Cranmer. It is against all precedent
to burn
One who recants ; they mean to pardon
me.

To give the poor—they give the poor who
die.

Well, burn me or not burn me I am
fixt ;

It is but a communion, not a mass :

A holy supper, not a sacrifice ;

No man can make his Maker—Villa
Garcia.

Enter VILLA GARCIA.

Villa Garcia. Pray you write out this
paper for me, Cranmer.

Cranmer. Have I not writ enough to
satisfy you?

Villa Garcia. It is the last.

Cranmer. Give it me, then.

[He writes.]

Villa Garcia.

Now sign.

Cranmer. I have sign'd enough, and
I will sign no more.

Villa Garcia. It is no more than what
you have sign'd already,
The public form thereof.

Cranmer. It may be so ;
I sign it with my presence, if I read it.

Villa Garcia. But this is idle of you.
Well, sir, well,

You are to beg the people to pray for you ;
Exhort them to a pure and virtuous life ;
Declare the Queen's right to the throne ;
confess

Your faith before all hearers ; and retract
That Eucharistic doctrine in your book.
Will you not sign it now?

Cranmer. No, Villa Garcia,
I sign no more. Will they have mercy
on me?

Villa Garcia. Have you good hopes
of mercy ! So, farewell. [Exit.]

Cranmer. Good hopes, not theirs,
have I that I am fixt,
Fixt beyond fall ; however, in strange
hours,

After the long brain-dazing colloquies,
And thousand-times recurring argument
Of those two friars ever in my prison,
When left alone in my despondency,
Without a friend, a book, my faith would
seem

Dead or half-drown'd, or else swam
heavily

Against the huge corruptions of the
Church,

Monsters of mistradition, old enough
To scare me into dreaming, ' what am I,
Cranmer, against whole ages ? ' was it so,
Or am I slandering my most inward friend,
To veil the fault of my most outward foe—
The soft and tremulous coward in the
flesh ?

O higher, holier, earlier, purer church,
I have found thee and not leave thee any
more.

It is no more than what
 you'd already,
 ereof.

It may be so ;
 presence, if I read it.
 But this is idle of you.
 Well,

people to pray for you ;
 pure and virtuous life ;
 s right to the throne ;

I hearers ; and retract
 doctrine in your book.
 now ?

No, Villa Garcia,
 Will they have mercy

Have you good hopes
 So, farewell. [*Exit.*
 hopes, not theirs,
 am fixt,
 however, in strange

-dazing colloquies,
 recurring argument
 ever in my prison,
 ny despondency,
 book, my faith would

n'd, or else swam

corruptions of the

tion, old enough
 naming, 'what am I,
 sole ages?' was it so,
 y most inward friend,
 y most outward foe—
 ous coward in the

dier, purer church,
 d not leave thee any

It is but a communion, not a mass—
 No sacrifice, but a life-giving feast !

(*Writes.*) So, so ; this will I say—thus
 will I pray. [*Puts up the paper.*

Enter BONNER.

Bonner. Good day, old friend ; what,
 you look somewhat worn ;

And yet it is a day to test your health
 Ev'n at the best : I scarce have spoken
 with you

Since when ?—your degradation. At
 your trial

Never stood up a bolder man than you ;
 You would not cap the Pope's commis-
 sioner—

Your learning, and your stoutness, and
 your heresy,

Dumbfounded half of us. So, after that,
 We had to dis-archbishop and unlord,
 And make you simple Cranmer once
 again.

The common barber clipt your hair, and I
 Scraped from your finger-points the holy
 oil ;

And worse than all, you had to kneel to
 me ;

Which was not pleasant for you, Master
 Cranmer.

Now you, that would not recognise the
 Pope,

And you, that would not own the Real
 Presence,

I have found a real presence in the stake,
 Which frights you back into the ancient
 faith ;

And so you have recanted to the Pope.

How are the mighty fallen, Master
 Cranmer !

Cranmer. You have been more fierce
 against the Pope than I ;

But why sling back the stone he strikes me
 with ?

[*Aside.*

O Bonner, if I ever did you kindness—
 Power hath been given you to try faith by
 fire—

Pray you, remembering how yourself have
 changed,

Be somewhat pitiful, after I have gone,
 To the poor flock—to women and to
 children—

That when I was archbishop held with me.

Bonner. Ay—gentle as they call you
 —live or die !

Pitiful to this pitiful heresy ?

I must obey the Queen and Council, man.

Win thro' this day with honour to your-
 self,

And I'll say something for you—so—
 good-bye. [*Exit.*

Cranmer. This hard coarse man of old
 hath crouch'd to me

Till I myself was half ashamed for him,

Enter THIRLBY.

Weep not, good Thirlby.

Thirlby. Oh, my Lord, my Lord !
 My heart is no such block as Bonner's is :
 Who would not weep ?

Cranmer. Why do you so my-lord me,
 Who am disgraced ?

Thirlby. On earth ; but saved in
 heaven

By your recanting.

Cranmer. Will they burn me,
 Thirlby ?

Thirlby. Alas, they will ; these burn-
 ings will not help

The purpose of the faith ; but my poor
 voice

Against them is a whisper to the roar
 Of a spring-tide.

Cranmer. And they will surely
 burn me ?

Thirlby. Ay ; and besides, will have
 you in the church

Q Q

Repeat your recantation in the ears
Of all men, to the saving of their souls,
Before your execution. May God help
you

Thro' that hard hour!

Cranmer. And may God bless you,
Thirlby!

Well, they shall hear my recantation there.

[*Exit Thirlby.*]

Disgraced, dishonour'd!—not by them,
indeed,

By mine own self—by mine own hand!
O thin-skinn'd hand and jutting veins,
'twas you

That sign'd the burning of poor Joan of
Kent;

But then she was a witch. You have
written much,

But you were never raised to plead for
Frith,

Whose dogmas I have reach'd: he was
deliver'd

To the secular arm to burn; and there
was Lambert;

Who can foresee himself? truly these
burnings,

As Thirlby says, are profitless to the
burners,

And help the other side. You shall burn
too,

Burn first when I am burnt.

Fire—inch by inch to die in agony!
Latimer,

Had a brief end—not Ridley. Hooper
burn'd

Three-quarters of an hour. Will my
faggots

Be wet as his were? It is a day of
rain.

I will not muse upon it.

My fancy takes the burner's part, and
makes

The fire seem even crueller than it is.

No, I not doubt that God will give me
strength,

Albeit I have denied him.

Enter SOTO and VILLA GARCIA.

Villa Garcia. We are ready
To take you to St. Mary's, Master
Cranmer.

Cranmer. And I: lead on; ye loose
me from my bonds. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

*COLE in the Pulpit, LORD WILLIAMS
OF THAME presiding. LORD WILLIAM
HOWARD, LORD PAGET, and others.
CRANMER enters between SOTO and
VILLA GARCIA, and the whole Choir
strike up 'Nunc Dimittis.' CRANMER
is set upon a Scaffold before the people.*

Cole. Behold him—

[*A pause: people in the foreground.*
People. Oh, unhappy sight!

First Protestant. See how the tears
run down his fatherly face.

Second Protestant. James, didst thou
ever see a carrion crow

Stand watching a sick beast before he
dies?

First Protestant. Him perch'd up
there? I wish some thunderbolt
Would make this Cole a cinder, pulpit
and all.

Cole. Behold him, brethren: he hath
cause to weep!—

So have we all: weep with him if ye will,
Yet—

It is expedient for one man to die,
Yea, for the people, lest the people die.
Yet wherefore should he die that hath
return'd

To the one Catholic Universal Church,
Repentant of his errors?

t that God will give me

enied him.

and VILLA GARCIA.

We are ready
to St. Mary's, Master

and I : lead on ; ye loose
my bonds, [Exeunt.

—ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

Pulpit, LORD WILLIAMS
residing, LORD WILLIAM
ORD PAGET, and others.
aters between SOTO and
IA, and the whole Choir
ne Dimittis.' CRANMER
Scaffold before the people.

I him—

people in the foreground.
unhappy sight !

ant. See how the tears
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stant. James, didst thou
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I wish some thunderbolt
his Cole a cinder, pulpit

d him, brethren : he hath
weep !—

weep with him if ye will,

for one man to die,
ople, lest the people die.
should he die that hath

holic Universal Church,
is errors ?

Protestant murmurs. Ay, tell us that.

Cole. Those of the wrong side will
despise the man,

Deeming him one that thro' the fear of
death

Gave up his cause, except he seal his faith
In sight of all with flaming martyrdom.

Cranmer. Ay.

Cole. Ye hear him, and albeit there
may seem

According to the canons pardon due

To him that so repents, yet are there
causes

Wherefore our Queen and Council at this
time

Adjudge him to the death. He hath been
a traitor,

A shaker and confounder of the realm ;

And when the King's divorce was sued at
Rome,

He here, this heretic metropolitan,

As if he had been the Holy Father, sat

And judg'd it. Did I call him heretic ?

A huge heresiarch ! never was it known

That any man so writing, preaching so,

So poisoning the Church, so long con-
tinuing,

Hath found his pardon ; therefore he must
die,

For warning and example.

Other reasons

There be for this man's ending, which
our Queen

And Council at this present deem it not
Expedient to be known.

Protestant murmurs. I warrant you.

Cole. Take therefore, all, example by
this man,

For if our Holy Queen not pardon him,
Much less shall others in like cause

escape,
That all of you, the highest as the

lowest,

May learn there is no power against the
Lord.

There stands a man, once of so high
degree,

Chief prelate of our Church, archbishop,
first

In Council, see, I person in the realm,
Friend for so long time of a mighty King ;

And now ye see downfallen and debased
From councillor to caitiff—fallen so low,

The leprous flutterings of the byway,
scum

And offal of the city would not change
Estates with him ; in brief, so miserable,

There is no hope of better left for him,
No place for worse.

Yet, Cranmer, be thou glad.
This is the work of God. He is glorified

In thy conversion : lo ! thou art reclaim'd ;
He brings thee home : nor fear but that

to-day
Thou shalt receive the penitent thief's

award,
And be with Christ the Lord in Paradise.

Remember how God made the fierce fire
seem

To those three children like a pleasant
dew.

Remember, too,
The triumph of St. Andrew on his cross,

The patience of St. Lawrence in the fire.
Thus, if thou call on God and all the

saints,
God will beat down the fury of the flame,

Or give thee saintly strength to undergo.
And for thy soul shall masses here be sung

By every priest in Oxford. Pray for him.
Cranmer. Ay, one and all, dear

brothers, pray for me ;
Pray with one breath, one heart, one soul

for me.
Cole. And now, lest anyone among

you doubt

The man's conversion and remorse of heart,
 Yourselves shall hear him speak. Speak,
 Master Cranmer,
 Fulfil your promise made me, and proclaim
 Your true undoubted faith, that all may hear.

Cranmer. And that I will. O God,
 Father of Heaven !
 O Son of God, Redeemer of the world !
 O Holy Ghost ! proceeding from them
 both,
 Three persons and one God, have mercy
 on me,
 Most miserable sinner, wretched man.
 I have offended against heaven and earth
 More grievously than any tongue can tell.
 Then whither should I flee for any help ?
 I am ashamed to lift my eyes to heaven,
 And I can find no refuge upon earth.
 Shall I despair then ?—God forbid ! O
 God,
 For thou art merciful, refusing none
 That come to Thee for succour, unto Thee,
 Therefore, I come ; humble myself to
 Thee ;
 Saying, O Lord God, although my sins
 be great,
 For thy great mercy have mercy ! O
 God the Son,
 Not for slight faults alone, when thou
 becamest
 Man in the Flesh, was the great mystery
 wrought ;
 O God the Father, not for little sins
 Didst thou yield up thy Son to human
 death ;
 But for the greatest sin that can be sinn'd,
 Yea, even such as mine, incalculable,
 Unpardonable,—sin against the light,
 The truth of God, which I had proven
 and known.

Thy mercy must be greater than all sin.
 Forgive me, Father, for no merit of mine,
 But that Thy name by man be glorified.
 And Thy most blessed Son's, who died
 for man.
 Good people, every man at time of
 death
 Would fain set forth some saying that may
 live
 After his death and better humankind ;
 For death gives life's last word a power
 to live,
 And, like the stone-cut epitaph, remain
 After the vanish'd voice, and speak to
 men.
 God grant me grace to glorify my God !
 And first I say it is a grievous case,
 Many so dote upon this bubble world,
 Whose colours in a moment break and fly,
 They care for nothing else. What saith
 St. John :—
 ' Love of this world is hatred against
 God.'
 Again, I pray you all that, next to God,
 You do un murmuringly and willingly
 Obey your King and Queen, and not for
 dread
 Of these alone, but from the fear of Him
 Whose ministers they be to govern you.
 Thirdly, I pray you all to live together
 Like brethren ; yet what hatred Christian
 men
 Bear to each other, seeming not as
 brethren,
 But mortal foes ! But do you good to all
 As much as in you lieth. Hurt no man
 more
 Than you would harm your loving natural
 brother
 Of the same roof, same breast. If any do,
 Albeit he think himself at home with
 God,
 Of his be sure, he is whole worlds away.

it be greater than all sin.
her, for no merit of mine,
me by man be glorified.
blessed Son's, who died

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But do you good to all
u lieth. Hurt no man

harm your loving natural

same breast. If any do,
himself at home with

e is whole worlds away.

Protestant murmurs. What sort of
brothers then be those that lust
To burn each other ?

Williams. Peace among you, there !

Cranmer. Fourthly, to those that own
exceeding wealth,
Remember that sore saying spoken once
By Him that was the truth, 'How hard
it is

For the rich man to enter into Heaven ;'
Let all rich men remember that hard word.
I have not time for more : if ever, now
Let them flow forth in charity, seeing now
The poor so many, and all food so dear.
Long have I lain in prison, yet have heard
Of all their wretchedness. Give to the
poor,

Ye give to God. He is with us in the
poor.

And now, and forasmuch as I have
come

To the last end of life, and thereupon
Hangs all my past, and all my life to be,
Either to live with Christ in Heaven with
joy,

Or to be still in pain with devils in hell ;
And, seeing in a moment, I shall find

[*Pointing upwards.*

Heaven or else hell ready to swallow me,

[*Pointing downwards.*

I shall declare to you my very faith

Without all colour.

Cole. Hear him, my good brethren.

Cranmer. I do believe in God, Father
of all ;

In every article of the Catholic faith,
And every syllable taught us by our Lord,
His prophets, and apostles, in the Testa-
ments,

Both Old and New.

Cole. Be plainer, Master Cranmer.

Cranmer. And now I come to the
great cause that weighs

Upon my conscience more than anything
Or said or done in all my life by me ;
For there be writings I have set abroad
Against the truth I knew within my heart,
Written for fear of death, to save my life,
If that might be ; the papers by my hand
Sign'd since my degradation—by this hand
[*Holding out his right hand.*

Written and sign'd—I here renounce them
all ;

And, since my hand offended, having
written

Against my heart, my hand shall first be
burnt,

So I may come to the fire.

[*Dead silence.*

Protestant murmurs.

First Protestant. I knew it would be
so,

Second Protestant. Our prayers are
heard !

Third Protestant. God bless him !

Catholic murmurs. Out upon him !
out upon him !

Liar ! dissembler ! traitor ! to the fire !

Williams (raising his voice). You
know that you recanted all you
said

Touching the sacrament in that same
book

You wrote against my Lord of Winches-
ter ;

Dissemble not ; play the plain Christian
man.

Cranmer. Alas, my Lord,

I have been a man loved plainness all my
life ;

I did dissemble, but the hour has come
For utter truth and plainness ; wherefore,
I say,

I hold by all I wrote within that book.

Moreover,

As for the Pope I count him Antichrist,

With all his devil's doctrines ; and refuse,
Reject him, and abhor him. I have said.

[*Cries on all sides, 'Pull him down !
Away with him !'*

Cole. Ay, stop the heretic's mouth !
Hale him away !

Williams. Harm him not, harm him
not ! have him to the fire !

[*CRANMER goes out between Two
Friars, smiling; hands are
reached to him from the crowd.
LORD WILLIAM HOWARD and
LORD PAGET are left alone in the
church.*

Paget. The nave and aisles all empty
as a fool's jest !

No, here's Lord William Howard.
What, my Lord,

You have not gone to see the burning ?
Howard. Fie !

To stand at ease, and stare as at a show,
And watch a good man burn. Never again.
I saw the deaths of Latimer and Ridley.
Moreover, tho' a Catholic, I would not,
For the pure honour of our common
nature,

Hear what I might—another recantation
Of Cranmer at the stake.

Paget. You'd not hear that.
He pass'd out smiling, and he walk'd
upright ;

His eye was like a soldier's, whom the
general

He looks to and he leans on as his God,
Hath rated for some backwardness and
bidd'n him

Charge one against a thousand, and the
man

Hurls his soil'd life against the pikes and
dies.

Howard. Yet that he might not after
all those papers
Of recantation yield again, who knows ?

Paget. Papers of recantation ! Think
you then

That Cranmer read all papers that he
sign'd ?

Or sign'd all those they tell us that he
sign'd ?

Nay, I trow not : and you shall see, my
Lord,

That howsoever hero-like the man
Dies in the fire, this Bonner or another
Will in some lying fashion misreport
His ending to the glory of their church.
And you saw Latimer and Ridley die ?
Latimer was eighty, was he not ? his best
Of life was over then.

Howard. His eighty years
Look'd somewhat crooked on him in his
frieze ;

But after they had stript him to his
shroud,

He stood upright, a lad of twenty-one,
And gather'd with his hands the starting
flame,

And wash'd his hands and all his face
therein,

Until the powder suddenly blew him
dead.

Ridley was longer burning ; but he died
As manfully and boldly, and, 'fore God,
I know them heretics, but right English
ones.

If ever, as heaven grant, we clash with
Spain,

Our Ridley-soldiers and our Latimer-
sailors

Will teach her something.

Paget. Your mild Legate Pole
Will tell you that the devil helpt them
thro' it.

[*A murmur of the Crowd in the
distance.*

Hark, how those Roman wolfdogs howl
and bay him !

ers of recantation ! Think
read all papers that he
nose they tell us that he
: and you shall see, my

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omething.

Your mild Legate Pole
at the devil helpt them

of the Crowd in the

Roman wolfdogs howl
m !

Howard. Might it not be the other
side rejoicing
In his brave end ?

Paget. They are too crush'd, too
broken,
They can but weep in silence.

Howard. Ay, ay, Paget,
They have brought it in large measure on
themselves.

Have I not heard them mock the blessed
Host

In songs so lewd, the beast might roar
his claim

To being in God's image, more than
they ?

Have I not seen the gamekeeper, the
groom,

Gardener, and huntsman, in the parson's
place,

The parson from his own spire swung out
dead,

And Ignorance crying in the streets, and
all men

Regarding her ? I say they have drawn
the fir-

On their own heads : yet, Paget, I do
hold

The Catholic, if he have the greater right,
Hath been the crueller.

Paget. Action and re-action,
The miserable see-saw of our child-

world,
Make us despise it at odd hours, my

Lord.
Heaven help that this re-action not re-

act,
Yet fiercelier under Queen Elizabeth,

So that she come to rule us.

Howard. The world's mad.
Paget. My Lord, the world is like a

drunken man,
Who cannot move straight to his end—
but reels

Now to the right, then as far to the left,
Push'd by the crowd beside—and under-
foot

An earthquake ; for since Henry for a
doubt—

Which a young lust had clapt upon the
back,

Crying, 'Forward !'—set our old church
rocking, men

Have hardly known what to believe, or
whether

They should believe in anything ; the
currents

So shift and change, they see not how
they are borne,

Nor whither. I conclude the King a
beast ;

Verily a lion if you will—the world
A most obedient beast and fool—myself

Half beast and fool as appertaining to it ;
Altho' your Lordship hath as little of

each
Cleaving to your original Adam-clay,
As may be consonant with mortality.

Howard. We talk and Cranmer
suffers.

The kindest man I ever knew ; see,
see,

I speak of him in the past. Unhappy
land !

Hard-natured Queen, half Spanish in
herself,

And grafted on the hard-grain'd stock of
Spain—

Her life, since Philip left her, and she
lost

Her fierce desire of bearing him a child,
Hath, like a brief and bitter winter's day,

Gone narrowing down and darkening to a
close.

There will be more conspiracies, I fear.

Paget. Ay, ay, beware of France.
Howard. O Paget, Paget !

I have seen heretics of the poorer sort,
Expectant of the rack from day to day,
To whom the fire were welcome, lying
chain'd

In breathless dungeons over steaming
sewers,

Fed with rank bread that crawl'd upon
the tongue,

And putrid water, every drop a worm,
Until they died of rotted limbs; and
then

Cast on the dunghill naked, and become
Hideously alive again from head to heel,
Made even the carrion-nosing mongrel
vomit

With hate and horror.

Paget. Nay, you sicken *me*
To hear you.

Howard. Fancy-sick; these things
are done,

Done right against the promise of this
Queen

Twice given.

Paget. No faith with heretics, my
Lord!

Hist! there be two old gossips—gospel-
lers,

I take it; stand behind the pillar here;
I warrant you they talk about the burning.

Enter Two Old Women. JOAN, and
after her TIB.

Joan. Why, it be Tib!

Tib. I cum behind tha, gall, and
couldn't make tha hear. Eh, the wind
and the wet! What a day, what a day!
nigh upo' judgement daay loike. Pwoaps
be pretty things, Joan, but they wunt set
i' the Lord's cheer o' that daay.

Joan. I must set down myself, Tib;
it be a var waay vor my owld legs up
vro' Islip. Eh, my rheumatizy be that
bad howiver be I to win to the burnin'.

Tib. I should saay 'twur ower by now.
I'd ha' been here avore, but Dumble wur
blow'd wi' the wind, and Dumble's the
best milcher in Islip.

Joan. Our Daisy's as good 'z her.

Tib. Noa, Joan.

Joan. Our Daisy's butter's as good 'z
hern.

Tib. Noa, Joan.

Joan. Our Daisy's cheeses be better.

Tib. Noa, Joan.

Joan. Eh, then ha' thy waay wi' me,
Tib; ez thou hast wi' thy owld man.

Tib. Ay, Joan, and my owld man
wur up and awaay betimes wi' dree hard
eggs for a good plect at the burnin'; and
barrin' the wet, Hodge 'ud ha' been a-
harrovin' o' white peasen i' the outfield
—and barrin' the wind, Dumble wur
blow'd wi' the wind, so 'z we was forced
to stick her, but we fetched her round at
last. Thank the Lord therefore. Dumble's
the best milcher in Islip.

Joan. Thou's thy way wi' man and
beast, Tib. I wonder at tha', it beats
me! Eh, but I do know ez Pwoaps and
vires be bad things; tell 'ee now, I heerd
summat as summun towld summun o'
owld Bishop Gardiner's end; there wur
an owld lord a-cum to dine wi' un, and
a wur so owld a couldn't bide vor his
dinner, but a had to bide howsomiver,
vor 'I wunt dine,' says my Lord Bishop,
says he, 'not till I hears ez Latimer and
Ridley be a-vire;' and so they bided on
and on till vour o' the clock, till his man
cum in post vro' here, and tells un ez the
vire has tuk holt. 'Now,' says the
Bishop, says he, 'we'll gwo to dinner;'
and the owld lord fell to 's meat wi' a
will, God bless un! but Gardiner wur
struck down like by the hand o' God
avore a could taste a mossel, and a set un

saay 'twur ower by now.
 avore, but Dumb^l wur
 ind, and Dumble's the
 lip.

isy's as good 'z her.

un.
 isy's butter's as good 'z

n.
 isy's cheeses be better.

n.

n ha' thy waay wi' me,
 wi' thy owld man.

n, and my owld man
 betimes wi' dree hard
 ace at the burnin'; and

Hodge 'ud ha' been af-

peasen i' the outfield

e wind, Dumble wur

nd, so 'z we was forced

ve fetched her round at

Lord therefore. Dum-

her in Islip.

thy way wi' man and

onder at tha', it beats

o know ez Pwoaps and

s; tell 'ee now, I heerd

un towld summun o'

liner's end; there wur

m to dine wi' un, and

couldn't bide vor his

l to bide howsomiver,

'says my Lord Bishop,

I hears ez Latimer and

' and so they bided on

the clock, till his man

ere, and tells un ez the

all a-vire, so 'z the tongue on un cum a-
 llopping out o' 'is mouth as black as a
 rat. Thank the Lord, therefore.

Paget. The fools!

Tib. Ay, Joan; and Queen Mary
 gwoes on a-burui'n' and a-burnin', to get
 her baaby born; but all her burnins' 'ill
 never burn out the hypocrisy that makes
 the water in her. There's nought but
 the vire of God's hell ez can burn out
 that.

Joan. Thank the Lord, therefore.

Paget. The fools!

Tib. A-burnin', and a-burnin', and
 a-makin' o' volk madder and madder;
 but tek thou my word vor't, Joan,—and
 I bean't wrong not twice i' ten year—the
 burnin' o' the owld archbishop 'ill burn
 the Pwoap out o' this 'ere land vor iver
 and iver.

Howard. Out of the church, you
 brace of cursed crones,

Or I will have you duck'd! (*Women
 hurry out.*) Said I not right?

For how should reverend prelate or
 throned prince

Brook for an hour such brute malignity?

Ah, what an acrid wine has Luther
 brew'd!

Paget. Pooh, pooh, my Lord! poor
 garrulous country-wives.

Buy you their cheeses, and they'll side
 with you;

You cannot judge the liquor from the lees.

Howard. I think that in some sort we
 may. But see,

Enter PETERS.

Peters, my gentleman, an honest
 Catholic,

Who follow'd with the crowd to Cran-
 mer's fire.

One that would neither misreport nor lie,

Not to gain paradise: no, nor if the Pope
 Charged him to do it—he is white as
 death.

Peters, how pale you look! you bring
 the smoke

Of Cranmer's burning with you.

Peters. Twice or thrice
 The smoke of Cranmer's burning wrapt
 me round.

Howard. Peters, you know me
 Catholic, but English.

Did he die bravely? Tell me that, or leave
 All else untold.

Peters. My Lord, he died most
 bravely.

Howard. Then tell me all.

Paget. Ay, Master Peters, tell us.

Peters. You saw him how he past
 among the crowd;

And ever as he walk'd the Spanish friars
 Still plied him with entreaty and
 reproach:

But Cranmer, as the helmsman at the
 helm

Steers, ever looking to the happy haven
 Where he shall rest at night, moved to
 his death;

And I could see that many silent hands
 Came from the crowd and met his own;
 and thus,

When we had come where Ridley burnt
 with Latimer,

He, with a cheerful smile, as one whose
 mind

Is all made up, in haste put off the rags
 They had mock'd his misery with, and all
 in white,

His long white beard, which he had never
 shaven

Since Henry's death, down-sweeping to
 the chain,

Wherewith they bound him to the stake,
 he stood

More like an ancient father of the Church,
Than heretic of these 'times; and still
the friars

Plied him, but Cranmer only shook his
head,

Or answer'd them in smiling negatives;
Whereat Lord Williams gave a sudden
cry:—

'Make short! make short!' and so they
lit the wood.

Then Cranmer lifted his left hand to
heaven,

And thrust his right into the bitter flame;
And crying, in his deep voice, more than
once,

'This hath offended—this unworthy
hand!'

So held it till it all was burn'd, before
The flame had reach'd his body; I stood
near—

Mark'd him—he never uttered moan of
pain:

He never stirr'd or writhed, but, like a
statue,

Unmoving in the greatness of the flame,
Gave up the ghost; and so past martyr-
like—

Martyr I may not call him—past—but
whither?

Paget. To purgatory, man, to purga-
tory.

Peters. Nay, but, my Lord, he denied
purgatory.

Paget. Why then to heaven, and God
ha' mercy on him.

Howard. *Paget*, despite his fearful
heresies,

I loved the man, and needs must moan
for him;

O Cranmer!

Paget. But your moan is useless now:
Come out, my Lord, it is a world of fools.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—LONDON. HALL IN THE PALACE.

QUEEN, SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.

Heath. Madam,

I do assure you, that it must be look'd
to:

Calais is but ill-garrison'd, in Guisnes
Are scarce two hundred men, and the
French fleet

Rule in the narrow seas. It must be
look'd to,

If war should fall between yourself and
France;

Or you will lose your Calais.

Mary. It shall be look'd to;
I wish you a good morning, good Sir

Nicholas:

Here is the King. [*Exit Heath.*]

Enter PHILIP.

Philip. Sir Nicholas tells you true,
And you must look to Calais when
I go.

Mary. Go? must you go, indeed—
again—so soon?

Why, nature's licensed vagabond, the
swallow,

That might live always in the sun's warm
heart,

Stays longer here in our poor north than
you:—

Knows where he nested—ever comes
again.

Philip. And, Madam, so shall I.

Mary. O, will you? will you?
I am faint with fear that you will come
no more.

Philip. Ay, ay; but many voices call
me hence.

ACT V.

LONDON. HALL IN THE
PALACE.

NICHOLAS HEATH.

am,
, that it must be look'd

garrison'd, in Guisnes
hundred men, and the
ect

orrow seas. It must be
all between yourself and

your Calais.

It shall be look'd to ;
ood morning, good Sir

[*Exit* Heath.

ter PHILIP.

r Nicholas tells you true,
look to Calais when

must you go, indeed—
soon?

licensed vagabond, the

always in the sun's warm

e in our poor north than

ne nested—ever comes

Madam, so shall I.

O, will you? will you?
fear that you will come

y; but many voices call

Mary. Voices—I hear unhappy ru-
mours—nay,

I say not, I believe. What voices call
you

Dearer than mine that should be dearest
to you?

Alas, my Lord! what voices and how
many?

Philip. The voices of Castille and
Aragon,

Granada, Naples, Sicily, and Milan,—
The voices of Franche-Comté, and the

Netherlands,

The voices of Peru and Mexico,
Tunis, and Oran, and the Philippines,

And all the fair spice-islands of the
East.

Mary (*admiringly*). You are the
mightiest monarch upon earth,

I but a little Queen: and, so indeed,
Need you the more.

Philip. A little Queen! but when
I came to wed your majesty, Lord Howard,

Sending an insolent shot that dash'd the
seas

Upon us, made us lower our kingly flag
To yours of England.

Mary. Howard is all English!
There is no king, not were he ten times

king,
Ten times our husband, but must lower

his flag
To that of England in the seas of

England.

Philip. Is that your answer?
Mary. Being Queen of England,

I have none other.

Philip. So.
Mary. But wherefore not

Helm the huge vessel of your state, my
liege,

Here by the side of her who loves you
most?

Philip. No, Madam, no! a candle in
the sun

Is all but smoke—a star beside the
moon

Is all but lost; your people will not crown
me—

Your people are as cheerless as your
clime;

Hate me and mine; witness the brawls,
the gibbets.

Here swings a Spaniard—there an Eng-
lishman;

The peoples are unlike as their com-
plexion;

Yet will I be your swallow and re-
turn—

But now I cannot bide.

Mary. Not to help *me*?

They hate *me* also for my love to you,
My Philip; and these judgments on the

land—
Harvestless autumns, horrible agues,

plague—
Philip. The blood and sweat of

heretics at the stake
Is God's best dew upon the barren field.

Burn more!
Mary. I will, I will; and you will

stay?
Philip. Have I not said? Madam, I

came to sue
Your Council and yourself to declare

war.
Mary. Sir, there are many English in

your ranks
To help your battle.

Philip. So far, good. I say
I came to sue your Council and your-

self
To declare war against the King of

France.

Mary. Not to see me?

Philip. Ay, Madam, to see you.

Unalterably and pesteringly fond ! [*Aside.*
But, soon or late you must have war with
France ;

King Henry warms your traitors at his
hearth.

Carew is there, and Thomas Stafford
there.

Courtenay, belike—

Mary. A fool and featherhead !

Philip. Ay, but they use his name.

In brief, this Henry

Stirs up your land against you to the
intent

That you may lose your English heritage.
And then, your Scottish namesake marry-
ing

The Dauphin, he would weld France,
England, Scotland,

Into one sword to hack at Spain and
me.

Mary. And yet the Pope is now
colleagued with France ;

You make your wars upon him down in
Italy :—

Philip, can that be well ?

Philip. Content you, Madam ;

You must abide my judgment, and my
father's,

Who deems it a most just and holy
war.

The Pope would cast the Spaniard out of
Naples :

He calls us worse than Jews, Moors,
Saracens.

The Pope has pushed his horns beyond
his mitre—

Beyond his province. Now,

Duke Alva will but touch him on the
horns,

And he withdraws ; and of his holy
head—

For Alva is true son of the true
church—

No hair is harm'd. Will you not help
me here ?

Mary. Alas ! the Council will not
hear of war.

They say your wars are not the wars of
England.

They will not lay more taxes on a land
So hunger-nipt and wretched ; and you
know

The crown is poor. We have given the
church-lands back :

The nobles would not ; nay, they clapt
their hands

Upon their swords when ask'd ; and
therefore God

Is hard upon the people. What's to be
done ?

Sir, I will move them in your cause
again,

And we will raise us loans and subsidies
Among the merchants ; and Sir Thomas
Gresham

Will aid us. There is Antwerp and the
Jews.

Philip. Madam, my thanks.

Mary. And you will stay your
going ?

Philip. And further to discourage and
lay lame

The plots of France, altho' you love her
not,

You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir.
She stands between you and the Queen of
Scots.

Mary. The Queen of Scots at least is
Catholic.

Philip. Ay, Madam, Catholic ; but
I will not have

The King of France the King of England
too.

Mary. But she's a heretic, and, when
I am gone,

Brings the new learning back.

m'd. Will you not help
 s! the Council will not
 war.
 wars are not the wars of
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 t and wretched; and you
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 im Elizabeth your heir.
 een you and the Queen of
 Queen of Scots at least is
 Madam, Catholic; but
 e have
 nce the King of England
 he's a heretic, and, when
 e,
 earning back.

Philip. It must be done.
 You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir.
Mary. Then it is done; but you will
 stay your going
 Somewhat beyond your settled purpose?
Philip. No!
Mary. What, not one day?
Philip. You beat upon the rock.
Mary. And I am broken there.
Philip. Is this a place
 To wait in, Madam? what! a public hall.
 Go in, I pray you.
Mary. Do not seem so changed.
 Say go; but only say it lovingly.
Philip. You do mistake. I am not
 one to change.
 I never loved you more.
Mary. Sire, I obey you.
 Come quickly.
Philip. Ay. *Exit Mary.*
Enter COUNT DE FERIA.
Feria (aside). The Queen in tears!
Philip. *Feria!*
 Hast thou not mark'd—come closer to
 mine ear—
 How doubly aged this Queen of ours hath
 grown
 Since she lost hope of bearing us a
 child?
Feria. Sire, if your Grace hath mark'd
 it, so have I.
Philip. Hast thou not likewise mark'd
 Elizabeth,
 How fair and royal—like a Queen, in-
 deed?
Feria. Allow me the same answer as
 before—
 That if your Grace hath mark'd her, so
 have I.
Philip. Good, now; methinks my
 Queen is like enough
 To leave me by and by.

Feria. To leave you, sire?
Philip. I mean not like to live.
Elizabeth—
 To Phillibert of Savoy, as you know,
 We meant to wed her; but I am not
 sure
 She will not serve me better—so my
 Queen
 Would leave me—as—my wife.
Feria. Sire, even so.
Philip. She will not have Prince
 Phillibert of Savoy.
Feria. No, sire.
Philip. I have to pray you, some
 odd time,
 To sound the Princess carelessly on
 this;
 Not as from me, but as your phantasy;
 And tell me how she takes it.
Feria. Sire, I will.
Philip. I am not certain but that
 Phillibert
 Shall be the man; and I shall urge his
 suit
 Upon the Queen, because I am not
 certain:
 You understand, *Feria.*
Feria. Sire, I do.
Philip. And if you be not secret in
 this matter,
 You understand me there, too?
Feria. Sire, I do.
Philip. You must be sweet and supple,
 like a Frenchman.
 She is none of those who loathe the
 honeycomb. [*Exit FERIA.*]
Enter RENARD.
Renard. My liege, I bring you goodly
 tidings.
Philip. Well?
Renard. There will be war with
 France, at last, my liege;

Sir Thomas Stafford, a bull-headed ass,
Sailing from France, with thirty English-
men,

Hath taken Scarboro' Castle, north of
York;

Proclaims himself protector, and affirms
The Queen has forfeited her right to
reign

By marriage with an alien—other things
As idle; a weak Wyatt! Little doubt
This buzz will soon be silenced; but the
Council

(I have talk'd with some already) are for
war.

This the fifth conspiracy hatch'd in
France;

They show their teeth upon it; and your
Grace,

So you will take advice of mine, should
stay

Yet for awhile, to shape and guide the
event.

Philip. Good! Renard, I will stay
then.

Renard. Also, sire,
Might I not say—to please your wife, the
Queen?

Philip. Ay, Renard, if you care to put
it so. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN THE
PALACE.

MARY, sitting: a rose in her hand. LADY
CLARENCE. ALICE in the background.

Mary. Look! I have play'd with this
poor rose so long
I have broken off the head.

Lady Clarence. Your Grace hath been
More merciful to many a rebel head
That should have fallen, and may rise
again.

Mary. There were not many hang'd
for Wyatt's rising.

Lady Clarence. Nay, not two hundred.

Mary. I could weep for them
And her, and mine own self and all the
world.

Lady Clarence. For her? for whom,
your Grace?

Enter USHER.

Usher. The Cardinal.

Enter CARDINAL POLE. (MARY rises.)

Mary. Reginald Pole, what news hath
plagued thy heart?

What makes thy favour like the bloodless
head

Fall'n on the block, and held up by the
hair?

Philip?—

Pole. No, Philip is as warm in life
As ever.

Mary. Ay, and then as cold as ever.
Is Calais taken?

Pole. Cousin, there hath chanced
A sharper harm to England and to
Rome,

Than Calais taken. Julius the Third
Was ever just, and mild, and father-
like;

But this new Pope Caraffa, Paul the
Fourth,

Not only reft me of that legateship
Which Julius gave me, and the legate-
ship

Annex'd to Canterbury—nay, but worse—
And yet I must obey the Holy Father,
And so must you, good cousin;—worse
than all,

A passing bell toll'd in a dying ear—
He hath cited me to Rome, for heresy,
Before his Inquisition.

Mary. I knew it, cousin,

ere were not many hang'd
att's rising.

ay, not two hundred.
I could weep for them
mine own self and all the

For her? for whom,
ace?

Enter USHER.

e Cardinal.

AL POLE. (MARY rises.)

ald Pole, what news hath
thy heart?

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block, and held up by the

Philip is as warm in life

and then as cold as ever.

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e of that legateship

ive me, and the legat-

erbury—nay, but worse—

obey the Holy Father,

u, good cousin;—worse

ld'd in a dying ear—

e to Rome, for heresy,

ition.

I knew it, cousin,

But held from you all papers sent by
Rome,

That you might rest among us, till the
Pope,

To compass which I wrote myself to
Rome,

Reversed his doom, and that y might
not seem

To disobey his Holiness.

Pole. He hates Philip;

He is all Italian, and he hates the
Spaniard;

He cannot dream that I advised the
war;

He strikes thro' me at Philip and your-
self.

Nay, but I know it of old, he hates me
too;

So brands me in the stare of Christen-
dom

A heretic!

Now, even now, when bow'd before my
time,

The house half-ruin'd ere the lease be
out;

When I should guide the Church in peace
at home,

After my twenty years of banishment,
And all my lifelong labour to uphold

The primacy—a heretic. Long ago,
When I was ruler in the patrimony,

I was too lenient to the Lutheran,
And I and learned friends among our-

selves
Would freely canvass certain Lutheran-

isms.
What then, he knew I was no Lutheran.

A heretic!
He drew this shaft against me to the

head,
When it was thought I might be chosen

Pope,
But then withdrew it. In full consistory,

When I was made Archbishop, he
approved me.

And how should he have sent me Legate
hither,

Deeming me heretic? and what heresy
since?

But he was evermore mine enemy,
And hates the Spaniard—fiery-choleric,

A drinker of black, strong, volcanic
wines,

That ever makes him fiercer. I, a here-
tic?

Your Highness knows that in pursuing
heresy

I have gone beyond your late Lord
Chancellor,—

He cried Enough! enough! before his
death.—

Gone beyond him and mine own natural
man

(It was God's cause); so far they call me
now,

The scourge and butcher of their English
church.

Mary. Have courage, your reward is
Heaven itself.

Pole. They groan amen; they swarm
into the fire

Like flies—for what? no dogma. They
know nothing;

They burn for nothing.

Mary. You have done your best.

Pole. Have done my best, and as a
faithful son,

That all day long hath wrought his father's
work,

When back he comes at evening hath the
door

Shut on him by the father whom he
loved,

His early follies cast into his teeth,
And the poor son turn'd out into the
street

To sleep, to die—I shall die of it,
cousin.

Mary. I pray you be not so dis-
consolate;

I still will do mine utmost with the
Pope.

Poor cousin!

Have not I been the fast friend of your
life

Since mine began, and it was thought we
two

Might make one flesh, and cleave unto
each other

As man and wife?

Pole. Ah, cousin, I remember

How I would dandle you upon my
knee

At lisping-age. I watch'd you dancing
once

With your huge father; he look'd the
Great Harry,

You but his cockboat; prettily you
did it,

And innocently. No—we were not made
One flesh in happiness, no happiness

here;

But now we are made one flesh in
misery;

Our bridemaids are not lovely—Dis-
appointment,

Ingratitude, Injustice, Evil-tongue,
Labour-in-vain.

Mary. Surely, not all in vain.
Peace, cousin, peace! I am sad at heart
myself.

Pole. Our altar is a mound of dead
men's clay,

Dug from the grave that yawns for us
beyond;

And there is one Death stands behind the
Groom,

And there is one Death stands behind the
Bride—

Mary. Have you been looking at the
'Dance of Death?'

Pole. No; but these libellous papers
which I found

Strewn in your palace. Look you here—
the Pope

Pointing at me with 'Pole, the heretic,
Thou hast burnt others, do thou burn
thyself,

Or I will burn thee;' and this other;
see!—

'We pray continually for the death
Of our accursed Queen and Cardinal
Pole.'

This last—I dare not read it her. [*Aside.*
Mary. Away!

Why do you bring me these?

I thought you knew me better. I never
read,

I tear them; they come back upon my
dreams.

The hands that write them should be
burnt clean off

As Cranmer's, and the fiends that utter
them

Tongue-torn with pincers, lash'd to death,
or lie

Famishing in black cells, while famish'd
rats

Eat them alive. Why do they bring me
these?

Do you mean to drive me mad?

Pole. I had forgotten
How these poor libels trouble you. Your
pardon,

Sweet cousin, and farewell! 'O bubble
world,

Whose colours in a moment break and
fly!'

Why, who said that? I know not—
true enough!

[*Puts up the papers, all but the last,*
which falls. Exit Pole.

Have you been looking at the
of Death?

but these libellous papers
found

palace. Look you here—

with 'Pole, the heretic,
nt others, do thou burn

thee;' and this other;

annually for the death
ed Queen and Cardinal

re not read it her. [*Aside.*
Away!

ng me these?

new me better. I never

ey come back upon my

write them should be
un off

and the fiends that utter

in pincers, lash'd to death,

black cells, while famish'd

Why do they bring me

drive me mad?

I had forgotten
bels trouble you. Your

d farewell! 'O bubble

n a moment break and

that? I know not—
h!

papers, all but the last,
lls. *Exit Pole.*

Alice. If Cranmer's spirit were a
mocking one,
And heard these two, there might be
sport for him. [*Aside.*

Mary. Clarence, they hate me; even
while I speak
There licks a silent dagger, listening
In some dark closet, some long gallery,
drawn,

And panting for my blood as I go by.
Lady Clarence. Nay, Madam, there
be loyal papers too,
And have often found them.

Mary. Find me one!
Lady Clarence. Ay, Madam; but Sir
Nicholas Heath, the Chancellor,
Would see your Highness.

Mary. Wherefore should I see him?

Lady Clarence. Well, Madam, he
may bring you news from Philip.

Mary. So, Clarence.

Lady Clarence. Let me first put

up your hair;
It tumbles all abroad.

Mary. And the gray dawn
Of an old age that never will be mine
Is all the clearer scen. No, no; what
matters?

Forlorn I am, and let me look forlorn.

Enter SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.

Heath. I bring your Majesty such
grievous news

I grieve to bring it. Madam, Calais is taken.

Mary. What traitor spoke? Here,
let my cousin Pole

Seize him and burn him for a Lutheran.

Heath. Her Highness is unwell. I
will retire.

Lady Clarence. Madam, your Chan-
cellor, Sir Nicholas Heath,

Mary. Sir Nicholas! I am stunn'd
—Nicholas Heath?

Methought some traitor smote me on the
head.

What said you, my good Lord, that our
brave English

Had sallied out from Calais and driven
back

The Frenchmen from their trenches?

Heath. Alas! no.

That gateway to the mainland over
which

Our flag hath floated for two hundred
years

Is France again.

Mary. So; but it is not lost—
Not yet. Send out: let England as
of old

Rise lionlike, strike hard and deep into
The prey they are rending from her—ay,

and rend

The renders too. Send out, send out,
and make

Musters in all the counties; gather all
From sixteen years to sixty; collect the
fleet;

Let every craft that carries sail and gun
Steer toward Calais. Guisnes is not
taken yet?

Heath. Guisnes is not taken yet.

Mary. There yet is hope.

Heath. Ah, Madam, but your people
are so cold;

I do much fear that England will not
care.

Methinks there is no manhood left among
us.

Mary. Send out; I am too weak to
stir abroad:

Tell my mind to the Council—to the
Parliament:

Proclaim it to the winds, Thou art cold
thyself

To babble of their coldness. O would I
were

My father for an hour! Away now—
quick! [Exit Heath.]

I hoped I had served God with all my
might!

It seems I have not. Ah! much heresy
Shelter'd in Calais. Saints, I have rebuilt
Your shrines, set up your broken images;
Be comfortable to me. Suffer not
That my brief reign in England be
defamed

Thro' all her angry chronicles hereafter
By loss of Calais. Grant me Calais.

Philip,

We have made war upon the Holy
Father

All for your sake: what good could come
of that?

Lady Clarence. No, Madam, not
against the Holy Father;

You did but help King Philip's war with
France,

Your troops were never down in Italy.

Mary. I am a byword. Heretic and
rebel

Point at me and make merry. Philip
gone!

And Calais gone! Time that I were
gone too!

Lady Clarence. Nay, if the fetid
gutter had a voice

And cried I was not clean, what should
I care?

Or you, for heretic cries? And I believe,
Spite of your melancholy Sir Nicholas,
Your England is as loyal as myself.

Mary (seeing the paper dropt by Pole).
There! there! another paper!

Said you not

Many of these were loyal? Shall I try
If this be one of such?

Lady Clarence. Let it be, let it be.

God pardon me! I have never yet
found one. [Aside.]

Mary (reads). 'Your people hate you
as your husband hates you.'

Clarence, Clarence, what have I done?
what sin

Beyond all grace, all pardon? Mother
of God,

Thou knowest never woman meant so
well,

And fared so ill in this disastrous
world.

My people hate me and desire my
death.

Lady Clarence. No, Madam, no.

Mary. My husband hates me, and
desires my death.

Lady Clarence. No, Madam; these
are libels.

Mary. I hate myself, and I desire my
death.

Lady Clarence. Long live your
Majesty! Shall Alice sing you

One of her pleasant songs? Alice, my
child,

Bring us your lute (*Alice goes*). They
say the gloom of Saul

Was lighten'd by young David's harp.

Mary. Too young!

And never knew a Philip.

Re-enter Alice.

Give me the lute.

He hates me!

(*She sings.*)

Hapless doom of woman happy in betrothing!
Beauty passes like a breath and love is lost in
loathing:

Low, my lute; speak low, my lute, but say the
world is nothing—

Low, lute, low!

Love will hover round the flowers when they first
awaken:

Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not be over-
taken;

Low, my lute! oh low, my lute! we fade and
are forsaken—

Low, dear lute, low!

'Your people hate you
usband hates you.'

ce, what have I done?

, all pardon? Mother

ever woman meant so

ill in this disastrous

e me and desire my

No, Madam, no.

usband hates me, and
y death.

No, Madam; these

myself, and I desire my

e. Long live your

Shall Alice sing you

songs? Alice, my

ute (Alice goes). They

oom of Saul

y young David's harp.

Too young!

a Philip.

enter Alice.

Give me the lute.

(He sings.)

man happy in betrothing!

a breath and love is lost in

k low, my lute, but say the

ng—

w, lute, low!

nd the flowers when they first

allen leaf, and not be over-

low, my lute! we fade and

w, dear lute, low!

Take it away! not low enough for me!

Alice. Your Grace hath a low voice.

Mary. How dare you say it?

Even for that he hates me. A low voice

Lost in a wilderness where none can hear!

A voice of shipwreck on a shoreless sea!

A low voice from the dust and from the

grave

(*Sitting on the ground*). There, am I

low enough now?

Alice. Good Lord! how grim and

ghastly looks her Grace,

With both her knees drawn upward to

her chin.

There was an old-world tomb beside my

father's,

And this was open'd, and the dead were

found

Sitting, and in this fashion; she looks a

corpse.

Enter LADY MAGDALEN DACRES.

Lady Magdalen. Madam, the Count

de Feria waits without,

In hopes to see your Highness.

Lady Clarence (*pointing to Mary*). Wait

he must—

Her trance again. She neither sees nor

hears,

And may not speak for hours.

Lady Magdalen. Unhappiest

Of Queens and wives and women!

Alice (*in the foreground with Lady*

Magdalen). And all along

Of Philip.

Lady Magdalen. Not so loud! Our

Clarence there

Sees ever such an aureole round the Queen,

It gilds the greatest wronger of her peace,

Who stands the nearest to her.

Alice. Ay, this Philip;

I used to love the Queen with all my

heart—

God help me, but methinks I love her less

For such a dotage upon such a man.

I would I were as tall and strong as you.

Lady Magdalen. I seem half-shamed

at times to be so tall.

Alice. You are the stateliest deer in

all the herd—

Beyond his aim—but I am small and

scandalous,

And love to hear bad tales of Philip.

Lady Magdalen. Why?

I never heard him utter worse of you

Than that you were low-statured.

Alice. Does he think

Low stature is low nature, or all women's

Low as his own?

Lady Magdalen. There you strike in

the nail.

This coarseness is a want of phantasy.

It is the low man thinks the woman low;

Sin is too dull to see beyond himself.

Alice. Ah, Magdalen, sin is bold as

well as dull.

How dared he?

Lady Magdalen. Stupid soldiers oft

are bold.

Poor lads, they see not what the general

sees,

A risk of utter ruin. I am not

Beyond his aim, or was not.

Alice. Who? Not you?

Tell, tell me; save my credit with myself.

Lady Magdalen. I never breathed it

to a bird in the eaves,

Would not for all the stars and maiden

moon

Our drooping Queen should know! In

Hampton Court

My window look'd upon the corridor;

And I was robing;—this poor throat of

mine,

Barer than I should wish a man to see

it,—

When he we speak of drove the window
back,
And, like a thief, push'd in his royal
hand;
But by God's providence a good stout staff
Lay near me; and you know me strong
of arm;

I do believe I lamed his Majesty's
For a day or two, tho', give the Devil
his due,
I never found he bore me any spite.

Alice. I would she could have wedded
that poor youth,
My Lord of Devon—light enough, God
knows,
And mixt with Wyatt's rising—and the
boy
Not out of him—but neither cold, coarse,
cruel,
And more than all—no Spaniard.

Lady Clarence. Not so loud.
Lord Devon, girls! what are you whispering here?

Alice. Probing an old state-secret—
how it chanced
That this young Earl was sent on foreign
travel,
Not lost his head.

Lady Clarence. There was no proof
against him.

Alice. Nay, Madam; did not Gardiner
intercept
A letter which the Count de Noailles
wrote

To that dead traitor Wyatt, with full proof
Of Courtenay's treason? What became
of that?

Lady Clarence. Some say that
Gardiner, out of love for him,
Burnt it, and some relate that it was lost
When Wyatt sack'd the Chancellor's
house in Southwark.
Let dead things rest.

Alice. Ay, and with him who died
Alone in Italy.

Lady Clarence. Much changed, I hear,
Had put off levity and put graveness on.
The foreign courts report him in his
manner

Noble as his young person and old shield.
It might be so—but all is over now;
He caught a chill in the lagoons of Venice,
And died in Padua.

Mary (looking up suddenly). Died in
the true faith?

Lady Clarence. Ay, Madam, happily.

Mary. Happier he than I.

Lady Magdalen. It seems her Highness
hath awaken'd. Think you
That I might dare to tell her that the
Count—

Mary. I will see no man hence for
evermore,
Saving my confessor and my cousin Pole.

Lady Magdalen. It is the Count de
Feria, my dear lady.

Mary. What Count?

Lady Magdalen. The Count de Feria,
from his Majesty

King Philip.

Mary. Philip! quick! loop up my hair!
Throw cushions on that seat, and make it
throne-like.

Arrange my dress—the gorgeous Indian
shawl

That Philip brought me in our happy
days!—

That covers all. So—am I somewhat
Queenlike,

Bride of the mightiest sovereign upon
earth?

Lady Clarence. Ay, so your Grace
would bide a moment yet.

Mary. No, no, he brings a letter.
I may die

Before I read it. Let me see him at once.

Enter COUNT DE FERIA *(kneels)*.

Feria. I trust your Grace is well.
(Aside) How her hand burns!

Mary. I am not well, but it will better me,
Sir Count, to read the letter which you bring.

Feria. Madam, I bring no letter.

Mary. How! no letter?

Feria. His Highness is so vex'd with strange affairs---

Mary. That his own wife is no affair of his.

Feria. Nay, Madam, nay! he sends his veriest love,
And says, he will come quickly.

Mary. Doth he, indeed?
You, sir, do *you* remember what *you* said
When last you came to England?

Feria. Madam, I brought
My King's congratulations; it was hoped
Your Highness was once more in happy state

To give him an heir male.

Mary. Sir, you said more;
You said he would come quickly. I had horses

On all the road from Dover, day and night;

On all the road from Harwich, night and day;

But the child came not, and the husband came not;

And yet he will come quickly. . . Thou hast learnt

Thy lesson, and I mine. There is no need

For Philip so to shame himself again.

Return,

And tell him that I know he comes no more.

Tell him at last I know his love is dead,

And that I am in state to bring forth death—

Thou art commission'd to Elizabeth,
And not to me!

Feria. Mere compliments and wishes.
But shall I take some message from your Grace?

Mary. Tell her to come and close my dying eyes,
And wear my crown, and dance upon my grave.

Feria. Then I may say your Grace will see your sister?

Your Grace is too low-spirited. Air and sunshine.

I would we had you, Madam, in our warm Spain.

You droop in your dim London.

Mary. Have him away!

I sicken of his readiness.

Lady Clarence. My Lord Count,
Her Highness is too ill for colloquy.

Feria (kneels, and kisses her hand). I wish her Highness better. *(Aside)*
How her hand burns! *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.—A HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

ELIZABETH, STEWARD OF THE HOUSEHOLD, ATTENDANTS.

Elizabeth. There's half an angel wrong'd in your account;

Methinks I am all angel, that I bear it
Without more ruffling. Cast it o'er again.

Steward. I were whole devil if I wrong'd you, Madam.

[Exit Steward.]

Attendant. The Count de FERIA, from the King of Spain.

Elizabeth. Ah!—let him enter. Nay, you need not go:

[To her Ladies.]

Remain within the chamber, but apart.
We'll have no private conference. Wel-
come to England !

Enter FERIA.

Feria. Fair island star !

Elizabeth. I shine ! What else,
Sir Count ?

Feria. As far as France, and into
Philip's heart.

My King would know if you be fairly
served,

And lodged, and treated.

Elizabeth. You see the lodging, sir,
I am well-served, and am in everything
Most loyal and most grateful to the
Queen.

Feria. You should be grateful to my
master, too.

He spoke of this ; and unto him you owe
That Mary hath acknowledged you her
heir.

Elizabeth. No, not to her nor him ;
but to the people,
Who know my right, and love me, as I
love

The people ! whom God aid !

Feria. You will be Queen,
And, were I Philip—

Elizabeth. Wherefore pause you—
what ?

Feria. Nay, but I speak from mine
own self, not him ;

Your royal sister cannot last ; your hand
Will be much coveted ! What a delicate
one !

Our Spanish ladies have none such—and
there,

Were you in Spain, this fine fair gossamer
gold—

Like sun-gilt breathings on a frosty
dawn—

That hovers round your shoulder—

Elizabeth.

Is it so fine ?

Troth, some have said so.

Feria. —would be deemed a miracle.

Elizabeth. Your Philip hath gold hair
and golden beard ;

There must be laucies many with hair like
mine.

Feria. Some few of Gothic blood have
golden hair,

But none like yours.

Elizabeth. I am happy you approve it.

Feria. But as to Philip and your
Grace—consider,—

If such a one as you should match with
Spain,

What hinders but that Spain and England
join'd,

Should make the mightiest empire earth
has known.

Spain would be England on her seas, and
England

Mistress of the Indies.

Elizabeth. It may chance, that
England

Will be the Mistress of the Indies yet,
Without the help of Spain.

Feria. Impossible ;

Except you put Spain down.

Wide of the mark ev'n for a madman's
dream.

Elizabeth. Perhaps ; but we have
seamen. Count de FERIA,

I take it that the King hath spoken to you ;
But is Don Carlos such a goodly match ?

Feria. Don Carlos, Madam, is but
twelve years old.

Elizabeth. Ay, tell the King that I
will muse upon it ;

He is my good friend, and I would keep
him so ;

But—he would have me Catholic of Rome,
And that I scarce can be ; and, sir, till
now

Is it so fine?

e said so.
ld be deemed a miracle.
our Philip hath gold hair
n beard;
adies many with hair like
few of Gothic blood have
ir,
ars.
am happy you approve it.
as to Philip and your
onsider,—
you should match with
that Spain and England
e mightiest empire earth
n.
England on her seas, and
adies.
It may chance, that
ress of the Indies yet,
of Spain.
Impossible;
pain down.
ck ev'n for a madman's
erhaps; but we have
Count de Feria,
ing hath spoken to you;
such a goodly match?
Carlos, Madam, is but
rs old.
tell the King that I
upon it;
end, and I would keep
me Catholic of Rome,
e can be; and, sir, till

My sister's marriage, and my father's
marriages,

Make me full fain to live and die a maid.
But I am much beholden to your King.

Have you aught else to tell me?

Feria. Nothing, Madam,
Save that methought I gather'd from the
Queen

That she would see your Grace before she
—died.

Elizabeth. God's death! and where-
fore spake you not before?

We dally with our lazy moments here,
And hers are number'd. Horses there,
without!

I am much beholden to the King, your
master.

Why did you keep me prating? Horses,
there! [*Exit Elizabeth, &c.*]

Feria. So from a clear sky falls the
thunderbolt!

Don Carlos? Madam, if you marry
Philip,

Then I and he will snaffle your 'God's
death,'

And break your paces in, and make you
tame;

God's death, forsooth—you do not know
King Philip. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—LONDON. BEFORE THE
PALACE.

*A light burning within. Voices of the
night passing.*

First. Is not yon light in the Queen's
chamber?

Second. Ay,

They say she's dying.

First. So is Cardinal Pole.
May the great angels join their wings,
and make

Down for their heads to heaven!

Second. Amen. Come on.
[*Exeunt.*]

TWO OTHERS.

First. There's the Queen's light. I
hear she cannot live.

Second. God curse her and her Legate!
Gardiner burns

Already; but to pay them full in kind,
The hottest hold in all the devil's den
Were but a sort of winter; sir, in Guern-
sey,

I watch'd a woman burn; and in her
agony

The mother came upon her—a child was
born—

And, sir, they hurl'd it back into the fire,
That, being but baptised in fire, the
babe

Might be in fire for ever. Ah, good
neighbour,

There should be something fierier than
fire

To yield them their deserts.

First. Amen to all
Your wish, and further.

A Third Voice. Deserts! Amen to
what? Whose deserts? Yours? You
have a gold ring on your finger, and soft
raiment about your body; and is not the
woman up yonder sleeping after all she
has done, in peace and quietness, on a
soft bed, in a closed room, with light,
fire, physic, tendance; and I have seen
the true men of Christ lying famine-dead
by scores, and under no ceiling but the
cloud that wept on them, not for them.

First. Friend, tho' so late, it is not
safe to preach.

You had best go home. What are you?

Third. What am I? One who cries
continually with sweat and tears to the
Lord God that it would please Him out
of His infinite love to break down all

kingship and queenship, all priesthood and prelacy; to cancel and abolish all bonds of human allegiance, all the magistracy, all the nobles, and all the wealthy; and to send us again, according to His promise, the one King, the Christ, and all things in common, as in the day of the first church, when Christ Jesus was King.

First. If ever I heard a madman,—
let's away!
Why, you long-winded—— Sir, you go
beyond me.

I pride myself on being moderate.
Good night! Go home. Besides, you
curse so loud,
The watch will hear you. Get you home
at once. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—LONDON. A ROOM IN
THE PALACE.

A Gallery on one side. The moonlight streaming through a range of windows on the wall opposite. MARY, LADY CLARENCE, LADY MAGDALEN DACRES, ALICE. QUEEN pacing the Gallery. A writing-table in front. QUEEN comes to the table and writes and goes again, pacing the Gallery.

Lady Clarence. Mine eyes are dim:
what hath she written? read.

Alice. 'I am dying, Philip; come to
me.'

Lady Magdalen. There—up and down,
poor lady, up and down.

Alice. And how her shadow crosses
one by one

The moonlight casements pattern'd on
the wall,

Following her like her sorrow. She
turns again.

[*Queen sits and writes, and goes again.*]

Lady Clarence. What hath she written
now?

Alice. Nothing; but 'come, come,
come,' and all awry,
And blotted by her tears. This cannot
last. [*Queen returns.*]

Mary. I whistle to the bird has broken
cage,

And all in vain. [*Sitting down.*]

Calais gone—Guisnes gone, too—and
Philip gone!

Lady Clarence. Dear Madam, Philip
is but at the wars;

I cannot doubt but that he comes again;
And he is with you in a measure still.

I never look'd upon so fair a likeness
As your great King in armour there, his
hand

Upon his helmet.

[*Pointing to the portrait of Philip on
the wall.*]

Mary. Doth he not look noble?

I had heard of him in battle over seas,
And I would have my warrior all in arms.
He said it was not courtly to stand
helmeted

Before the Queen. He had his gracious
moment,

Altho' you'll not believe me. How he
smiles

As if he loved me yet!

Lady Clarence. And so he does.

Mary. He never loved me—nay, he
could not love me.

It was his father's policy against France.
I am eleven years older than he,
Poor boy!

[*Weeps.*]

Alice. That was a lusty boy of twenty-
seven;

[*Aside.*]

Poor enough in God's grace!

Mary. —And all in vain!
The Queen of Scots is married to the
Dauphin,

What hath she written
 ; but 'come, come,
 all awry,
 her tears. This cannot
 [Queen returns,
 le to the bird has broken

[Sitting down.
 isnes gone, too—and

Dear Madam, Philip
 e wars ;
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He had his gracious
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 And so he does.
 r loved me—nay, he
 ve me.
 policy against France.
 older than he,

[Weeps.
 a lusty boy of twenty—

[Aside.
 's grace !
 —And all in vain !
 ts is married to the

And Charles, the lord of this low world,
 is gone ;
 And all his wars and wisdoms past away ;
 And in a moment I shall follow him.

Lady Clarence. Nay, dearest Lady,
 see your good physician.

Mary. Drugs—but he knows they
 cannot help me—says

That rest is all—tells me I must not
 think—

That I must rest—I shall rest by-and-by.
 Catch the wild cat, cage him, and when
 he springs

And maims himself against the bars, say
 'rest' :

Why, you must kill him if you would have
 him rest—

Dead or alive you cannot make him happy.

Lady Clarence. Your Majesty has
 lived so pure a life,

And done such mighty things by Holy
 Church,

I trust that God will make you happy yet.

Mary. What is the strange thing
 happiness ? Sit down here :

Tell me thine happiest hour.

Lady Clarence. I will, if that
 May make your Grace forget yourself a
 little.

There runs a shallow brook across our field
 For twenty miles, where the black crow
 flies five,

And doth so bound and babble all the way
 As if itself were happy. It was May-time,
 And I was walking with the man I loved.
 I loved him, but I thought I was not loved.
 And both were silent, letting the wild
 brook

Speak for us—till he stoop'd and gather'd
 one

From out a bed of thick forget-me-nots,
 Lool'd hard and sweet at me, and gave
 it me.

I took it, tho' I did not know I took it,
 And put it in my bosom, and all at once
 I felt his arms about me, and his lips—

Mary. O God ! I have been too slack,
 too slack ;

There are Hot Gospellers even among
 our guards—

Nobles we dared not touch. We have
 but burnt

The heretic priest, workmen, and women
 and children.

Wet, famine, ague, fever, storm, wreck,
 wrath,—

We have so play'd the coward ; but by
 God's grace,

We'll follow Philip's leading, and set up
 The Holy Office here—garner the wheat,

And burn the tares with unquenchable fire !
 Burn !—

Fie, what a savour ! tell the cooks to close
 The doors of all the offices below.

Latimer !

Sir, we are private with our women here—

Ever a rough, blunt, and uncourtly fel-
 low—

Thou light a torch that never will go out !

'Tis out—mine flames. Women, the
 Holy Father

Has ta'en the legateship from our cousin
 Pole—

Was that well done ? and poor Pole pines
 of it,

As I do, to the death. I am but a woman
 I have no power.—Ah, weak and meek
 old man,

Seven-fold dishonour'd even in the sight
 Of thine own sectaries—No, no. No
 pardon !—

Why that was false : there is the right
 hand still

Beckons me hence.

Sir, you were burnt for heresy, not for
 treason,

Remember that! 'twas I and Bonner did it,
And Pole; we are three to one—Have
you found mercy there,
Grant it me here: and see, he smiles and
goes,
Gentle as in life.

Alice. Madam, who goes? King
Philip?

Mary. No, Philip comes and goes,
but never goes.

Women, when I am dead,
Open my heart, and there you will find
written

Two names, Philip and Calais; open
his,—

So that he have one,—

You will find Philip only, policy,
policy,—

Ay, worse than that—not one hour true
to me!

Foul maggots crawling in a fester'd vice!
Adulterous to the very heart of Hell.

Hast thou a knife?

Alice. Ay, Madam, but o' God's
mercy—

Mary. Fool, think'st thou I would
peril mine own soul

By slaughter of the body? I could not,
girl,

Not this way—callous with a constant
stripe,

Unwoundable. The knife!

Alice. Take heed, take heed!
The blade is keen as death.

Mary. This Philip shall not
Stare in upon me in my haggardness;
Old, miserable, diseased,
Incapable of children. Come thou down.
[Cuts out the picture and throws it down.

Lie there. (Wails) O God, I have
kill'd my Philip!

Alice. No,

Madam, you have but cut the canvas out;
We can replace it.

Mary. All is well then; rest—
I will to rest; he said, I must have rest.

[Cries of 'Elizabeth' in the street.

A cry! What's that? Elizabeth? revolt?
A new Northumberland, another Wyatt?

I'll fight it on the threshold of the grave.

Lady Clarence. Madam, your royal
sister comes to see you.

Mary. I will not see her.
Who knows if Boleyn's daughter be my
sister?

I will see none except the priest. Your
arm. [To Lady Clarence.

O Saint of Aragon, with that sweet worn
smile

Among thy patient wrinkles—I help me
hence. [Exeunt.

*The Priest passes. Enter ELIZABETH
and SIR WILLIAM CECIL.*

Elizabeth. Good counsel yours—
No one in waiting? still,

As if the chamberlain were Death himself!
The room she sleeps in—is not this the

way?
No, that way there are voices. Am I

too late?
Cecil . . . God guide me lest I lose the

way. [Exit Elizabeth.
Cecil. Many points weather'd, many

perilous ones,
At last a harbour opens; but therein

Sunk rocks—they need fine steering—
much it is

To be nor mad, nor bigot—have a mind—
Nor let Priests' talk, or dream of worlds

to be,
Miscolour things about her—sudden

touches
For him, or him—sunk rocks; no

passionate faith—

But—if let be—balance and compromise ;
 Brave, wary, sane to the heart of her—a
 Tudor
 School'd by the shadow of death—a
 Boleyn, too,
 Glancing across the Tudor—not so well.

Enter ALICE.

How is the good Queen now ?

Alice. Away from Philip.
 Back in her childhood—prattling to her
 mother

Of her betrothal to the Emperor Charles,
 And childlike-jealous of him again—
 once

She thank'd her father sweetly for his book
 Against that godless German. Ah, those
 days

Were happy. It was never merry world
 In England, since the Bible came among
 us.

Cecil. And who says that ?

Alice. It is a saying among the
 Catholics.

Cecil. It never will be merry world in
 England,

Till all men have their Bible, rich and
 poor.

Alice. The Queen is dying, or you
 dare not say it.

Enter ELIZABETH.

Elizabeth. The Queen is dead.

Cecil. Then here she stands ! my
 homage.

Elizabeth. She knew me, and ac-
 knowledged me her heir,

Pray'd me to pay her debts, and keep the
 Faith ;

Then claspt the cross, and pass'd away
 in peace.

I left her lying still and beautiful,

More beautiful than in life. Why would
 you vex yourself,

Poor sister ? Sir, I swear I have no heart
 To be your Queen. To reign is restless
 fence,

Tierce, quart, and trickery. Peace is with
 the dead.

Her life was winter, for her spring was
 nupt ;

And she loved much : pray God she be
 forgiven.

Cecil. Peace with the dead, who never
 were at peace !

Yet she loved one so much—I needs must
 say—

That never English monarch dying left
 England so little.

Elizabeth. But with Cecil's aid
 And others, if our person be secured
 From traitor stabs—we will make England
 great.

*Enter PAGET, and other LORDS OF THE
 COUNCIL, SIR RALPH BAGENHALL,
 &c.*

Lords. God save Elizabeth, the Queen
 of England !

Bagenhall. God save the Crown ! the
 Papacy is no more.

Paget (aside). Are we so sure of
 that ?

Acclamation. God save the Queen !

HAROLD:

A DRAMA.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY
THE RIGHT HON. LORD LYTTON,

Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

MY DEAR LORD LYTTON,—After old-world records—such as the Bayeux tapestry and the Roman de Rou,—Edward Freeman's History of the Norman Conquest, and your father's Historical Romance treating of the same times, have been mainly helpful to me in writing this Drama. Your father dedicated his 'Harold' to my father's brother; allow me to dedicate my 'Harold' to yourself.

A. TENNYSON.

SHOW-DAY AT BATTLE ABBEY, 1876.

A GARDEN here—May breath and bloom of spring—
The cuckoo yonder from an English elm
Crying 'with my false egg I overwhelm
The native nest:' and fancy hears the ring
Of harness, and that deathful arrow sing,
And Saxon battleaxe clang on Norman helm.
Here rose the dragon-banner of our realm:
Here fought, here fell, our Norman-slander'd king.
O Garden blossoming out of English blood!
O strange hate-healer Time! We stroll and stare
Where might made right eight hundred years ago;
Might, right? ay good, so all things make for good—
But he and he, if soul be soul, are where
Each stands full face with all he did below.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

STIGAND, created Archbishop of Canterbury by the Antipope Benedict.

ALDRED, Archbishop of York.

THE NORMAN BISHOP OF LONDON.

HAROLD, Earl of Wessex, afterwards King of England

TOSTIG, Earl of Northumbria

GURTH, Earl of East Anglia

LEOFWIN, Earl of Kent and Essex

WULFNOTH

COUNT WILLIAM OF NORMANDY.

WILLIAM RUFUS.

WILLIAM MALET, a Norman Noble.*

EDWIN, Earl of Mercia

MORCAR, Earl of Northumbria after Tostig

GAMEL, a Northumbrian Thane.

ROLF, a Ponthieu Fisherman.

OSGOD and ATHELRIC, Canons from Waltham.

THE QUEEN, Edward the Confessor's Wife, Daughter of Godwin.

ALDWYTH, Daughter of Algar and Widow of Gruffyth, King of Wales.

EDITH, Ward of King Edward.

Courtiers, Earls and Thanes, Men-at-Arms, Canons of Waltham, Fishermen, &c.

* . . . quidam partim Normannus et Anglus
Compter Herald. (*Guy of Amiens*, 587.)

ACT I.

SCENE I.—LONDON. THE KING'S PALACE.

(A comet seen through the open windows.)

ALDWYTH, GAMEL, COURTIERs talking together.

First Courtier. Lo! there once more
—this is the seventh night!
Yon grimly-glaring, treble-brandish'd
scourge

Of England!

Second Courtier. Horrible!

First Courtier. Look you, there's a star
That dances in it as mad with agony!

Third Courtier. Ay, like a spirit in
Hell who skips and flies
To right and left, and cannot scape the
flame.

Second Courtier. Steam'd upward
from the undescendable
Abysm.

First Courtier. Or floated downward
from the throne
Of God Almighty.

Aldwyth. Gamel, son of Orm,
What thinkest thou this means?

Gamel. War, my dear lady!*Aldwyth.* Doth this affright thee?*Gamel.* Mightily, my dear lady!

Aldwyth. Stand by me then, and look
upon my face,
Not on the comet.

(Enter MORCAR.)

Brother! why so pale?
Morcar. It glares in heaven, it flares
upon the Thames,

The people are as thick as bees below,
They hum like bees,—they cannot speak
—for awe;

Look to the skies, then to the river, strike
Their hearts, and hold their babies up to it.

I think that they would Molochize them too,

To have the heavens clear.

Aldwyth.

They fright not me.

(Enter LEOFWIN, after him GURTH.)

Ask thou Lord Leofwin what he thinks of this!

Morcar. Lord Leofwin, dost thou
believe, that these
Three rods of blood-red fire up yonder
mean

The doom of England and the wrath of Heaven?

Bishop of London (passing). Did ye
not cast with bestial violence
Our holy Norman bishops down from all
Their thrones in England? I alone
remain.

Why should not Heaven be wroth?

Leofwin.

With us, or thee?

Bishop of London. Did ye not outlaw
your archbishop Robert,
Robert of Jumiéges—well-nigh murder
him too?

Is there no reason for the wrath of Heaven?

Leofwin. Why then the wrath of
Heaven hath three tails,
The devil only one.

*[Exit Bishop of London.]**(Enter ARCHBISHOP STIGAND.)*

Ask our Archbishop.
Stigand should know the purposes of
Heaven.

Stigand. Not I. I cannot read the
face of heaven;
Perhaps our vines will grow the better for
it.

Leofwin (laughing). He can but read
the king's face on his coins.

Stigand. Ay, ay, young lord, *there* the
king's face is power.

Gurth. O father, mock not at a public fear,
But tell us, is this pendent hell in heaven
A harm to England?

Stigand. Ask it of King Edward!
And he may tell thee, *I* am a harm to
England.

Old uncanonical Stigand—ask of *me*
Who had my pallium from an Antipope!
Not he the man—for in our windy
world

What's up is faith, what's down is heresy.
Our friends, the Normans, help to shake
his chair.

I have a Norman fever on me, son,
And cannot answer sanely . . . What it
means?

Ask our broad Earl.

[*Pointing to HAROLD, who enters.*

Harold (*seeing Gamel*). Hail, Gamel,
son of Orm!

Albeit no rolling stone, my good friend
Gamel,

Thou hast rounded since we met. Thy
life at home

Is easier than mine here. Look! am I
not

Work-wan, flesh-fallen?

Gamel. Art thou sick, good Earl?

Harold. Sick as an autumn swallow
for a voyage,

Sick for an idle week of hawk and hound
Beyond the seas—a change! When
camest thou hither?

Gamel. To-day, good Earl.

Harold. Is the North quiet, Gamel?

Gamel. Nay, there be murmurs, for
thy brother breaks us

With over-taxing—quiet, ay, as yet—
Nothing as yet.

Harold. Stand by him, mine old
friend,

Thou art a great voice in Northumberland!

Advise him: speak him sweetly, he will
hear thee.

He is passionate but honest. Stand thou
by him!

More talk of this to-morrow, if yon weird
sign

Not blast us in our dreams.—Well, father:
Stigand—

[*To Stigand, who advances to him.*

Stigand (*pointing to the comet*). War
there, my son? is that the doom
of England?

Harold. Why not the doom of all the
world as well?

For all the world sees it as well as Eng-
land.

These meteors came and went before our
day,

Not harming any: it threatens us no more
Than French or Norman. War? the
worst that follows

Things that seem jerk'd out of the common
rut

Of Nature is the hot religious fool,
Who, seeing war in heaven, for heaven's
credit

Makes it on earth: but look, where
Edward draws

A faint foot hither, leaning upon Tostig.
He hath learnt to love our Tostig much
of late.

Leofwin. And he hath learnt, despite
the tiger in him,

To sleek and supple himself to the king's
hand.

Gurth. I trust the kingly touch that
cures the evil

May serve to charm the tiger out of him.

Leofwin. He hath as much of cat as
tiger in him.

Our Tostig loves the hand and not the
man.

Harold. Nay! Better die than lie!

Enter KING, QUEEN, and TOSTIG.

Edward. In heaven signs!
Signs upon earth! signs everywhere!
your Priests

Gross, worldly, simoniacal, unlearn'd!
They scarce can read their Psalter; and
your churches

Uncouth, unhandsome, while in Norman-
land

God speaks thro' abler voices, as He
dwells

In statelier shrines. I say not this, as
being

Half Norman-blooded, nor as some have
held,

Because I love the Norman better—no,
But dreading God's revenge upon this
realm

For narrowness and coldness: and I say it
For the last time perchance, before I go
To find the sweet refreshment of the
Saints.

I have lived a life of utter purity:

I have builded the great church of Holy
Peter:

I have wrought miracles—to God the
glory—

And miracles will in my name be wrought
Hereafter.—I have fought the fight and
go—

I see the flashing of the gates of pearl—
And it is well with me, tho' some of you
Have scorn'd me—ay—but after I am
gone

Woe, woe to England! I have had a
vision;

The seven sleepers in the cave at Ephesus
Have turn'd from right to left.

Harold. My most dear Master,
What matters? let them turn from left to
right

And sleep again.

Tostig. Too hardy with thy king!
A life of prayer and fasting well may see
Deeper into the mysteries of heaven
Than thou, good brother.

Aldwyth (aside). Sees he into thine,
That thou wouldst have his promise for
the crown?

Edward. Tostig says true; my son,
thou art too hard,
Not stagger'd by this ominous earth and
heaven:

But heaven and earth are threads of the
same loom,
Play into one another, and weave the web
That may confound thee yet.

Harold. Nay, I trust not,
For I have served thee long and honestly.

Edward. I know it, son; I am not
thankless: thou

Hast broken all my foes, lighten'd for me
The weight of this poor crown, and left
me time

And peace for prayer to gain a better one.
Twelve years of service! England loves
thee for it.

Thou art the man to rule her!

Aldwyth (aside). So, not Tostig!

Harold. And after those twelve years
a boon, my king,

Respite, a holiday: thyself wast wont
To love the chase: thy leave to set my
feet

On board, and hunt and hawk beyond
the seas!

Edward. What with this flouting
horror overhead?

Harold. Well, when it passes then.

Edward. Ay if it pass.
Go not to Normandy—go not to Nor-
mandy.

Harold. And wherefore not, my king,
to Normandy?

Is not my brother Wulfnoth hostage there

For my dead father's loyalty to thee?
I pray thee, let me hence and bring him home.

Edward. Not thee, my son: some other messenger.

Harold. And why not me, my lord, to Normandy?

Is not the Norman Count thy friend and mine?

Edward. I pray thee, do not go to Normandy.

Harold. Because my father drove the Normans out of England?—That was many a summer gone—

Forgotten and forgiven by them and thee.

Edward. Harold, I will not yield thee leave to go.

Harold. Why then to Flanders. I will hawk and hunt in Flanders.

Edward. Be there not fair woods and fields

In England? Wilful, wilful. Go—the Saints

Pilot and prosper all thy wandering out And homeward. Tostig, I am faint again.

Son Harold, I will in and pray for thee.

[*Exit, leaning on Tostig, and followed by Stigand, Morcar, and Courtiers.*]

Harold. What lies upon the mind of our good king That he should harp this way on Normandy?

Queen. Brother, the king is wiser than he seems;
And Tostig knows it; Tostig loves the king.

Harold. And love should know; and—be the king so wise,—

Then Tostig too were wiser than he seems. I love the man but not his phantasies.

(*Re-enter TOSTIG.*)

Well, brother,
When didst thou hear from thy Northumbria?

Tostig. When did I hear aught but this 'When' from thee?

Leave me alone, brother, with my Northumbria:

She is *my* mistress, let *me* look to her! The King hath made me Earl; make me not fool!

Nor make the King a fool, who made me Earl!

Harold. No, Tostig—lest I make myself a fool

Who made the King who made thee, make thee Earl.

Tostig. Why chafe me then? Thou knowest I soon go wild.

Gerth. Come, come! as yet thou art not gone so wild

But thou canst bear the best and wisest of us

Harold. So says old Gerth, not I: yet hear! this earldom,

Tostig, hath been a kingdom. Their old crown

Is yet a force among them, a sun set But leaving light enough for Alfgar's house

To strike thee down by—nay, this ghastly glare

May heat their fancies.

Tostig. My most worthy brother, Thou art the quietest man in all the world—

Ay, ay and with a peace and great in war—

Pray God the people choose thee for their king!

o were wiser than he seems,
but not his phantasies.

Enter TOSTIG.)

u hear from thy Northum-

en did I hear aught but
then' from thee?

ne, brother, with my
mbria:

ess, let *me* look to her!
made me Earl; make me

King a fool, who made

, Tostig!—lest I make
fool

King who made thee,
e Earl.

chafe me then? Thou
t soon go wild.

e, come! as yet thou art
so wild

ear the best and wisest

says old Gurth, not I:
thin; earldom,

a kingdom. Their old

ong them, a sun set
ht enough for Alfgar's

wn by—nay, this ghastly

ncies.

ly most worthy brother,
uietest man in all the

a peace and great in

people choose thee for

!

But all the powers of the house of Godwin
Are not enframed in thee.

Harold. Thank the Saints, no!
But thou hast drain'd them shallow by
thy tolls,

And thou art ever here about the King:
Thine absence well may seem a want of
care.

Cling to their love; for, now the sons of
Godwin

Sit topmost in the field of England, envy,
Like the rough bear beneath the tree,
good brother,

Waits till the man let go.

Tostig. Good counsel truly!
I heard from my Northumbria yesterday.

Harold. How goes it then with thy
Northumbria? Well?

Tostig. And wouldst thou that it went
ought else than well?

Harold. I would it went as well as
with mine earldom,
Leofwin's and Gurth's.

Tostig. Ye govern milder men.

Gurth. We have made them milder
by just government.

Tostig. Ay, ever give yourselves your
own good word.

Leofwin. An honest gift, by all the
Saints, if giver

And taker be but honest! but they bribe
Each other, and so often, an honest world
Will not believe them.

Harold. I may tell thee, Tostig,
I heard from thy Northumberland to-day.

Tostig. From spies of thine to spy
my nakedness

In my poor North!

Harold. There is a movement there,
A blind one—nothing yet.

Tostig. Crush it at once
With all the power I have!—I must—I
will!—

Crush it half-born! Fool still? or
wisdom there,

My wise head-shaking Harold?

Harold. Make not thou
The nothing something. Wisdom when
in power

And wisest, should not frown as Power,
but smile

As kindness, watching all, till the true
must

Shall make her strike as Power: but
when to strike—

O Tostig, O dear brother—If they
prance,

Rein in, not lash them, lest they rear and
run

And break both neck and axle.

Tostig. Good again!
Good counsel tho' scarce needed. Pour
not water

In the full vessel running out at top
To swamp the house.

Leofwin. Nor 'a be a wild thing
Out of the waste, to turn and bite the hand
Would help thee from the trap.

Tostig. Thou playest in tune.

Leofwin. To the deaf adder thee, that
wilt not dance

However wisely charm'd.

Tostig. No more, no more!

Gurth. I likewise cry 'no more.'
Unwholesome talk

For Godwin's house! Leofwin, thou hast
a tongue!

Tostig, thou lookst as thou would'st
spring upon him.

St. Olaf, not while I am by! Come,
come,

Join hands, let brethren dwell in unity;
Let kith and kin stand close as our shield-

wall,

Who breaks us then? I say, thou hast a
tongue,

And Tostig is not stout enough to bear it.
Vex him not, Leofwin.

Tostig. No, I am not vext,—
Altho' ye seek to vex me, one and all.
I have to make report of my good earldom
To the good king who gave it—not to
you—

Not any of you.—I am not vext at all.

Harold. The king? the king is ever
at his prayers;

In all that handles matter of the state
I am the king.

Tostig. That shalt thou never be
If I can thwart thee.

Harold. Brother, brother!

Tostig. Away!

[*Exit Tostig.*]

Queen. Spite of this grisly star ye
three must gall

Poor Tostig.

Leofwin. Tostig, sister, galls himself;
He cannot smell a rose but pricks his nose
Against the thorn, and rails against the
rose.

Queen. I am the only rose of all the
stock

That never thorn'd him; Edward loves
him, so

Ye hate him. Harold always hated him.
Why—how they fought when boys—and,
Holy Mary!

How Harold used to beat him!

Harold. Why, boys will fight.
Leofwin would often fight me, and I beat
him.

Even old Gurth would fight. I had
much ado

To hold mine own against old Gurth.
Old Gurth,

We fought like great states for grave
cause; but Tostig—

On a sudden—at a something—for a
nothing;—

The boy would fist me hard, and when
we fought

I conquer'd, and he loved me none the
less,

Till thou wouldst get him all apart, and
tell him

That where he was but worsted, he was
wring'd.

Ah! thou hast taught the king to spoil
him too;

Now the spoilt child sways both. Take
heed, take heed;

Thou art the Queen; ye are boy and girl
no more:

Side not with Tostig in any violence,
Lest thou be sideways guilty of the
violence.

Queen. Come fall not foul on me. I
leave thee, brother.

Harold. Nay, my good sister—
[*Exit Queen, Harold, Gurth, and
Leofwin.*]

Aldwyth. Gamel, son of Orm,
What thinkest thou this means?

[*Pointing to the comet.*]

Gamel. War, my dear lady
War, waste, plague, famine, all malignan-
ties.

Aldwyth. It means the fall of Tostig
from his earldom.

Gamel. That were too small a matter
for a comet!

Aldwyth. It means the lifting of the
house of Alfgar.

Gamel. Too small! a comet would
not show for that!

Aldwyth. Not small for thee, if thou
canst compass it.

Gamel. Thy love?

Aldwyth. As much as I can give
thee man;

This Tostig is, or like to be, a tyrant;
It is to my people: oust him!

Gamel.

And thy love?

Alldwyth. As much as thou canst bear.*Gamel.*

I can bear all,

And not be giddy.

Alldwyth. No more now : to-morrow.SCENE II.—IN THE GARDEN. THE
KING'S HOUSE NEAR LONDON.
SUNSET.*Edith.* Mad for thy mate, passionate
nightingale . . .

I love thee for it—ay, but stay a moment ;

He can but stay a moment : he is going.I fain would hear him coming ! . . . near
me . . . near,Somewhere—To draw him nearer with a
charm

Like thine to thine.

(Singing.)

Love is come with a song and a smile,

Welcome Love with a smile and a song :

Love can stay but a little while.

Why cannot he stay ? They call him
away :

Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong ;

Love will stay for a whole life long.

*Enter HAROLD.**Harold.* The nightingales at Havering-
in-the-bowerSang out their loves so loud, that
Edward's prayersWere deafen'd, and he pray'd them dumb,
and thus

I dumb thee too, my wingless nightingale !

*[Kissing her.]**Edith.* Thou art my music ! Would
their wings were mineTo follow thee to Flanders ! Must thou
go ?*Harold.* Not must, but will. It is
but for one moon.*Edith.* Leaving so many foes in
Edward's hallTo league against thy weal. The Lady
AlldwythWas here to-day, and when she touch'd
on thee,She stammer'd in her hate ; I am sure
she hates thee,

Pants for thy blood.

Harold. Well, I have given her
cause—

I fear no woman.

*Edith.*Hate not one who felt
Some pity for thy later ! I am sureHer morning wanted sunlight, she so
praisedThe convent and lone life—within the
pale—Beyond the passion. Nay—she held with
Edward,At least methought she held with holy
Edward,

That marriage was half sin.

*Harold.*A lesson worth
Finger and thumb—thus *(snaps his
fingers)*. And my answer to it—

See here—an interwoven H and E !

Take thou this ring ; I will demand his
wardFrom Edward when I come again. Ay,
would she ?

She to shut up my blossom in the dark !

Thou art *my* nun, thy cloister in mine
arms.*Edith (taking the ring).* Yea, but
Earl Tostig—*Harold.*That's a truer fear !
For if the North take fire, I should be back ;
I shall be, soon enough.*Edith.*

Ay, but last night

Harold. A gnat that vex'd thy pillow !
Had I been by

I would have spoil'd his horn. My girl,
what was it?

Edith. Oh! that thou wert not going!
For so mighthought it was our marriage-
morn,

And while we stood together, a dead man
Rose from behind the altar, tore away
My marriage ring, and rent my bridal veil;
And then I turn'd, and saw the church
all fill'd

With dead men upright from their graves,
and all

The dead men made at thee to murder
thee,

But thou didst back thyself against a
pillar,

And strike among them with thy battle-
axe—

There, what a dream!

Harold. Well, well—a dream—
no more!

Edith. Did not Heaven speak to men
in dreams of old?

Harold. Ay—well—of old. I tell
thee what, my child;

Thou hast misread this merry dream of
thine,

Taken the rifted pillars of the wood
For smooth stone columns of the sanc-
tuary,

The shadows of a hundred fat dead deer
For dead men's ghosts. True, that the
battle-axe

Was out of place; it should have been
the bow.—

Come, thou shalt dream no more such
dreams; I swear it,

By mine own eyes—and these two sap-
phires—these

Twin rubies, that are amulets against all
The kisses of all kind of womankind

In Flanders, till the sea shall roll me back
To tumble at thy feet.

Edith. That would but shame me,
Rather than make me vain. The sea may
roll

Sand, shingle, shore-weed, not the living
rock

Which guards the land.

Harold. Except it be a soft one,
And undereaten to the fall. Mine
amulet . . .

This last . . . upon thine eyelids, to
shut in

A happier dream. Sleep, sleep, and
thou shalt see

My grayhounds fleeting like a beam of
light,

And hear my peregrine and her bells in
heaven;

And other bells on earth, which yet are
heaven's;

Guess what they be.

Edith. He cannot guess who knows.
Farewell, my king.

Harold. Not yet, but then—my queen.
[*Exeunt.*]

Enter ALDWYTH from the thicket.

Aldwyth. The kiss that charms thine
eyelids into sleep,

Will hold mine waking. Hate him?
I could love him

More, tenfold, than this fearful child can do;
Griffyth I hated: why not hate the foe

Of England? Griffyth when I saw him
flee,

Chased deer-like up his mountains, all
the blood

That should have only pulsed for Griffyth,
beat

For his pursuer. I love him or think I
love him.

If he were King of England, I his queen,
I might be sure of it. Nay, I do love
him.—

that would but shame me,
 e me vain. The sea may

shore-weed, not the living

the land.

Except it be a soft one,
 en to the fall. Mine

upon thine eyelids, to

um. Sleep, sleep, and
 t see

fleeting like a beam of

eregrine and her bells in

on earth, which yet are

be.

cannot guess who knows.

g.

yet, but then—my queen.

[*Exeunt.*

Edith from the thicket.

the kiss that charms thine

to sleep,

waking. Hate him?

love him

in this fearful child can do;

why not hate the foe

Griffyth when I saw him

up his mountains, all

only pulsed for Griffyth.

I love him or think I

of England, I his queen.

of it. Nay, I do love

SCENE II.

HAROLD.

629

She must be cloister'd somehow, lest the
 king

Should yield his ward to Harold's will.
 What harm?

She hath but blood enough to live, not
 love.—

When Harold goes and Tostig, shall I
 play

The craftier Tostig with him? fawn upon
 him?

Chime in with all? 'O thou more saint
 than king!'

And that were true enough. 'O blessed
 relics!'

'O Holy Peter!' If he found me thus,
 Harold might hate me; he is broad and

honest,
 Breathing an easy gladness . . . not

like Aldwyth . . .

For which I strangely love him. Should
 not England

Love Aldwyth, if she stay the feuds that
 part

The sons of Godwin from the sons of
 Alfgar

By such a marrying? Courage, noble
 Aldwyth!

Let all thy people bless thee!
 Our wild Tostig,

Edward hath made him Earl: he would
 be king:—

The dog that snapt the shadow, dropt the
 bone.—

I trust he may do well, this Gamel, whom
 I play upon, that he may play the note

Whereat the dog shall howl and run, and
 Harold

Hear the king's music, all alone with him,
 Pronounced his heir of England.

I see the goal and half the way to it.—
 Peace-lover is our Harold for the sake

Of England's wholeness—so—to shake
 the North

With earthquake and disruption—some
 division—

Then fling mine own fair person in the gap
 A sacrifice to Harold, a peace-offering,

A scape-goat marriage—all the sins of
 both

The houses on mine head—then a fair life
 And bless the Queen of England.

Morcar (coming from the thicket). Art
 thou assured

By this, that Harold loves but Edith?
Aldwyth.

Why creepst thou like a timorous beast
 of prey

Out of the bush by night?
Morcar.

I follow'd thee.
Aldwyth. Follow my lead, and I will

make thee earl.
Morcar. What lead then?

Aldwyth. Thou shalt flash it secretly
 Among the good Northumbrian folk,

that I—
 That Harold loves me—yea, and presently

That I and Harold are betroth'd—and
 last—

Perchance that Harold wrongs me; tho'
 I would not

That it should come to that.
Morcar.

I will both flash
 And thunder for thee.
Aldwyth.

I said 'secretly';
 It is the flash that murders, the poor
 thunder

Never harm'd head.
Morcar. But thunder may bring down

That which the flash hath stricken.
Aldwyth.

Down with Tostig!
 That first of all.—And when doth Harold

go?
Morcar. To-morrow—first to Bosham,

then to Flanders.
Aldwyth. Not to come back till
 Tostig shall have shown

And reddened with his people's blood the
teeth
That shall be broken by us—yea, and
thou
Chair'd in his place. Good-night, and
dream thyself
Their chosen Earl. [*Exit Aldwyth.*
Morcar. Earl first, and after that
Who knows I may not dream myself their
king!

ACT II.

SCENE I.—SEASHORE. PONTIEU.
NIGHT.

HAROLD and his Men, *wrecked*.

Harold. Friends, in that last inhospitable plunge
Our boat hath burst her ribs; but ours
are whole;
I have but bark'd my hands.

Attendant. I dug mine into
My old fast friend the shore, and clinging
thus
Felt the remorseless outdraught of the
deep

Haul like a great strong fellow at my legs,
And then I rose and ran. The blast that
came

So suddenly hath fallen as suddenly—
Put thou the comet and this blast together—

Harold. Put thou thyself and mother-wit together.

Be not a fool!

(*Enter Fishermen with torches, HAROLD going up to one of them, &c.*)

Wicked sea-will-o'-the-wind!
Wolf of the shore! dog, with thy lying
lights
Thou hast betray'd us on these rocks of
thine!

Rolf. Ay, but thou liest as loud as the
black herring-pond behind thee. We be
fishermen; I came to see after my nets.

Harold. To drag us into them.
Fishermen? devils!

While ye fish for men with your
false fires,

Let the great Devil fish for your own souls.

Rolf. Nay then, we be liker the blessed
Apostles; they were fishers of men, Father
Jean says.

Harold. I had liefer that the fish had
swallowed me,
Like Jonah, than have known there were
such devils.

What's to be done?

[*To his Men—goes apart with them.*

Fisherman. Rolf, what fish did swallow
Jonah?

Rolf. A whale!

Fisherman. Then a whale to a whale
we have swallowed the King of England.
I saw him over there. Look thee, Rolf,
when I was down in the fever, she was
down with the hunger, and thou didst
stand by her and give her thy crabs, and
set her up again, till now, by the patient
Saints, she's as crabbed as ever.

Rolf. And I'll give her my crabs again,
when thou art down again.

Fisherman. I thank thee, Rolf. Run
thou to Count Guy; he is hard at hand.
Tell him what hath crept into our creel,
and he will fee thee as freely as he will
wrench this outlander's ransom out of
him—and why not? for what right had
he to get himself wrecked on another
man's land?

Rolf. Thou art the human-heartedest,
Christian-charitist of all crab-catchers.
Share and share alike! [*Exit.*

Harold (to Fisherman). Fellow, dost
thou catch crabs?

thou liest as loud as the
d behind thee. We be
e to see after my nets.
drag us into them.
? devils!

fish for men with your

fish for your own souls.
n, we be liker the blessed
ere fishers of men, Father

l liefer that the fish had
me,
have known there were

s.
c?

—goes apart with them.
olf, what fish did swallow

! :
Then a whale to a whelk
d the King of England.
ere. Look thee, Rolf,
n in the fever, she was
unger, and thou didst
give her thy crabs, and
till now, by the patient
rabb'd as ever.

give her my crabs again,
wn again.

thank thee, Rolf. Run
ay; he is hard at hand.
ath crept into our creel,
hee as freely as he will
ander's ransom out of
ot? for what right had
lf wrecked on another

et the human-heartedest,
st of all crab-catchers.
like! [*Exit*
herman). Fellow, dost
crabs?

Fisherman. As few as I may in a
wind, and less than I would in a calm.
Ay!

Harold. I have a mind that thou shalt
catch no more.

Fisherman. How?

Harold. I have a mind to brain thee
with mine axe.

Fisherman. Ay, do, do, and our
great Count-crab will make his nippers
meet in thine heart; he'll sweat it out of
thee, he'll sweat it out of thee. Look,
he's here! He'll speak for himself!
Hold thine own, if thou canst.

Enter GUY, COUNT OF PONTIEU.

Harold. Guy, Count of Ponthieu!

Guy. Harold, Earl of Wessex!

Harold. Thy villains with their lying
lights have wreck'd us!

Guy. Art thou not Earl of Wessex?

Harold. In mine earldom
A man may hang gold bracelets on a
bush,

A leave them for a year, and coming
back

Find them in.

Guy. Thou art a mighty man
In thine own earldom!

Harold. Were such murderous liars
In Wessex—if I caught them, they should
hang

Cliff-gibbeted for sea-marks; our sea-mew
Winging their only wail!

Guy. Ay, but my men
Hold that the shipwreckt are accursed of
God;—

What hinders me to hold with mine own
men?

Harold. The Christian manhood of
the man who reigns!

Guy. Ay, rave thy worst, but in our
oublittes

Thou shalt or rot or ransom. Hale him
hence! [*To one of his Attendants.*
Fly thou to William; tell him we have
Harold.

SCENE II. —BAYEUX. PALACE.

COUNT WILLIAM and WILLIAM MALET.

William. We hold our Saxon wood-
cock in the springe,

But he begins to flutter. As I think
He was thine host in England when I

went
To visit Edward.

Malet. Yea, and there, my lord,
To make allowance for their rougher
fashions,

I found him all a noble host should be.

William. Thou art his friend: thou
know'st my claim on England
Thro' Edward's promise: we have him in
the toils.

And it were well, if thou shouldst let him
feel,

How dense a fold of danger nets him
round,

So that he bristle himself against my
will.

Malet. What would I do, my lord, if
I were you?

William. What wouldst thou do?

Malet. My lord, he is thy guest.

William. Nay, by the splendour of
God, no guest of mine.

He came not to see me, had past me by
To hunt and hawk elsewhere, save for the
fate

Which hunted him when that un-Saxon
blast,

And bolts of thunder moulded in high
heaven

To serve the Norman purpose, drave and
crack'd

His boat on Ponthieu beach ; where our
friend Guy

Had wrung his ransom from him by the
rack,

But that I stept between and purchased
him,

Translating his captivity from Guy

To mine own hearth at Bayeux, where he
sits

My ransom'd prisoner.

Malet. Well, if not with gold,
With golden deeds and iron strokes that
brought

Thy war with Brittany to a goodlier close
Than else had been, he paid his ransom
back.

William. So that henceforth they are
not like to league

With Harold against me.

Malet. A marvel, how
He from the liquid sands of Coesnon
Haled thy shore-swallow'd, armour'd
Normans up

To fight for thee again !

William. Perchance against
Their saver, save thou save him from
himself.

Malet. But I should let him home
again, my lord.

William. Simple ! let fly the bird
within the hand,

To catch the bird again within the bush !
No.

Smooth thou my way, before he clash with
me ;

I want his voice in England for the crown,
I want thy voice with him to bring him
round ;

And being brave he must be subtly cow'd,
And being truthful wrought upon to
swear

Vows that he dare not break. England
our own

Thro' Harold's help, he shall be my dear
friend

As well as thine, and thou thyself shalt
have

Large lordship there of lands and territory.

Malet. I knew thy purpose ; he and
Wulfnoth never

Have met, except in public ; shall they
meet

In private ? I have often talk'd with
Wulfnoth,

And stuff'd the boy with fears that these
may act

On Harold when they meet.

William. Then let them meet !

Malet. I can but love this noble,
honest Harold.

William. Love him ! why not ? thine
is a loving office,

I have commission'd thee to save the
man :

Help the good ship, showing the sunken
rock,

Or he is wreckt for ever.

Enter WILLIAM RUFUS.

William Rufus. Father.

William. Well, boy.

William Rufus. They have taken
away the toy thou gavest me,

The Norman knight.

William. Why, boy ?

William Rufus. Because I broke

The horse's leg—it was mine own to
break ;

I like to have my toys, and break them too.

William. Well, thou shalt have
another Norman knight !

William Rufus. And may I break his
legs ?

William. Yea,—get thee gone !

William Rufus. I'll tell them I have
had my way with thee. [*Exit.*

elp, he shall be my dear

and thou thyself shalt

ere of lands and territory.

w thy purpose; he and

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ot in public; shall they

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ILLIAM RUFUS.

. Father.

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Why, boy?

Because I broke

—it was mine own to

boys, and break them too.

ll, thou shalt have

orman knight!

. And may I break his

ea,—get thee gone!

. I'll tell them I have

ay with thee. [*Exit.*]

Malet. I never knew thee check thy
will for ought

Save for the prattling of thy little ones.

William. Who shall be kings of
England. I am heir

Of England by the promise of her king.

Malet. But there the great Assembly
choose their king,

The choice of England is the voice of
England.

William. I will be king of England
by the laws,

The choice, and voice of England.

Malet. Can that be?

William. The voice of any people is
the sword

That guards them, or the sword that beats
them down.

Here comes the would-be what I will
be . . . kinglike . . .

Tho' scarce at ease; for, save our meshes
break,

More kinglike he than like to prove a king.

(*Enter HAROLD, musing, with his eyes
on the ground.*)

He sees me not—and yet he dreams of me.

Earl, wilt thou fly my falcons this fair day?

They are of the best, strong-wing'd against
the wind.

*Harold (looking up suddenly, having
caught but the last word).* Which
way does it blow?

William. Blowing for England, ha?

Not yet. Thou hast not learnt thy quarters

here.

The winds so cross and jostle among these
towers.

Harold. Count of the Normans, thou
hast ransom'd us,

Maintain'd, and entertain'd us royally!

William. And thou for us hast fought
as loyally,

Which binds us friendship-fast for ever!

Harold. Good!

But lest we turn the scale of courtesy

By too much pressure on it, I would fain,

Since thou hast promised Wulfnoth home

with us,

Be home again with Wulfnoth.

William. Stay—as yet

Thou hast but seen how Norman hands

can strike,

But walk'd our Norman field, scarce

touch'd or tasted

The splendours of our Court.

Harold. I am in no mood:

I should be as the shadow of a cloud

Crossing your light.

William. Nay, rest a week or two,

And we will fill thee full of Norman sun,

And send thee back among thine island

mists

With laughter.

Harold. Count, I thank thee, but

had rather

Breathe the free wind from off our Saxon

downs,

Tho' charged with all the woe of all the

west.

William. Why if thou wilt, so let it

be—thou shalt.

That were a graceless hospitality

To chain the free guest to the banquet-

board;

To-morrow we will ride with thee to

Harfleur,

And see thee shipt, and pray in thy behalf

For happier homeward winds than that

which crack'd

Thy bark at Ponthieu,—yet to us, in faith,

A happy one—whereby we came to know

Thy valour and thy value, noble earl.

Ay, and perchance a happy one for thee,

Provided—I will go with thee to-mor-

row—

Nay—but there be conditions, easy ones,
So thou fair friend, will take them easily.

Enter PAGE.

Page. My lord there is a post from
over seas

With news for thee. [*Exit PAGE.*]

William. Come, Malet, let us hear!

[*Exeunt Count William and Malet.*]

Harold. Conditions? What conditions? pay him back

His ransom? 'easy'—that were easy—
nay—

No money-lover he! What said the
King?

'I pray you do not go to Normandy.'

And fate hath blown me hither, bound
me too

With bitter obligation to the Count—

Have I not fought it out? What did he
mean?

There lodged a gleaming grimness in his
eyes,

Gave his shorn smile the lie. The walls
oppress me,

And yon huge keep that hinders half the
heaven.

Free air! free field!

[*Moves to go out. A Man-at-arms
follows him.*]

Harold (to the Man-at-arms). I need
thee not. Why dost thou follow me?

Man-at-arms. I have the Count's
commands to follow thee.

Harold. What then? Am I in danger
in this court?

Man-at-arms. I cannot tell. I have
the Count's commands.

Harold. Stand out of earshot then,
and keep me still

In eyeshot.

Man-at-arms. Yea, lord Harold.

[*Withdraws.*]

Harold.

And arm'd men
Ever keep watch beside my chamber door,
And if I walk within the lonely wood,
There is an arm'd man ever glides behind!

(*Enter MALET.*)

Why am I follow'd, haunted, harass'd,
watch'd?

See yonder!

[*Pointing to the Man-at-arms.*]

Malet. 'Tis the good Count's care for
thee!

The Normans love thee not, nor thou the
Normans,

Or—so they deem.

Harold. But wherefore is the wind,
Which way soever the vane-arrow swing,
Not ever fair for England? Why but
now

He said (thou heardest him) that I must
not hence

Save on conditions.

Malet. So in truth he said.

Harold. Malet, thy mother was an
Englishwoman;

There somewhere beats an English pulse
in thee!

Malet. Well—for my mother's sake
I love your England,

But for my father I love Normandy.

Harold. Speak for thy mother's sake,
and tell me true.

Malet. Then for my mother's sake,
and England's sake

That suffers in the daily want of thee,
Obey the Count's conditions, my good
friend.

Harold. How, Malet, if they be not
honourable!

Malet. Seem to obey them.

Harold. Better die than lie!

Malet. Choose therefore whether thou
wilt have thy conscience

And arm'd men
h beside my chamber door,
within the lonely wood,
'd man ever glides behind !

ter MALET.)

low'd, hauried, harass'd,
?

inting to the Man-at-arms.
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ove thee not, nor thou the

s,
em.
But wherefore is the wind,
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So in truth he said.
let, thy mother was an
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ur England,
er I love Normandy.
ak for thy mother's sake,
ne true.

for my mother's sake,
and's sake
he daily want of thee,
t's conditions, my good

w, Malet, if they be not
le !
to obey them.

Better die than lie !
se therefore whether thou
thy conscience

White as a maiden's hand, or whether
England

Be shatter'd into fragments.

Harold. News from England ?

Malet. Morcar and Edwin have stirr'd
up the Thanes

Against thy brother Tostig's governance ;
And all the North of Humber is one storm.

Harold. I shoul' be there, Malet, I
should be there !

Malet. And Tostig in his own hall on
suspicion

Hath massacred the Thane that was his
guest,

Camel, the son of Orm : and there be more
As villainously slain.

Harold. The wolf ! the beast !
Ill news for guests, ha, Malet ! More ?

What more ?

What do they say ? did Edward know of
this ?

Malet. They say, his wife was knowing
and abetting.

Harold. They say, his wife !—To
marry and have no husband

Makes the wife fool. My God, I should
be there.

I'll hack my way to the sea.

Malet. Thou canst not, Harold ;
Our Duke is all between thee and the sea,
Our Duke is all about thee like a God ;
All passes block'd. Obey him, speak
him fair,

For he is only debonair to those
That follow where he leads, but stark as
death

To those that cross him.—Look thou,
here is Wulfnoth !

I leave thee to thy talk with him alone ;
How wan, poor lad ! how sick and sad
for home !

[Exit Malet.]

Harold (muttering). Go not to
Normandy—go not to Normandy !

(Enter WULFNOTH.)

Poor brother ! still a hostage !

Wulfnoth.

Yea, and I

Shall see the dewy kiss of dawn no more
Make blush the maiden-white of our tall
cliffs,

Nor mark the sea-bird rouse himself and
hover

Above the windy ripple, and fill the sky
With free sea-laughter — never — save
indeed

Thou canst make yield this iron-mooded
Duke

To let me go.

Harold. Why, brother, so he will ;
But on conditions. Canst thou guess at
them ?

Wulfnoth. Draw nearer,—I was in
the corridor,

I saw him coming with his brother Odo
The Bayeux bishop, and I hid myself.

Harold. They did thee wrong who
made thee hostage ; thou
Wast ever fearful.

Wulfnoth. And he spoke—I
heard him—

'This Harold is not of the royal blood,
Can have no right to the crown,' and Odo
said,

'Thine is the right, for thine the might ;
he is here,

And yonder is thy keep.'

Harold. No, Wulfnoth, no.

Wulfnoth. And William laugh'd and
swore that might was right,
Far as he knew in this poor world of
ours—

'Marry, the Saints must go along with us,
And, brother, we will find a way,' said
he—

Yea, yea, he would be king of England,

Harold.

Never !

Wulfnoth. Yea, but thou must not
this way answer *him*.

Harold. Is it not better still to speak
the truth?

Wulfnoth. Not here, or thou wilt
never hence nor I :

For in the racing toward this golden goal
He turns not right or left, but tramples flat
Whatever thwarts him ; hast thou never
heard

His savagery at Alençon,—the town
Hung out raw hides along their walls, and
cried

‘Work for the tanner.’

Harold. That had anger’d me
Had I been William.

Wulfnoth. Nay, but he had prisoners,
He tore their eyes out, sliced their hands
away,

And flung them streaming o’er the battle-
ments

Upon the heads of those who walk’d
within—

O speak him fair, Harold, for thine own
sake.

Harold. Your Welshman says, ‘The
Trath against the World,’

Much more the truth against myself.

Wulfnoth. Thyself ?
But for my sake, oh brother ! oh ! for
my sake !

Harold. Poor Wulfnoth ! do they not
entreat thee well?

Wulfnoth. I see the blackness of my
dungeon loom

Across their lamps of revel, and beyond
The merriest murmurs of their banquet
clank

The shackles that will bind me to the
wall.

Harold. Too fearful still !

Wulfnoth. Oh no, no—speak
him fair !

Call it to temporize ; and not to lie ;
Harold, I do not counsel thee to lie.

The man that hath to foil a murderous aim
May, surely, play with words.

Harold. Words are the man.
Not ev’n for thy sake, brother, would I
lie.

Wulfnoth. Then for thine Edith ?

Harold. There thou prickst me
deep.

Wulfnoth. And for our Mother Eng-
land ?

Harold. Deeper still.

Wulfnoth. And deeper still the deep-
down oubliette,
Down thirty feet below the smiling day—
In blackness—dogs’ food thrown upon
thy head.

And over thee the suns arise and set,
And the lark sings, the sweet stars come
and go,

And men are at their markets, in their
fields,

And woo their loves and have forgotten
thee ;

And thou art upright in thy living grave,
Where there is barely room to shift thy
side,

And all thine England hath forgotten thee ;
And he our lazy-pious Norman King,
With all his Normans round him once
again,

Counts his old beads, and hath forgotten
thee.

Harold. Thou art of my blood, and
so methinks, my boy,
Thy fears infect me beyond reason.
Peace !

Wulfnoth. And then our fiery Tostig,
while thy hands

Are palsied here, if his Northumbrians rise
And hurl him from them,—I have heard
the Normans

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eads, and hath forgotten

u art of my blood, and
 ks, my boy,
 ct me beyond reason.

and then our fiery Tostig,
 hands

if his Northumbrians rise
 om them,—I have heard
 ans

Count upon this confusion—may he not
 make

A league with William, so to bring him
 back?

Harold. That lies within the shadow
 of the chance.

Wulfnoth. And like a river in flood
 thro' a burst dam

Descends the ruthless Norman—our good
 King

Kneels mumbling some old bone—our
 helpless folk

Are wash'd away, wailing, in their own
 blood—

Harold. Wailing! not warring? Boy,
 thou hast forgotten

That thou art English.

Wulfnoth. Then our modest women—
 I know the Norman license—thine own
 Edith—

Harold. No more! I will not hear
 thee—William comes.

Wulfnoth. I dare not well be seen in
 talk with thee.

Make thou not mention that I spake with
 thee.

[*Moves away to the back of the stage.*]

Enter WILLIAM, MALET, and Officer.

Officer. We have the man that rail'd
 against thy birth.

William. Tear out his tongue.

Officer. He shall not rail again.
 He said that he should see confusion fall
 On thee and on thine house.

William. Tear out his eyes,
 And plunge him into prison.

Officer. It shall be done.

[*Exit Officer.*]

William. Look not amazed, fair earl!
 Better leave undone

Than do by halves—tongueless and eye-
 less, prison'd—

Harold. Better methinks have slain
 the man at once!

William. We have respect for man's
 immortal soul,

We seldom take man's life, except in
 war;

It frights the traitor more to maim and
 blind.

Harold. In mine own land I should
 have scorn'd the man,

Or lash'd his rascal back, and let him go.

William. And let him go? To slander
 thee again!

Yet in thine own land in thy father's day
 They blinded my young kinsman, Alfred

—ay,
 Some said it was thy father's deed.

Harold. They lied.

William. But thou and he—whom at
 thy word, for thou

Art known a speaker of the truth, I free
 From this foul charge—

Harold. Nay, nay, he freed himself
 By oath and compurgation from the
 charge.

The king, the lords, the people clear'd
 him of it.

William. But thou and he drove our
 good Normans out

From England, and this rankles in us yet.
 Archbishop Robert hardly scaped with
 life.

Harold. Archbishop Robert! Robert
 the Archbishop!

Robert of Jumièges, he that—

Malet. Quiet! quiet!

Harold. Count! if there sat within
 thy Norman chair

A ruler all for England—one who fill'd
 All offices, all bishopricks with English—

We could not move from Dover to the
 Humber

Saving thro' Norman bishopricks—I say

Ye would applaud that Norman who
should drive

The stranger to the fiends !

William. Why, that is reason !
Warrior thou art, and mighty wise withal !
Ay, ay, but many among our Norman
lords

Hate thee for this, and press upon me—
saying

God and the sea have given thee to our
hands—

To plunge thee into life-long prison here :—
Yet I hold out against them, as I may,
Yea—would hold out, yea, tho' they
should revolt—

For thou hast done the battle in my cause ;
I am thy fastest friend in Normandy.

Harold. I am doubly bound to thee
. . . if this be so.

William. And I would bind thee
more, and would myself
Be bounden to thee more.

Harold. Then let me hence
With Wulfnoth to King Edward.

William. So we will.
We hear he hath not long to live.

Harold. It may be.
William. Why then the heir of

England, who is he ?

Harold. The Atheling is nearest to
the throne.

William. But sickly, slight, half-
witted and a child,

Will England have him king ?

Harold. It may be, no.

William. And hath King Edward not
pronounced his heir ?

Harold. Not that I know.

William. When he was here in
Normandy,

He loved us and we him, because we
found him

A Norman of the Normans.

Harold. So did we.

William. A gentle, gracious, pure and
saintly man !

And grateful to the hand that shielded
him,

He promised that if ever he were king
In England, he would give his kingly
voice

To me as his successor. Knowest thou
this ?

Harold. I learn it now.

William. Thou knowest I am his
cousin,

And that my wife descends from Alfred ?

Harold. Ay.

William. Who hath a better claim
then to the crown

So that ye will not crown the Atheling ?

Harold. None that I know . . . if
that but hung upon

King Edward's will.

William. Wilt thou uphold my claim ?

Malet (aside to Harold). Be careful of
thine answer, my good friend.

Wulfnoth (aside to Harold). Oh !
Harold, for my sake and for thine
own !

Harold. Ay . . . if the king have
not revoked his promise.

William. But hath he done it then ?

Harold. Not that I know.

William. Good, good, and thou wilt
help me to the crown ?

Harold. Ay . . . if the Witan will
consent to this.

William. Thou art the mightiest voice
in England, man,

Thy voice will lead the Witan—shall I
have it ?

Wulfnoth (aside to Harold). Oh !

Harold, if thou love thine Edith

ay.

Harold. Ay, if—

So did we.

gentle, gracious, pure and
man!

o the hand that shielded

at if ever he were king
e would give his kingly

successor. Knowest thou

I learn it now.

Thou knowest I am his

ife descends from Alfred?

Ay.

Who hath a better claim
the crown

not crown the Atheling?
one that I know . . . if

hung upon

will.

Wilt thou uphold my claim?

(to Harold). Be careful of
swer, my good friend.

(aside to Harold). Oh!
for my sake and for thine

. . . if the king have
ked his promise.

But hath he done it then?

Not that I know.
Good, good, and thou wilt

to the crown?

. . . if the Witan will
to this.

thou art the mightiest voice
and, man,

lead the Witan—shall I

(aside to Harold). Oh!
if thou love thine Edith,

, if—

Malet (aside to Harold). Thine 'ifs'
will sear thine eyes out—ay.

William. I ask thee, wilt thou help
me to the crown?

And I will make thee my great Earl of
Earls,

Foremost in England and in Normandy;
Thou shalt be verily king—all but the
name—

For I shall most sojourn in Normandy;
And thou be my vice-king in England.

Speak.

Wulfnoth (aside to Harold). Ay,
brother—for the sake of Eng-
land—ay.

Harold. My lord—

Malet (aside to Harold). Take heed
now.

Harold. Ay.

William. I am content,

For thou art truthful, and thy word thy
bond.

To-morrow will we ride with thee to
Harefleu. [*Exit William.*]

Malet. Harold, I am thy friend, one
life with thee,

And even as I should bless thee saving
mine,

I thank thee now for having saved thyself.
[*Exit Malet.*]

Harold. For having lost myself to save
myself,

Said 'ay' when I meant 'no,' lied like
a lad

That dreads the pendent scourge, said
'ay' for 'no'!

Ay! No!—he hath not bound me by an
oath—

Is 'ay' an oath? is 'ay' strong as an
oath?

Or is it the same sin to break my word
As break mine oath? He call'd my word
my bond!

He is a liar who knows I am a liar,
And makes believe that he believes my
word—

The crime be on his head—not bounden—
no.

[*Suddenly doors are flung open, dis-
covering in an inner hall COUNT
WILLIAM in his state robes, seated
upon his throne, between two
Bishops, OLD OF BAYEUX being
one; in the centre of the hall an ark
covered with cloth of gold; and on
either side of it the Norman barons.*]

Enter a JAILOR before William's throne.

William (to Jailer). Knave, hast thou
let thy prisoner scape?

Jailer. Sir Count,
He had but one foot, he must have hopt
away,

Yea, some familiar spirit must have help'd
him.

William. Woe knave to thy familiar
and to thee!

Give me thy keys. [*They fall clashing.*]
Nay let them lie. Stand there and wait
my will. [*The Jailer stands aside.*]

William (to Harold). Hast thou such
trustless jailors in thy North?

Harold. We have few prisoners in
mine earldom there,

So less chance for false keepers.

William. We have heard
Of thy just, mild, and equal governance;
Honour to thee! thou art perfect in all
honour!

Thy naked word thy bond! confirm it
now

Before our gather'd Norman baronage,
For they will not believe thee—as I
believe.

[*Descends from his throne and stands
by the ark.*]

Let all men here bear witness of our bond !

[*Becoms to Harold, who advances.*

Enter MALET behind him.

Lay thou thy hand upon this golden pall !

Behold the jewel of St. Pancratius

Woven into the gold. Swear thou on this !

Harold. What should I swear ? Why should I swear on this ?

William (savagely). Swear thou to help me to the crown of England.

Malet (whispering Harold). My friend, thou hast gone too far to palter now.

Wulfnoth (whispering Harold). Swear thou to-day, to-morrow is thine own.

Harold. I swear to help thee to the crown of England . . .

According as King Edward promises.

William. Thou must swear absolutely, noble Earl.

Malet (whispering). Delay is death to thee, ruin to England.

Wulfnoth (whispering). Swear, dearest brother, I beseech thee, swear !

Harold (putting his hand on the jewel).

I swear to help thee to the crown of England.

William. Thanks, truthful Earl ; I did not doubt thy word,

But that my barons might believe thy word,

And that the Holy Saints of Normandy

When thou art home in England, with thine own,

Might strengthen thee in keeping of thy word,

I made thee swear.—Show him by whom he hath sworn.

[*The two Bishops advance, and raise the cloth of gold. The bodies and bones of Saints are seen lying in the ark.*

The holy bones of all the Canonised From all the holiest shrines in Normandy !

Harold. Horrible ! [*They let the cloth fall again.*

William. Ay, for thou hast sworn an oath

Which, if not kept, would make the hard earth rive

To the very Devil's horns, the bright sky cleave

To the very feet of God, and send her hosts

Of injured Saints to scatter sparks of plague

Thro' all your cities, blast your infants, dash

The torch of war among your standing corn,

Dabble your hearths with your own blood.—Enough !

Thou wilt not break it ! I, the Count—the King—

Thy friend—am grateful for thine honest oath,

Not coming fiercely like a conqueror, now,

But softly as a bridegroom to his own.

For I shall rule according to your laws,

And make your ever-jarring Earldoms move

To music and in order—Angle, Jute,

Dane, Saxon, Norman, help to build a throne

Out-towering hers of France . . . The wind is fair

For England now . . . To-night we will be merry.

To-morrow will I ride with thee to Harfleur.

[*Exeunt William and all the Norman barons, &c.*

of all the Canonised
holiest shrines in Nor-
rrible! [*They let the cloth*
n.
y, for thou hast sworn an
ept, would make the hard
e
evil's horns, the bright sky
et of God, and send her
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cities, blast your infants,
ar among your standing
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Enough!
break it! I, the Count—
—
grateful for thine honest
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bridegroom to his own.
rule according to your
er ever-jarring Earldoms
a order—Angle, Jute,
Norman, help to build a
ers of France . . . The
air
w . . . To-night we will
I ride with thee to
William and all the Norman
etc.

Harold. To-night we will be merry—
and to-morrow—
Juggler and bastard—bastard—he hates
that most—
William the tanner's bastard! Would
he heard me!
O God, that I were in some wide, waste
field
With nothing but my battle-axe and him
To spatter his brains! Why let earth
rive, gulf in
These cursed Normans—yea and mine
own self.
Cleave heaven, and send thy saints that
I may say
E'en to their faces, 'If ye side with
William
Ye are not noble.' How their pointed
fingers
Glared at me! Am I Harold, Harold,
sen
Of our great Godwin? Lo! I touch
mine arms,
My limbs—they are not mine—they are
a liar's—
I mean to be a liar—I am not bound—
Stigand shall give me absolution for it—
Did the chest move? did it move? I am
utter craven!
O Wulfnoth, Wulfnoth, brother, thou
hast betray'd me!
Wulfnoth. Forgive me, brother, I
will live here and die.

Enter PAGE.

Page. My lord! the Duke awaits thee
at the banquet.
Harold. Where they eat dead men's
flesh, and drink their blood.
Page. My lord—
Harold. I know your Norman cookery
is so spiced,
it masks all this.

Page. My lord! thou art white
as death.

Harold. With looking on the dead.
Am I so white?
Thy Duke will seem the darker. Hence,
I follow.
[Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE KING'S PALACE.
LONDON.

KING EDWARD *dying on a couch, and by
him standing the QUEEN, HAROLD,
ARCHBISHOP STIGAND, GERTIL,
LEOFWIN, ARCHBISHOP ALDRED,
ALDWYTH, and EDITH.*

Stigand. Sleeping or dying there?
If this be death,
Then our great Council wait to crown
thee King—
Come hither, I have a power;

[To Harold.]
They call me near, for I am close to thee
And England—I, old shrivell'd Stigand,
I,
Dry as an old wood-fungus on a dead
tree,

I have a power!
See here this little key about my neck!
There lies a treasure buried down in Ely:
If e'er the Norman grow too hard for
thee,

Ask me for this at thy most need, son
Harold,

At thy most need—not sooner.

Harold. So I will.

Stigand. Red gold—a hundred purses
—yea, and more!

If thou canst make a wholesome use of
these

To chink against the Norman, I do
believe

My old crook'd spine would bud out two
young wings

To fly to heaven straight with.

Harold. Thank thee, father !
Thou art English, Edward too is English
now,

He hath clean repented of his Nor-
manism.

Stigand. Ay, as the libertine repents
who cannot

Make done undone, when thro' his dying
sense

Shrills 'lost thro' thee.' They have
built their castles here ;

Our priories are Norman ; the Norman
adder

Hath bitten us ; we are poison'd : our
dear England

Is demi-Norman. He !—

[*Pointing to King Edward, sleeping.*

Harold. I would I were
As holy and as passionless as he !
That I might rest as calmly ! Look at
him—

The rosy face, and long down-silvering
beard,

The brows unwrinkled as a summer
mere.—

Stigand. A summer mere with sudden
wreckful gusts

From a side-gorge. Passionless ? How
he flamed

When Tostig's anger'd earldom flung
him, nay,

He fain had calcined all Northumbria
To one black ash, but that thy patriot
passion

Siding with our great Council against
Tostig.

Out-passion'd his ! Holy ? ay, ay, for-
sooth,

A conscience for his own soul, not his
realm ;

A twilight conscience lighted thro' a
chink ;

Thine by the sun ; nay, by some sun to be,
When all the world hath learnt to speak
the truth,

And lying were self-murder by that state
Which was the exception.

Harold. That sun may God speed !

Stigand. Come, Harold, shake the
cloud off !

Harold. Can I, father ?
Our Tostig parted cursing me and
England ;

Our sister hates us for his banishment ;
He hath gone to kindle Norway against
England,

And Wulfnoth is alone in Normandy.
For when I rode with William down to
Harfleur,

'Wulfnoth is sick,' he said ; 'he cannot
follow ;'
Then with that friendly-fiendly smile of
his,

'We have learnt to love him, let him a
little longer

Remain a hostage for the loyalty
Of Godwin's house.' As far as touches
Wulfnoth

I that so prized plain word and naked
truth

Have sinn'd against it—all in vain.

Leofwin. Good brother,
By all the truths that ever priest hath
preach'd,

Of all the lies that ever men have lied,
Thine is the pardonablest.

Harold. May be so !
I think it so, I think I am a fool
To think it can be otherwise than so.

Stigand. Tut, tut, I have absolved
thee : dost thou scorn me,
Because I had my Canterbury pallium
From one whom they disposed ?

science lighted thro' a

ay, by some sun to be,
world hath learnt to speak
h,
self-murder by that state
exception.

hat sun may God speed!
ome, Harold, shake the
!

Can I, father?
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; us for his banishment;
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Good brother,
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,
hat ever men have lied,
rdonablest.

May be so!

think I am a fool
be otherwise than so.

ut, tut, I have absolved
est thou scorn me,

my Canterbury pallium
m they disposed?

Harold. No, Stigand, no!
Stigand. Is naked truth actable in
true life?

I have heard a saying of thy father
Godwin,

That, were a man of state nakedly true,
Mon would but take him for the craftier
liar.

Leofwin. Be men less delicate than
the Devil himself?

I thought that naked Truth would shame
the Devil

The Devil is so modest.

Gurth. He never said it!

Leofwin. Be thou not stupid-honest,
brother Gurth!

Harold. Better to be a liar's dog, and
hold

My master honest, than believe that lying
And ruling men are fatal twins that
cannot

Move one without the other. Edward
wakes!--

Dazed—he hath seen a vision.

Edward. The green tree!

Then a great Angel past along the highest
Crying 'the doom of England,' and at
once

He stood beside me, in his grasp a sword
Of lightnings, wherewithal he cleft the
tree

From off the bearing trunk, and hurl'd
it from him

Three fields away, and then he dash'd
and drench'd,

He dyed, he soak'd the trunk with
human blood,

And brought the sunder'd tree again, and
set it

Straight on the trunk, that thus baptized
in blood

Grew ever high and higher, beyond my
seeing,

And shot out sidelong boughs across the
deep

That dropt themselves, and rooted in far
isles

Beyond my seeing: and the great Angel
rose

And past again along the highest crying
'The doom of England!'—Tostig, raise

my head! [*Falls back senseless.*]

Harold (raising him). Let Harold
serve for Tostig!

Queen. Harold served
Tostig so ill, he cannot serve for Tostig!

Ay, raise his head, for thou hast laid it
low!

The sickness of our saintly king, for
whom

My prayers go up as fast as my tears fall,
I well believe, hath mainly drawn itself

From lack of Tostig—thou hast banish'd
him.

Harold. Nay—but the council, and
the king himself,

Queen. Thou hatest him, hatest him.
Harold (coldly). Ay—Stigand,

unriddle
This vision, canst thou?

Stigand. Dotage!
Edward (starting up). It is finish'd.

I have built the Lord a house—the Lord
hath dwelt

In darkness. I have built the Lord a
house—

Palms, flowers, pomegranates, golden
cherubim

With twenty-cubit wings from wall to
wall—

I have built the Lord a house—sing,
Asaph! clash

The cymbal, Heman! blow the trumpet,
priest!

Fall, cloud, and fill the house—lo! my
two pillars,

Jachin and Boaz !—

[*Seeing Harold and Gurth.*

Harold, Gurth,—where am I?

Where is the charter of our Westminster?

Stigand. It lies beside thee, king,
upon thy bed.

Edward. Sign, sign at once—take,
sign it, Stigand, Aldred !

Sign it, my good son Harold, Gurth, and
Leofwin,

Sign it, my queen !

All. We have sign'd it.

Edward. It is finish'd !
The kingliest Abbey in all Christian
lands,

The lordliest, lofliest minster ever built

To Holy Peter in our English isle !

Let me be buried there, and all our
kings,

And all our just and wise and holy men

That shall be born hereafter. It is
finish'd !

Hast thou had absolution for thine oath?

[*To Harold.*

Harold. Stigand hath given me abso-
lution for it.

Edward. Stigand is not canonical
enough

To save thee from the wrath of Norman
Saints.

Stigand. Norman enough ! Be there
no Saints of England

To help us from their brethren yonder?

Edward. Prelate,
The Saints are one, but those of Nor-
manland

Are mightier than our own. Ask it of
Aldred. [*To Harold.*

Aldred. It shall be granted him, my
king ; for he

Who vows a vow to strangle his own
mother

Is guiltier keeping this, than breaking it.

Edward. O friends, I shall not over-
live the day.

Stigand. Why then the throne is
empty. Who inherits?

Fortho' we be not bound by the king's voice
In making of a king, yet the king's voice
Is much toward his making. Who
inherits?

Edgar the Atheling?

Edward. No, no, but Harold.
I love him : he hath served me : none
but he

Can rule all England. Yet the curse is
on him

For swearing falsely by those blessed
bones ;

He did not mean to keep his vow.

Harold. Not mean
To make our England Norman.

Edward. There spake Godwin,
Who hated all the Normans ; but their
Saints

Have heard thee, Harold.

Edith. Oh ! my lord, my king !

He knew not whom he sware by.

Edward. Yea, I know

He knew not, but those heavenly ears
have heard,

Their curse is on him ; wilt thou bring
another,

Edith, upon his head ?

Edith. No, no, not I.

Edward. Why then, thou must not
wed him.

Harold. Wherefore, wherefore?

Edward. O son, when thou didst tell
me of thine oath,

I sorrow'd for my random promise given
To yon fox-lion. I did not dream then

I should be king.—My son, the Saints
are virgins ;

They love the white rose of virginity,
The cold, white lily blowing in her cell :

friends, I shall not over-
day.

Why then the throne is
Who inherits?

Not bound by the king's voice
king, yet the king's voice
ard his making. Who
?

eling?
No, no, but Harold.
e hath served me: none

England. Yet the curse is

falsely by those blessed

an to keep his vow.

Not mean
England Norman.

There spake Godwin,
the Normans; but their

c, Harold.

Oh! my lord, my king!
hom he sware by.

Yea, I know
but those heavenly ears
ard,
on him; wilt thou bring

head?

No, no, not I.
Why then, thou must not

Wherefore, wherefore?
son, when thou didst tell
ine oath,

my random promise given
I did not dream then
g.—My son, the Saints
s;

white rose of virginity,
lily blowing in her cell:

I have been myself a virgin; and I swear
To consecrate my virgin here to heaven—
The silent, cloister'd, solitary life,
A life of life-long prayer against the curse
That lies on thee and England.

Harold. No, no, no.

Edward. Treble denial of the tongue
of flesh,

Like Peter's when he fell, and thou wilt
have

To wait for it like Peter. O my son!
Are all oaths to be broken then, all
promises

Made in our agony for help from heaven?
Son, there is one who loves thee: and a
wife,

What matters who, so she be serviceable
In all obedience, as mine own hath
been:

God bless thee, wedded daughter.

[Laying his hand on the Queen's head.
Queen.

Bless thou too
That brother whom I love beyond the rest,
My banish'd Tostig.

Edward. All the sweet Saints
bless him!

Spare and forbear him, Harold, if he
comes!

And let him pass unscathed; he loves
me, Harold!

Be kindly to the Normans left among us,
Who follow'd me for love! and dear son,
swear

When thou art king, to see my solemn
vow
Accomplish'd.

Harold. Nay, dear lord, for I have
sworn

Not to swear falsely twice.

Edward. Thou wilt not swear?

Harold. I cannot.

Edward. Then on thee remains
the curse,

Harold, if thou embrace her: and on thee,
Edith, if thou abide it,—

[The King swoons; Edith falls and
kneels by the couch.

Stigand. He hath swoon'd!

Death? . . . as yet a breath.

Harold. Look up! look up!

Edith!
Alfred. Confuse her not; she hath
begun

Her life-long prayer for thee.

Alfred. O noble Harold,
I would thou couldst have sworn.

Harold. For thine own pleasure?
Alfred. No, but to please our dying
king, and those

Who make thy good their own—all
England, Earl.

Alfred. I would thou couldst have
sworn. Our holy king
Hath given his virgin lamb to Holy
Church

To save thee from the curse.

Harold. Alas! poor man,
His promise brought it on me.

Alfred. O good son!
That knowledge made him all the care-
fuller

To find a means whereby the curse might
glance

From thee and England.

Harold. Father, we so loved—

Alfred. The more the love, the
mightier is the prayer;

The more the love, the more acceptable
The sacrifice of both your loves to heaven.
No sacrifice to heaven, no help from
heaven;

That runs thro' all the faiths of all the
world.

And sacrifice there must be, for the king
Is holy, and hath talk'd with God, and
seen



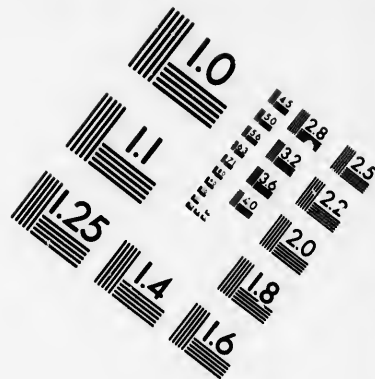
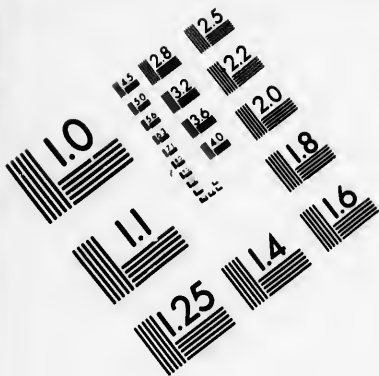
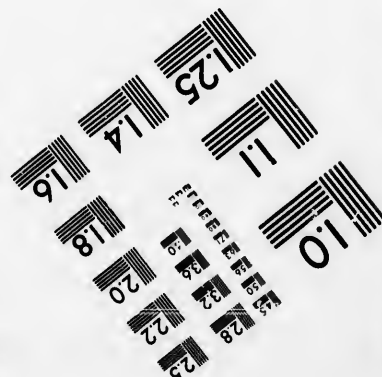
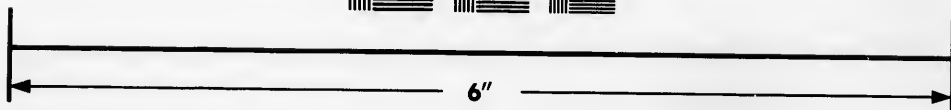
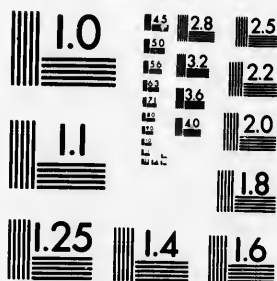


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A shadowing horror, there are signs in
heaven—

Harold. Your comet came and went.

Aldred. And signs on earth!

Knowest thou Senlac hill?

Harold. I know all Sussex;

A good entrenchment for a perilous hour!

Aldred. Pray God that come not
suddenly! There is one

Who passing by that hill three nights ago—

He shook so that he scarce could out
with it—

Heard, heard—

Harold. The wind in his hair?

Aldred. A ghostly horn

Blowing continually, and faint battle-
hymns,

And cries, and clashes, and the groans of
men;

And dreadful shadows strove upon the hill,

And dreadful lights crept up from out
the marsh—

Corpse-candles gliding over nameless
graves—

Harold. At Senlac?

Aldred. Senlac.

Edward (waking). Senlac! Sanguelac,
The Lake of Blood!

Stigand. This lightning before death
Plays on the word,—and Normanizes too!

Harold. Hush, father, hush!

Edward. Thou uncanonical fool,
Wilt thou play with the thunder? North
and South

Thunder together, showers of blood are
blown

Before a never ending blast, and hiss
Against the blaze they cannot quench—a
lake,

A sea of blood—we are drown'd in blood
—for God

Has fill'd the quiver, and Death has
drawn the bow—

Sanguelac! Sanguelac! the arrow! the
arrow! [*Dies.*

Stigand. It is the arrow of death in
his own heart—

And our great Council wait to crown thee
King.

SCENE II.—IN THE GARDEN. THE
KING'S HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

Edith. Crown'd, crown'd and lost,
crown'd King—and lost to me!

(*Singing.*)

Two young lovers in winter weather,

None to guide them,

Walk'd at night on the misty heather;

Night, as black as a raven's feather;

Both were lost and found together,

None beside them.

That is the burthen of it—lost and found

Together in the cruel river Swale

A hundred years ago; and there's another,

Lost, lost, the light of day,

To which the lover answers lovingly

'I am beside thee.'

Lost, lost, we have lost the way.

'Love, I will guide thee.'

Whither, O whither? into the river,

Where we two may be lost together,

And lost for ever? 'Oh! never,

oh! never,

Tho' we be lost and be found to-
gether.'

Some think they loved within the pale
forbidden

By Holy Church; but who shall say?
the truth

Was lost in that fierce North, where they
were lost,

Where all good things are lost, where
Tostig lost

anguelac ! the arrow ! the
[Dies.
is the arrow of death in
heart—
Council wait to crown thee

IN THE GARDEN. THE
HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

wn'd, crown'd and lost,
King—and lost to me !

(Singing.)
ers in winter weather,
guide them,
t on the misty heather ;
as a raven's feather ;
and found together,
side them.

hen of it—lost and found
cruel river Swale
sago ; and there's another,
st, the light of day,

over answers lovingly
beside thee.'
we have lost the way.
, I will guide thee.'
O whither ? into the river,
two may be lost together,
for ever ? 'Oh ! never,
never,
e lost and be found to-
ner.'

ey loved within the pale
rch : but who shall say ?

fierce North, where they
,
l things are lost, where
st

The good hearts of his people. It is
Harold !

(Enter HAROLD.)

Harold the King !

Harold. Call me not King, but

Harold.

Edith. Nay, thou art King !

Harold. Thine, thine, or King
or churl !

My girl, thou hast been weeping : turn
not thou

Thy face away, but rather let me be
King of the moment to thee, and command
That kiss my due when subject, which
will make

My kingship kinglier to me than to reign
King of the world without it.

Edith. Lark me not,
Lest I should yield it, and the second
course

Descend upon thine head, and thou be
only

King of the moment over England.

Harold. Edith,
Tho' somewhat less a king to my true self
Than ere they crown'd me one, for I have
lost

Somewhat of upright stature thro' mine
oath,

Yet thee I would not lose, and sell not
thou

Our living passion for a dead man's dream ;
Stigand believed he knew not what he
spake.

Oh God ! I cannot help it, but at times
They seem to me too narrow, all the faiths
Of this grown world of ours, whose baby
eye

Saw them sufficient. Fool and wise, I
fear

This curse, and scorn it. But a little
light !—

And on it falls the shadow of the priest ;
Heaven yield us more ! for better,
Woden, all

Our cancell'd warrior-gods, our grim
Walhalla,

Eternal war, than that the Saints at peace
The Holiest of our Holiest one should be
This William's fellow-tricksters ;—better
die

Than credit this, for death is death, or else
Lifts us beyond the lie. Kiss me—thou
art not

A holy sister yet, my girl, to fear
There might be more than brother in my
kiss,

And more than sister in thine own.

Edith. I dare not.

Harold. Scared by the church—
'Love for a whole life long'

When was that sung ?

Edith. Here to the nightingales.

Harold. Their anthems of no church,
how sweet they are !

Nor kingly priest, nor priestly king to cross
Their billings ere they nest.

Edith. They are but of spring,
They fly the winter change—not so with
us—

No wings to come and go.

Harold. But wing'd souls flying
Beyond all change and in the eternal
distance

To settle on the Truth.

Edith. They are not so true,
They change their mates.

Harold. Do they ? I did not know it.

Edith. They say thou art to wed the
Lady Aldwyth.

Harold. They say, they say.

Edith. If this be politic,
And well for thee and England—and for
her—

Care not for me who love thee.

Gurth (calling). Harold, Harold !
Harold. The voice of Gurth ! (*Enter*
 GURTH.) Good even, my good
 brother !

Gurth. Good even, gentle Edith.

Edith. Good even, Gurth.

Gurth. Ill news hath come ! Our
 hapless brother, Tostig—
 He, and the giant King of Norway,
 Harold

Hardrada—Scotland, Ireland, Iceland,
 Orkney,

Are landed North of Humber, and in a
 field

So packt with carnage that the dykes and
 brooks

Were bridged and damm'd with dead,
 have overthrown

Morcar and Edwin.

Harold. Well then, we must
 fight.

How blows the wind ?

Gurth. Against St. Valery
 And William.

Harold. Well then, we will to the
 North.

Gurth. Ay, but worse news : this
 William sent to Rome,
 Swearing thou swarest falsely by his
 Saints :

The Pope and that Archdeacon Hilde-
 brand

His master, heard him, and have sent him
 back

A holy gonfalon, and a blessed hair
 Of Peter, and all France, all Burgundy,
 Poitou, all Christendom is raised against
 thee ;

He hath cursed thee, and all those who
 fight for thee,

And given thy realm of England to the
 bastard.

Harold. Ha ! ha !

Edith. Oh ! laugh not ! . . . Strange
 and ghastly in the gloom
 And shadowing of this double thunder-
 cloud

That lours on England—laughter !

Harold. No, not strange !
 This was old human laughter in old Rome
 Before a Pope was born, when that which
 reign'd

Call'd itself God.—A kindly rendering
 Of 'Render unto Cæsar.' . . . The
 Good Shepherd !

Take this, and render that.

Gurth. They have taken York.

Harold. The Lord was God and came
 as man—the Pope

Is man and comes as God.—York taken ?

Gurth. Yea,

Tostig hath taken York !

Harold. To York then. Edith,
 Hadst thou been braver, I had better
 braved

All—but I love thee and thou me—and
 that

Remains beyond all chances and all
 church

And that thou vest.

Edith. Ay, but take back thy ring.
 It burns my hand—a curse to thee and me.
 I dare not wear it.

[*Proffers Harold the ring, which he takes.*

Harold. But I dare. God with thee !

[*Exeunt Harold and Gurth.*
Edith. The King hath cursed him, if
 he marry me ;

The Pope hath cursed him, marry me or
 no !

God help me ! I know nothing—can but
 pray

For Harold—pray, pray, pray—no help
 but prayer,

A breath that fleets beyond this iron world,
 And touches Him that made it.

laugh not ! . . . Strange
ly in the gloom
of this double thunder-

England—laughter !

No, not strange !
man laughter in old Rome
was born, when that which

l.—A kindly rendering
to Cæsar.' . . . The
epherd !

render that.

They have taken York.

The Lord was God and came
—the Pope

es as God.—York taken ?

Yea,

en York !

To York then. Edith,
en braver, I had better

e thee and thou me—and

nd all chances and all

rest.

er, but take back thy ring.
—a curse to thee and me.
it.

l the ring, which he takes.

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King hath cursed him, if

me ;

cursed him, marry me or

I know nothing—can but

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er,

ets beyond this iron world,

m that made it.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—IN NORTHUMBRIA.

ARCHBISHOP ALDRED, MORCAR, EDWIN,
and Forces. *Enter HAROLD. The
standard of the golden Dragon of Wes-
sex preceding him.*

Harold. What ! are thy people sullen
from defeat ?

Our Wessex dragon flies beyond the
Humber,

No voice to greet it.

Edwin. Let not our great king
Believe us sullen—only shamed to the
quick

Before the king—as having been so bruised
By Harold, king of Norway ; but our help
Is Harold, king of England. Pardon us,
thou !

Our silence is our reverence for the
king !

Harold. Earl of the Mercians ! if the
truth be gall,

Cram me not thou with honey, when our
good hive

Needs every sting to save it.

Voices. Aldwyth ! Aldwyth !

Harold. Why cry thy people on thy
sister's name ?

Morcar. She hath won upon our
people thro' her beauty,

And pleasantness among them.

Voices. Aldwyth, Aldwyth !

Harold. They shout as they would
have her for a queen.

Morcar. She hath followed with our
host, and suffer'd all.

Harold. What would ye, men ?

Voice. Our old Northumbrian
crown,

And kings of our own choosing.

Harold. Your old crown

Were little help without our Saxon carles
Against Hardrada.

Voice. Little ! we are Danes,
Who conquer'd what we walk on, our
own field.

Harold. They have been plotting here !
[*Aside.*

Voice. He calls us little !

Harold. The kingdoms of this world
began with little,

A hill, a fort, a city—that reach'd a hand
Down to the field beneath it, 'Be thou
mine,'

Then to the next, 'Thou also !' If the field
Cried out 'I am mine own ;' another hill
Or fort, or city, took it, and the first
Fell, and the next became an Empire.

Voice. Yet
Thou art but a West Saxon : we are Danes !

Harold. My mother is a Dane, and I
am English ;

There is a pleasant fable in old books,
Ye take a stick, and break it ; bind a score
All in one faggot, snap it over knee,
Ye cannot.

Voice. Hear King Harold ! he
says true !

Harold. Would ye be Norsemen ?

Voices. No !

Harold. Or Norman ?

Voices. No !

Harold. Snap not the faggot-band then.

Voice. That is true !

Voice. Ay, but thou art not kingly,
only grandson

To Wulfmoth, a poor cow-herd.

Harold. This old Wulfmoth

Would take me on his knees and tell me
tales

Of Alfreð and of Athelstan the Great

Who drove you Danes ; and yet he held
that Dane,

Jute, Angle, Saxon, were or should be all

One England, for this cow-herd, like my father,
 Who shook the Norman scoundrels off the throne,
 Had in him kingly thoughts—a king of men,
 Not made but born, like the great king of all,
 A light among the oxen.
Voice. That is true !
Voice. Ay, and I love him now, for mine own father
 Was great, and cobbled.
Voice. Thou art Tostig's brother,
 Who wastes the land.
Harold. This brother comes to save
 Your land from waste ; I saved it once before,
 For when your people banish'd Tostig hence,
 And Edward would have sent a host against you,
 Then I, who loved my brother, bad the king
 Who doted on him, sanction your decree
 Of Tostig's banishment, and choice of Morcar,
 To help the realm from scattering.
Voice. King ! thy brother,
 If one may dare to speak the truth, was wrong'd.
 Wild was he, born so : but the plots against him
 Had madden'd tamer men.
Morcar. Thou art one of those
 Who brake into Lord Tostig's treasure-house
 And slew two hundred of his following,
 And now, when Tostig hath come back with power,
 Are frighted back to Tostig.
Old Thane. Ugh ! Plots and feuds !
 This is my ninetieth birthday. Can ye not

Be brethren ? Godwin still at feud with Alfgar,
 And Alfgar hates King Harold. Plots and feuds !
 This is my ninetieth birthday !
Harold. Old man, Harold
 Hates nothing ; not *his* fault, if our two houses
 Be less than brothers.
Voices. Aldwyth, Harold, Aldwyth !
Harold. Again ! Morcar ! Edwin !
 What do they mean ?
Edwin. So the good king would deign to lend an ear
 Not overscornful, we might chance—perchance—
 To guess their meaning.
Morcar. Thine own meaning, Harold,
 To make all England one, to close all feuds,
 Mixing our bloods, that thence a king may rise
 Half-Godwin and half-Alfgar, one to rule
 All England beyond question, beyond quarrel.
Harold. Who sow'd this fancy here among the people ?
Morcar. Who knows what sows itself among the people ?
 A goodly flower at times,
Harold. The Queen of *Wales* ?
 Why, Morcar, it is all but duty in her
 To hate me ; I have heard she hates me.
Morcar. No !
 For I can swear to that, but cannot swear
 That these will follow thee against the Norsemen,
 If thou deny them this.
Harold. Morcar and Edwin,
 When will ye cease to plot against my house ?
Edwin. The king can scarcely dream
 that we, who know
 His prowess in the mountains of the West,

Godwin still at feud with
ates King Harold. Plots
ds !
etieth birthday !
Old man, Harold
; not *his* fault, if our two

others.
dwyth, Harold, Aldwyth !
gain ! Morcar ! Edwin !
o they mean ?
the good king would deign
an ear
ul, we might chance—per-

meaning.
ine own meaning, Harold,
gland one, to close all feuds,
oods, that thence a king
nd half-Alfgar, one to rule
eyond question, beyond

ho sow'd this fancy here
he people ?
ho knows what sows itself
he people ?
r at times.

The Queen of Wales ?
it is all but duty in her
have heard she hates me.

No !
r to that, but cannot swear
I follow thee against the
en,
em this.

Morcar and Edwin,
cease to plot against my

e king can scarcely dream
who know
the mountains of the West,

Should care to plot against him in the
North.

Morcar. Who dares arraign us, king,
of such a plot ?

Harold. Ye heard one witness even now.

Morcar. The craven !
There is a faction risen again for Tostig,
Since Tostig came with Norway—fright
not love.

Harold. Morcar and Edwin, will ye,
if I yield,

Follow against the Norseman ?

Morcar. Surely, surely !

Harold. Morcar and Edwin, will ye
upon oath,

Help us against the Norman ?

Morcar. With good will ;

Yea, take the Sacrament upon it, king.

Harold. Where is thy sister ?

Morcar. Somewhere hard at hand.

Call and she comes.

[*One goes out, then enter Aldwyth.*]

Harold. I doubt not but thou knowest

Why thou art summon'd.

Aldwyth. Why ?—I stay with these,
Lest thy fierce Tostig spy me out alone,
And slay me all alive.

Harold. Canst thou love one
Whodid discrown thine husband, unqueen
thee ?

Didst thou not love thine husband ?

Aldwyth. Oh ! my lord,
Thenimble, wild, red, wiry, savage king—
That was, my lord, a match of policy.

Harold. Was it ?
I knew him brave : he loved his land : he
fain

Had made her great : his finger on her harp
(I heard him more than once) had in it
Wales,

Her floods, her woods, her hills : had I
been his,

I had been all Welsh.

Aldwyth. Oh, ay—all Welsh—and yet
I saw thee drive him up his hills—and
women

Cling to the conquer'd, if they love, the
more ;

If not, they cannot hate the conqueror.
We never—oh ! good Morcar, speak for us,
His conqueror conquer'd Aldwyth.

Harold. Goodly news !

Morcar. Doubt it not thou ! Since
Griffyth's head was sent

To Edward, she hath said it.

Harold. I had rather
She would have loved her husband.

Aldwyth, Aldwyth,
Canst thou love me, thou knowing where
I love ?

Aldwyth. I can, my lord, for mine
own sake, for thine,

For England, for thy poor white dove,
who flutters

Between thee and the porch, but then
would find

Her nest within the cloister, and be still.

Harold. Canst thou love one, who
cannot love again ?

Aldwyth. Full hope have I that love
will answer love.

Harold. Then in the name of the
great God, so be it !

Come, Aldred, join our hands before the
hosts,

That all may see.

[*Aldred joins the hands of Harold
and Aldwyth and blesses them.*]

Voices. Harold, Harold and Aldwyth !

Harold. Set forth our golden Dragon,
let him flap

The wings that beat down Wales !
Advance our Standard of the Warrior,
Dark among gems and gold ; and thou,
brave banner,

Blaze like a night of fatal stars on those

Who read their doom and die.
 Where lie the Norsemen? on the Derwent? ay
 At Stamford-bridge.
 Morcar, collect thy men; Edwin, my friend—
 Thou lingerest.—Gurth,—
 Last night King Edward came to me in dreams—
 The rosy face and long down-silvering beard—
 He told me I should conquer :—
 I am no woman to put faith in dreams.
(To his army).
 Last night King Edward came to me in dreams,
 And told me we should conquer.
Voices. Forward! Forward!
 Harold and Holy Cross!
Alwayth. The day is won!

SCENE II.—A PLAIN. BEFORE THE
 BATTLE OF STAMFORD-BRIDGE.

HAROLD and his Guard.

Harold. Who is it comes this way?
Tostig. *(Enter TOSTIG with a small force.)* O brother,
 What art thou doing here?
Tostig. I am foraging
 For Norway's army.
Harold. I could take and slay thee.
 Thou art in arms against us.
Tostig. Take and slay me,
 For Edward loved me.
Harold. Edward bad me spare thee.
Tostig. I hate King Edward, for he
 join'd with thee
 To drive me outlaw'd. Take and slay
 me, I say,
 Or I shall count thee fool.
Harold. Take thee, or free thee,

Free thee or slay thee, Norway will have
 war;
 No man would strike with Tostig, save
 for Norway.
 Thou art nothing in thine England, save
 for Norway,
 Who loves not thee but war. What dost
 thou here,
 Trampling thy mother's bosom into blood?
Tostig. She hath wean'd me from it
 with such bitterness.
 I come for mine own Earldom, my
 Northumbria;
 Thou hast given it to the enemy of our
 house.
Harold. Northumbria threw thee off,
 she will not have thee,
 Thou hast misused her: and, O crowning
 crime!
 Hast murder'd thine own guest, the son
 of Orm,
 Gamel, at thine own hearth.
Tostig. The slow, fat fool!
 He draw'd and prated so, I smote him
 suddenly,
 I knew not what I did. He held with
 Morcar.—
 I hate myself for all things that I do.
Harold. And Morcar holds with us.
 Come back with him.
 Know what thou dost; and we may find
 for thee,
 So thou be chasten'd by thy banishment,
 Some easier earldom.
Tostig. What for Norway then?
 He looks for land among us, he and his.
Harold. Seven feet of English land,
 or something more,
 Seeing he is a giant.
Tostig. That is noble!
 That sounds of Godwin.
Harold. Come thou back, and be
 Once more a son of Godwin.

ay thee, Norway will have

I strike with Tostig, save
way.

ing in thine England, save
way,

thee but war. What dost
re,

mother's bosom into blood?
hath wean'd me from it

ch bitterness.
nine own Earldom, my

ubria;
en it to the enemy of our

orthumbria threw thee off,
not have thee,

sed her: and, O crowning

thine own guest, the son

e own hearth.

The slow, fat fool!
I prated so, I smote him

,
at I did. He held with

or all things that I do.

d Morcar holds with us.
ck with him.

u dost; and we may find

ten'd by thy banishment,
ldom.

What for Norway then?

and among us, he and his.
en feet of English land,

ning more,
iant.

That is noble!
Godwin.

Come thou back, and be
of Godwin.

Tostig (turns away). O brother,
brother,

O Harold—

*Harold (laying his hand on Tostig's
shoulder).* Nay then, come thou
back to us!

Tostig (after a pause turning to him).
Never shall any man say that I,
that Tostig

onjured the mightier Harold from his
North

To do the battle for me here in England,
Then left him for the meaner! thee!—

Thou hast no passion for the House of
Godwin—

Thou hast but cared to make thyself a
king—

Thou hast sold me for a cry.—
Thou gavest thy voice against me in the

Council—
I hate thee, and despise thee, and defy

thee.
Farewell for ever!

Harold. On to Stamford-bridge!

[Exit.

SCENE III.

AFTER THE BATTLE OF STAMFORD-
BRIDGE. BANQUET.

HAROLD and ALDWYTH. GURTH,
LEOFWIN, MORCAR, EDWIN, and
other Earls and Thanes.

Voices. Hail! Harold! Aldwyth! hail,
bridegroom and bride!

Aldwyth (talking with Harold). An-
swer them thou!

Is this our marriage-banquet? Would
the wines

Of wedding had been dash'd into the cups
Of victory, and our marriage and thy glory

Been drunk together! these poor hands
but sew,

Spin, broider—would that they were
man's to have held

The battle-axe by thee!

Harold. There was a moment
When being forced aloof from all my

guard,
And striking at Hardrada and his mad-

men
I had wish'd for any weapon.

Aldwyth. Why art thou sad?

Harold. I have lost the boy who play'd
at ball with me,

With whom I fought another fight than
this

Of Stamford-bridge,
Aldwyth. Ay! ay! thy victories

Over our own poor Wales, when at thy
side

He conquer'd with thee.

Harold. No—the childish fist
That cannot strike again.

Aldwyth. Thou art too kindly.
Why didst thou let so many Norsemen

hence?
Thy fierce forekings had clench'd their

pirate hides
To the bleak church doors, like kites upon

a barn.
Harold. Is there so great a need to

tell thee why?

Aldwyth. Yea, am I not thy wife?

Voices. Hail, Harold, Aldwyth!

Bridegroom and bride!

Aldwyth. Answer them! [To Harold.
Harold (to all). Earls and Thanes!

Full thanks for your fair greeting of my
bride!

Earls, Thanes, and all our countrymen!
the day,

Our day beside the Derwent will not shine
Less than a star among the goldenest hours

Of Alfred, or of Edward his great son,
Or Athelstan, or English Ironside

Who fought with Knut, or Knut who
coming Dane
Died English. Every man about his king
Fought like a king; the king like his own
man,
No better; one for all, and all for one,
One soul! and therefore have we shatter'd
back
The hugest wave from Norseland ever
yet
Surged on us, and our battle-axes broken
The Raven's wing, and dumb'd his carrion
croak
From the gray sea for ever. Many are
gone—
Drink to the dead who died for us, the
living
Who fought and would have died, but
happier lived,
If happier be to live; they both have life
In the large mouth of England, till *her*
voice
Die with the world. Hail—hail!
Morcar. May all invaders perish like
Hardrada!
All traitors fail like Tostig!
[*All drink but Harold.*
Aldwyth. Thy cup's full!
Harold. I saw the hand of Tostig
cover it.
Our dear, dead, traitor-brother, Tostig,
him
Reverently we buried. Friends, had I
been here,
Without too large self-lauding I must hold
The sequel had been other than his league
With Norway, and this battle. Peace be
with him!
He was not of the worst. If there be
those
At banquet in this hall, and hearing me—
For there be those I fear who prick'd the
lion

To make him spring, that sight of Danish
blood
Might serve an end not English—peace
with them
Likewise, if *they* can be at peace with what
God gave us to divide us from the wolf!
Aldwyth (*aside to Harold*). Make not
our Morcar sullen: it is not wise.
Harold. Hail to the living who fought,
the dead who fell!
Voices. Hail, hail!
First Thane. How ran that answer
which King Harold gave
To his dead namesake, when he ask'd for
England?
Leofwin. 'Seven feet of English earth,
or something more,
Seeing he is a giant!' *First Thane.* Then for the bastard
Six feet and nothing more!
Leofwin. Ay, but belike
Thou hast not learnt his measure.
First Thane. By St. Edmund
I over-measure him. Sound sleep to the
man
Here by dead Norway without dream or
dawn!
Second Thane. What is he bragging
still that he will come
To thrust our Harold's throne from under
him?
My nurse would tell me of a molehill
crying
To a mountain 'Stand aside and room for
me!'
First Thane. Let him come! let him
come. Here's to him, sink or
swim! [*Drinks.*
Second Thane. God sink him!
First Thane. Cannot hands which
had the strength
To shove that stranded iceberg off our
shores,

spring, that sight of Danish

and not English—peace

em

ty can be at peace with what

o divide us from the wolf!

ide to Harold). Make not

rear sullen: it is not wise.

ail to the living who fought,

l who fell!

il, hail!

. How ran that answer

King Harold gave

amesake, when he ask'd for

?

Seven feet of English earth,

thing more,

giant!

. Then for the bastard

othing more!

Ay, but belike

learnt his measure.

By St. Edmund

him. Sound sleep to the

Norway without dream or

ve. What is he bragging

t he will come

Harold's throne from under

ld tell me of a molehill

'Stand aside and room for

Let him come! let him

Here's to him, sink or

[Drinks]

c. God sink him!

. Cannot hands which

strength

stranded iceberg off our

And send the shatter'd North again to sea,
Scuttle his cockle-shell? What's Brun-

anburg
To Stamford-bridge? a war-crash, and so

hard,
So loud, that, by St. Dunstan, old St.

Thor—
By God, we thought him dead—but our

old Thor
Heard his own thunder again, and woke

and came
Among us again, and mark'd the sons of

those
Who made this Britain England, break

the North:

Mark'd how the war-axe swang,
Heard how the war-horn sang,

Mark'd how the spear-head sprang,
Heard how the shield-wall rang,

Iron on iron clang,
Anvil on hammer bang—

Second Thane. Hammer on anvil,
hammer on anvil. Old dog,

Thou art drunk, old dog!

First Thane. Too drunk to fight with
thee!

Second Thane. Fight thou with thine
own double, not with me,

Keep that for Norman William!

First Thane. Down with William!

Third Thane. The washerwoman's
brat!

Fourth Thane. The tanner's bastard!

Fifth Thane. The Falaise byblow!

[Enter a Thane, from Pevensey, spat-

ter'd with mud.
Harold. Ay, but what late guest,

As haggard as a fast of forty days,
And caked and plaster'd with a hundred

mires,
Hath stumbled on our cups?

Thane from Pevensey. Mylord the King!
William the Norman, for the wind had

changed—
Harold. I felt it in the middle of that

fierce fight
At Stamford-bridge. William hath landed,

ha?
Thane from Pevensey. Landed at

Pevensey—I am from Pevensey—
Hath wasted all the land at Pevensey—

Hath harried mine own cattle—God con-

found him!
I have ridden night and day from Peven-

sey—
A thousand ships—a hundred thousand

men—
Thousands of horses, like as many lions

Neighing and roaring as they leapt to
land—

Harold. How oft in coming hast thou
broken bread?

Thane from Pevensey. Some thrice,
or so.

Harold. Bring not thy hollowness
On our full feast. Famine is fear, were

it but
Of being starved. Sit down, sit down,

and eat,
And, when again red-blooded, speak

again;
(*Aside.*) The men that guarded Eng-

land to the South,
Were scatter'd to the harvest. . . . No

power mine
To hold their force together. . . . Many

are fallen
At Stamford-bridge. . . . the people

stupid-sure
Sleep like their swine. . . . in South and

North at once
I could not be.

(*Aloud.*) Gurth, Leofwin, Morcar,
Edwin!

(*Pointing to the revellers.*) The curse of
England! these are drown'd in
wassail,

And cannot see the world but thro' their
wines!

Leave them! and thee too, Aldwyth,
must I leave—

Harsh is the news! hard is our honey-
moon!

Thy pardon. (*Turning round to his
attendants.*) Break the banquet
up . . . Ye four!

And thou, my carrier-pigeon of black news,
Cram thy crop full, but come when thou
art call'd. [*Exit Harold.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A TENT ON A MOUND,
FROM WHICH CAN BE SEEN THE
FIELD OF SENLAC.

HAROLD, *sitting*; by him standing HUGH
MARGOT the Monk, GURTH, LEOFWIN.

Harold. Refer my cause, my crown
to Rome! . . . The wolf

Mudded the brook and predetermined all.
Monk,

Thou hast said thy say, and had my
constant 'No'

For all but instant battle. I hear no
more.

Margot. Hear me again—for the last
time. Arise,
Scatter thy people home, descend the hill,
Lay hands of full allegiance in thy Lord's
And crave his mercy, for the Holy Father
Hath given this realm of England to the
Norman.

Harold. Then for the last time, monk,
I ask again
When had the Lateran and the Holy
Father

To do with England's choice of her own
king?

Margot. Earl, the first Christian
Cesar drew to the East

To leave the Pope dominion in the West.
He gave him all the kingdoms of the West.

Harold. So!—did he?—Earl—I have
a mind to play

The William with thine eyesight and thy
tongue.

Earl—ay—thou art but a messenger of
William.

I am weary—go: make me not wroth
with thee!

Margot. Mock-king, I am the mes-
senger of God,

His Norman Daniel! Mene, Mene,
Tekel!

Is thy wrath Hell, that I should spare to
cry,

Yon heaven is wroth with thee? Hear
me again!

Our Saints have moved the Church that
moves the world,

And all the Heavens and very God: they
heard—

They know King Edward's promise and
thine—thine.

Harold. Should they not know free
England crowns herself?

Not know that he nor I had power to
promise?

Not know that Edward cancell'd his own
promise?

And for my part therein—Back to that
juggler, [*Rising.*]

Tell him the Saints are nobler than he
dreams,

Tell him that God is nobler than the
Saints,

And tell him we stand arm'd on Senlac
Hill,

And bide the doom of God.

England's choice of her own

Earl, the first Christian
drew to the East
hope dominion in the West.
l the kingdoms of the West.
!—did he?—Earl—I have
to play

with thine eyesight and thy

u art but a messenger of

go : make me not wroth

!—

ock-king, I am the mes-

of God,

Daniel : Mene, Mene,

ell, that I should spare to

wroth with thee? Hear

n !

e moved the Church that

the world,

avens and very God : they

g Edward's promise and

mine.

ould they not know free

crowns herself?

he nor I had power to

Edward cancell'd his own

t therein—Back to that

[*Rising.*

ints are nobler than he

God is nobler than the

e stand arm'd on Senlac

om of God.

Margot.

Hear it thro' me. The realm for which thou art forsworn is cursed,

The babe enwomb'd and at the breast is cursed,

The corpse thou whelme'st with thine earth is cursed,

The soul who fighteth on thy side is cursed,

The seed thou sowest in thy field is cursed,

The steer wherewith thou plowest thy field is cursed,

The fowl that fleeth o'er thy field is cursed,

And thou, usurper, liar—

Harold. Out, beast monk !

[*Lifting his hand to strike him.*

Harold. Thanks, Gurth ! The simple, silent, selfless man

Is worth a world of tonguesters. (*To Margot.*) Get thee gone !

He means the thing he says. See him out safe !

Leofwin. He hath blown himself as red as fire with curses.

An honest fool ! Follow me, honest fool,

But if thou blurt thy curse among our folk,

I know not—I may give that egg-bald head

The tap that silences.

Harold. See him out safe.

[*Exeunt Leofwin and Margot.*

Gurth. Thou hast lost thine even temper, brother Harold !

Harold. Gurth, when I past by Waltham, my foundation

For men who serve the neighbour, not themselves,

I cast me down prone, praying ; and, when I rose,

They told me that the Holy Rood had lean'd

And bow'd above me ; whether that which held it

Had weaken'd, and the Rood itself were bound

To that necessity which binds us down ;

Whether it bow'd at all but in their fancy ;

Or if it bow'd, whether it symbol'd ruin

Or glory, who shall tell ? but they were sad,

And somewhat sadden'd me.

Gurth. Yet if a fear,

Or shadow of a fear, lest the strange Saints

By whom thou swarest, should have power to balk

Thy puissance in this fight with him, who made

And heard thee swear—brother—I have not sworn—

If the king fall, may not the kingdom fall ?

But if I fall, I fall, and thou art king ;

And, if I win, I win, and thou art king ;

Draw thou to London, there make strength to breast

Whatever chance, but leave this day to me.

Leofwin (entering). And waste the land about thee as thou goest,

And be thy hand as winter on the field,

To leave the foe no forage.

Harold. Noble Gurth !

Best son of Godwin ! If I fall, I fall—

The doom of God ! How should the people fight

When the king flies ? And, Leofwin, art thou mad ?

How should the King of England waste the fields

Of England, his own people ?—No glance yet

Of the Northumbrian helmet on the heath ?

Leofwin. No, but a shoal of wives
upon the heath,
And someone saw thy willy-nilly nun
Vying a tress against our golden fern.

Harold. Vying a tear with our cold
dews, a sigh

With these low-moaning heavens. Let
her be fetch'd.

We have parted from our wife without
reproach,

Tho' we have dived thro' all her practices ;
And that is well.

Leofwin. I saw here even now :
She hath not left us.

Harold. Nought of Morcar then ?

Gurth. Nor seen, nor heard ; thine,
William's or his own

As wind blows, or tide flows : belike he
watches,

If this war-storm in one of its rough rolls
Wash up that old crown of Northumber-
land.

Harold. I married her for Morcar—a
sin against

The truth of love. Evil for good, it seems,
Is oft as childless of the good as evil
For evil.

Leofwin. Good for good hath borne
at times

A bastard false as William.

Harold. Ay, if Wisdom
Pair'd not with Good. But I am some-
what worn,

A snatch of sleep were like the peace of
God.

Gurth, Leofwin, go once more about the
hill—

What did the dead man call it—Sanguelac,
The lake of blood ?

Leofwin. A lake that dips in William
As well as Harold.

Harold. Like enough. I have seen
The trenches dug, the palisades uprear'd

And wattled thick with ash and willow-
wands ;

Yea, wrought at them myself. Go round
once more ;

See all be sound and whole. No Norman
horse

Can shatter England, standing shield by
shield ;

Tell that again to all.

Gurth. I will, good brother.

Harold. Our guardsman hath but
toil'd his hand and foot,

I hand, foot, heart and head. Some
wine ! (*One pours wine into a*

goblet which he hands to Harold.)

Too much !

What? we must use our battle-axe to-
day.

Our guardsmen have slept well, since we
came in ?

Leofwin. Ay, slept and snored.

Your second-sighted man

That scared the dying conscience of the
king,

Misheard their snores for groans. They
are up again

And chanting that old song of Brunanburg
Where England conquer'd.

Harold. That is well. The Norman,
What is he doing ?

Leofwin. Praying for Normandy ;
Our scouts have heard the tinkle of their
bells.

Harold. And our old songs are prayers
for England too !

But by all Saints—

Leofwin. Barring the Norman !

Harold. Nay,

Were the great trumpet blowing dooms-
day dawn,

I needs must rest. Call when the
Norman moves—

[*Exeunt all, but Harold.*]

thick with ash and willow-
ls;
ht at them myself. Go round
more;
und and whole. No Norman
England, standing shield by
d;
ain to all.

I will, good brother.
Our guardsman hath but
his hand and foot,
ot, heart and head. Some
! (*One pours wine into a*
which he hands to Harold.)
Too much!
must use our battle-axe to-

men have slept well, since we
in?

Ay, slept and snored.
second-sighted man
the dying conscience of the

their snores for groans. They
p again

g that old song of Brunanburg
and conquer'd.

That is well. The Norman,
loing?

Praying for Normandy;
ave heard the tinkle of their

And our old songs are prayers
England too!

aints—

Barring the Norman!

Nay,

eat trumpet blowing dooms-

awn,

ust rest. Call when the

an moves—

[*Exeunt all, but Harold.*]

No horse—thousands of horses—our
shield wall—

Wall—break it not—break not—break—

Vision of Edward. Son Harold, I thy
king, who came before

To tell thee thou should'st win at
Stamford-bridge,

Come yet once more, from where I am at
peace,

Because I loved thee in my mortal day,
To tell thee thou shalt die on Senlac hill—

Sanguelac!

Vision of Wulfnoth. O brother, from
my ghastly oubliette

I send my voice across the narrow seas—
No more, no more, dear brother, never-
more—

Sanguelac!

Vision of Tostig. O brother, most
unbrotherlike to me,

Thou gavest thy voice against me in my life,
I give my voice against thee from the
grave—

Sanguelac!

Vision of Norman Saints. O hapless
Harold! King but for an hour!

Thou swarest falsely by our blessed bones,
We give our voice against thee out of
heaven!

Sanguelac! Sanguelac! The arrow! the
arrow!

*Harold (starting up, battle-axe in
hand).* Away!

My battle-axe against your voices. Peace!
The king's last word—'the arrow!' I

shall die—

I die for England then, who lived for
England—

What nobler? men must die.

I cannot fall into a false world—

I have done no man wrong. Tostig, poor
brother,

Art thou so anger'd?

Fain had I kept thine earldom in thy
hands

Save for thy wild and violent will that
wrench'd

All hearts of freemen from thee. I could
do

No other than this way advise the king
Against the race of Godwin. Is it possible
That mortal men should bear their earthly
heats

In yon bloodless world, and threaten us
thence

Unschool'd of Death? Thus then thou
art revenged—

I left our England naked to the South
To meet thee in the North. The Norse-
man's raid

Hath helpt the Norman, and the race of
Godwin

Hath ruin'd Godwin. No—our waking
thoughts

Suffer a stormless shipwreck in the pools
Of sullen slumber, and arise again

Disjointed: only dreams—where mine
own self

Takes part against myself! Why? for a
spark

Of self-disdain born in me when I swear
Falsely to him, the false Norman, over
His gilded ark of mummy-saints, by
whom

I knew not that I swear,—not for my-
self—

For England—yet not wholly—

(*Enter EDITH.*)

Edith, Edith,
Get thou into thy cloister as the king
Will'd it: be safe: the perjury-mongering
Count

Hath made too good an use of Holy
Church

To break her close ! There the great
 God of truth
 Fill all thine hours with peace !—A lying
 devil
 Hath haunted me—mine oath—my wife
 —I fain
 Had made my marriage not a lie ; I could
 not :
 Thou art my bride ! and thou in after years
 Praying perchance for this poor soul of
 mine
 In cold, white cells beneath an icy moon—
 Thi memory to thee !—and this to
 England,
 My legacy of war against the Pope
 From child to child, from Pope to Pope,
 from age to age,
 Till the sea wash her level with her shores,
 Or till the Pope be Christ's.

Enter ALDWYTH.

Aldwyth (to Edith). Away from him !

Edith. I will . . . I have not spoken
 to the king

One word ; and one I must. Farewell !
[Going.

Harold. Not yet.
 Stay.

Edith. To what use ?

Harold. The king commands thee,
 woman !

(To Aldwyth.)

Have thy two brethren sent their forces in ?

Aldwyth. Nay, I fear not.

Harold. Then there's no force in thee !
 Thou didst possess thyself of Edward's ear
 To part me from the woman that I loved !
 Thou didst arouse the fierce Northum-
 brians !

Thou hast been false to England and to
 me !—

As . . . in some sort . . . I have been
 false to thee.

Leave me. No more—Pardon on both
 sides—Go !

Aldwyth. Alas, my lord, I loved thee.

Harold (bitterly). With a love

Passing thy love for Griffyth ! wherefore
 now

Obey my first and last commandment. Go !

Aldwyth. O Harold ! husband ! Shall
 we meet again ?

Harold. After the battle—after the
 battle. Go.

Aldwyth. I go. *(Aside.)* That I could
 stab her standing there !

[Exit Aldwyth.]

Edith. Alas, my lord, she loved thee.

Harold. Never ! never !

Edith. I saw it in her eyes !

Harold. I see it in thine.

And not on thee—nor England—fall
 God's doom !

Edith. On thee ? on me. And thou
 art England ! Alfred

Was England. Ethelred was nothing.
 England

Is but her king, and thou art Harold !

Harold. *Edith,*

The sign in heaven—the sudden blast at
 sea—

My fatal oath—the dead Saints—the dark
 dreams—

The Pope's Anathema—the Holy Rood
 That bow'd to me at Waltham—Edith, if

I, the last English King of England—

Edith. No,

First of a line that coming from the
 people,

And chosen by the people—

Harold. And fighting for

And dying for the people—

Edith. Living ! living !

Harold. Yea so, good cheer ! thou

art Harold, I am Edith !

Look not thus war !

o more—Pardon on both
Go!

Alas, my lord, I loved thee.
rly). With a love
ve for Griffyth! wherefore

nd last commandment. Go!
O Harold! husband! Shall
t again?

fter the battle—after the
Go.

go. (*Aside.*) That I could
standing there!

[*Exit* Aldwyth.
as, my lord, she loved thee.

Never! never!
aw it in her eyes!

I see it in thine.
thee—nor England—fall
loom!

thee? on me. And thou
land! Alfred

. Ethelred was nothing.
d

g, and thou art Harold!
Edith,

even—the sudden blast at

—the dead Saints—the dark

—
mathema—the Holy Rood

me at Waltham—Edith, if
English King of England—

No,
ne that coming from the

y the people—
And fighting for

the people—
Living! living!

Yea so, good cheer! thou
old, I am Edith!

was I

Edith. What matters how I look?
Have we not broken Wales and Norse-
land? slain,
Whose life was all one battle, incarnate
war,
Their giant king, a mightier man-in-arms
Than William.

Harold. Ay, my girl, no tricks in
him—

No bastard he! when all was lost, he
yell'd,

And bit his shield, and dash'd it on the
ground,

And swaying his two-handed sword about
him,

Two deaths at every swing, ran in upon us
And died so, and I loved him as I hate

This liar who made me liar. If I hate can
kill,

And Loathing wield a Saxon battle-axe—
Edith. Waste not thy might before
the battle!

Harold. No,
And thou must hence. Stigand will see
thee safe,

And so—Farewell.
[*He is going, but turns back.*

The ring thou dardest not wear,
I have had it fashion'd, see, to meet my
hand.

[*Harold shows the ring which is on
his finger.*

Farewell!
[*He is going, but turns back again.*

I am dead as Death this day to ought
of earth's

Save William's death or mine.
Edith. Thy death!—to-day!

Is it not thy birthday?
Harold. Ay, that happy day!

A birthday welcome! happy days and
many!

One—this!

[*They embrace.*

Look, I will bear thy blessing into the
battle

And front the doom of God.

Norman cries (heard in the distance).
Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

Enter GURTH.
Gurth. The Norman moves!

Harold. Harold and Holy Cross!
[*Exeunt* Harold and Gurth.

Enter STIGAND.
Stigand. Our Church in arms—the

lamb the lion—not
Spear into pruning-hook—the counter

way—
Cowl, helm; and crozier, battle-axe.

Abbot Alfwig,
Leofric, and all the monks of Peterboro'

Strike for the king; but I, old wretch,
old Stigand,

With hands too limp to brandish iron—
and yet

I have a power—would Harold ask me
for it—

I have a power.
Edith. What power, holy father?

Stigand. Power now from Harold to
command thee hence

And see thee safe from Senlac.
Edith. I remain!

Stigand. Yea, so will I, daughter,
until I find

Which way the battle balance. I can
see it

From where we stand: and, live or die,
I would

I were among them!

Canons from Waltham (singing without).
Salva patriam

Sancte Pater,
Salva Fili,

Salva Spiritus,

Salva patriam,
Sancta Mater.¹

Edith. Are those the blessed angels
quiring, father?

Stigand. No, daughter, but the
canons out of Waltham,
The king's foundation, that have follow'd
him.

Edith. O God of battles, make their
wall of shields
Firm as thy cliffs, strengthen their
palisades!

What is that whirring sound?

Stigand. The Norman arrow!

Edith. Look out upon the battle—is
he safe?

Stigand. The king of England stands
between his banners.

He glitters on the crowning of the hill.
God save King Harold!

Edith. —chosen by his people
And fighting for his people!

Stigand. There is one
Come as Goliath came of yore—he flings
His brand in air and catches it again,
He is chanting some old warsong.

Edith. And no David
To meet him?

Stigand. Ay, there springs a Saxon on
him,
Falls—and another falls.

Edith. Have mercy on us!

Stigand. Lo! our good Gurth hath
smitten him to the death.

Edith. So perish all the enemies of
Harold!

Canons (singing).

Hostis in Angliam
Ruit prædator,
Illorum, Domine,
Scutum scindatur!

¹ The *a* throughout these Latin hymns should
be sounded broad, as in 'father.'

Hostis per Angliæ
Plagas bacchatur;
Casa crematur,
Pastor fugatur
Grege trucidatur—

Stigand. Illos trucidæ, Domine.

Edith. Ay, good father.

Canons (singing).

Illorum scelera
Pœna sequatur!

English cries. Harold and Holy
Cross! Out! out!

Stigand. Our javelins
Answer their arrows. All the Norman
foot

Are storming up the hill. The range of
knights

Sit, each a statue on his horse, and wait.

English cries. Harold and God Al-
mighty!

Norman cries. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

Canons (singing).

Eques cum pedite
Præpeditatur!

Illorum in lacrymas
Cruor fundatur!

Pereant, pereant,
Anglia præcatur.

Stigand. Look, daughter, look.

Edith. Nay, father, look for me!

Stigand. Our axes lighten with a single
flash

About the summit of the hill, and heads
And arms are sliver'd off and splinter'd by
Their lightning—and they fly—the Nor-
man flies.

Edith. Stigand, O father, have we
won the day?

Stigand. No, daughter, no—they fall
behind the horse—

Their horse are thronging to the bar-
ricades;

s per Angliæ
 gas bacchatur;
 sa crematur,
 stor fugatur
 ex trucidatur—
 los trucidæ, Domine.
 Ay, good father.
 ing).
 orum scelera
 Poena sequatur!
 Harold and Holy
 Out! out!
 Our javelins
 arrows. All the Norman
 up the hill. The range of
 ue on his horse, and wait.
 Harold and God Al-
 !
 s. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!
 ing).
 cum pedite
 epediatur!
 m in lacrymas
 or fundatur!
 nt, percent,
 glia precatur.
 ook, daughter, look.
 Nay, father, look for me!
 uraxes lighten with a single
 mit of the hill, and heads
 liver'd off and splinter'd by
 g—and they fly—the Nor-
 s.
 and, O father, have we
 day?
 o, daughter, no—they fall
 the horse—
 re thronging to the bar-

I see the gonfanon of Holy Peter
 Floating above their helmets—ha! he is
 down!

Edith. He down! Who down?

Stigand. The Norman Count is down.

Edith. So perish all the enemies of
 England!

Stigand. No, no, he hath risen again
 —he bares his face—

Shouts something—he points onward—
 all their horse

Swallow the hill locust-like, swarming up.

Edith. O God of battles, make his
 battle-axe keen

As thine own sharp-dividing justice, heavy
 As thine own bolts that fall on crimeful
 heads

Charged with the weight of heaven
 wherefrom they fall!

Canons (singing).

Jacta tonitrua

Deus bellator!

Surgas e tenebris,

Sis vindicator!

Fulmina, fulmina

Deus vastator!

Edith. O God of battles, they are
 three to one,

Make thou one man as three to roll them
 down!

Canons (singing).

Equus cum equite

Dejiciatur!

Acies, Acies

Prona sternatur!

Illorum lanceas

Frangere Creator!

Stigand. Yea, yea, for how their lances
 snap and shiver

Against the shifting blaze of Harold's axe!
 War-woodman of old Woden, how he
 fells

The mortal copse of faces! There! And
 there!

The horse and horseman cannot meet the
 shield,

The blow that brains the horseman cleaves
 the horse,

The horse and horseman roll along the
 hill,

They fly once more, they fly, the Norman
 flies!

Equus cum equite

Præcipitatur.

Edith. O God, the God of truth hath
 heard my cry.

Follow them, follow them, drive them to
 the sea!

Illorum scelera

Pœna sequatur!

Stigand. Truth! no; a lie; a trick,
 a Norman trick!

They turn on the pursuer, horse against
 foot,

They murder all that follow.

Edith. Have mercy on us!

Stigand. Hot-headed fools—to burst
 the wall of shields!

They have broken the commandment of
 the king!

Edith. His oath was broken—O holy
 Norman Saints,

Ye that are now of heaven, and see
 beyond

Your Norman shrines, pardon it, pardon
 it,

That he forswore himself for all he loved,
 Me, me and all! Look out upon the

battle!

Stigand. They thunder again upon the
 barricades.

My sight is eagle, but the strife so thick—
 This is the hottest of it: hold, ash! hold,

willow!

English cries. Out, out!

Norman cries. Ha Rou !
Stigand. Ha ! Gurth hath leapt upon him

And slain him : he hath fallen.

Edith. And I am heard.
 Glory to God in the Highest ! fallen,
 fallen !

Stigand. No, no, his horse—he
 mounts another—wields
 His war-club, dashes it on Gurth, and
 Gurth,

Our noble Gurth, is down !

Edith. Have mercy on us !

Stigand. And Leofwin is down !

Edith. Have mercy on us !

O Thou that knowest, let not my strong
 prayer

Be weaken'd in thy sight, because I love
 The husband of another !

Norman cries. Ha Rou ! Ha Rou !

Edith. I do not hear our English
 war-cry.

Stigand. No.

Edith. Look out upon the battle—is
 he safe ?

Stigand. He stands between the banners
 with the dead
 So piled about him he can hardly
 move.

Edith (takes up the war-cry). Out !
 out !

Norman cries. Ha Rou !

Edith (cries out). Harold and Holy
 Cross !

Norman cries. Ha Rou ! Ha Rou !

Edith. What is that whirring sound ?

Stigand. The Norman sends his arrows
 up to Heaven,

They fall on those within the palisade !

Edith. What out upon the hill—is
 Harold there ?

Stigand. Sanguelac—Sanguelac—the
 arrow—the arrow !—away !

SCENE II.—FIELD OF THE DEAD.
 NIGHT.

ALDWYTH and EDITH.

Aldwyth. O Edith, art thou here ? O
 Harold, Harold—

Our Harold—we shall never see him more.

Edith. For there was more than sister
 in my kiss,

And so the saints were wroth. I cannot
 love them,

For they are Norman saints—and yet I
 should—

They are so much holier than their harlot's
 son

With whom they play'd their game against
 the king !

Aldwyth. The king is slain, the
 kingdom overthrown !

Edith. No matter !

Aldwyth. How no matter, Harold
 slain ?—

I cannot find his body. O help me thou !
 O Edith, if I ever wrought against thee,
 Forgive me thou, and help me here !

Edith. No matter !

Aldwyth. Not help me, nor forgive
 me ?

Edith. So thou saidest.

Aldwyth. I say it now, forgive me !

Edith. Cross me not !

I am seeking one who wedded me in
 secret.

Whisper ! God's angels only know it. Ha !

What art thou doing here among the dead ?

They are stripping the dead bodies naked
 yonder,

And thou art come to rob them of their
 rings !

Aldwyth. O Edith, Edith, I have lost
 both crown

And husband.

Edith. So have I

—FIELD OF THE DEAD.
NIGHT.

YTH and EDITH.

O Edith, art thou here? O
Harold—

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No matter!
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So thou saidest.
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ing the dead bodies naked

me to rob them of their

Edith, Edith, I have lost
wn

So have I

SCENE II.

HAROLD.

665

Aldwyth. I tell thee, girl,
I am seeking my dead Harold.

Edith. And I mine!
The Holy Father strangled him with a hair
Of Peter, and his brother Tostig helpt;
The wicked sister clapt her hands and
laugh'd;

Then all the dead fell on him.

Aldwyth. Edith, Edith—
Edith. What was he like, this hus-
band? like to thee?

Call not for help from me. I knew him
not.

He lies not here: not close beside the
standard.

Here fell the truest, manliest hearts of
England.

Go further hence and find him.

Aldwyth. She is crazed!

Edith. That doth not matter either.
Lower the light.

He must be here.

*Enter two Canons, OSGOD and
ATHELRIC, with torches. They
turn over the dead bodies and
examine them as they pass.*

Osgod. I think that this is Thurkill.

Athelric. More likely Godric.

Osgod. I am sure this body

Is Alfwig, the king's uncle.

Athelric. So it is!

No, no—brave Gurth, one gash from
brow to knee!

Osgod. And here is Leofwin.

Edith. And here is He!

Aldwyth. Harold? Oh no—nay, if
it were—my God,

They have so main'd and murder'd all
his face

There is no man can swear to him.

Edith. But one woman!

Look you, we never mean to part again.

I have found him, I am happy.

Was there not someone ask'd me for
forgiveness?

I yield it freely, being the true wife
Of this dead King, who never bore revenge.

*Enter COUNT WILLIAM and WILLIAM
MALET.*

William. Who be these women?

And what body is this?

Edith. Harold, thy better!

William. Ay, and what art thou?

Edith. His wife!

Malet. Not true, my girl, here is the

Queen! [*Pointing out Aldwyth.*

William (to Aldwyth). Wast thou his
Queen?

Aldwyth. I was the Queen of Wales.

William. Why then of England.

Madam, fear us not.

(*To Malet.*) Knowest thou this other?

Malet. When I visited England,

Some held she was his wife in secret—
some—

Well—some believed she was his para-
mour.

Edith. Norman, thou liest! liars all
of you,

Your Saints and all! I am his wife!
and she—

For look, our marriage ring!

[*She draws it off .the finger of Harold.*

I lost it somehow—

I lost it, playing with it when I was wild.

That bred the doubt! but I am wiser
now . . .

I am too wise . . . Will none among
you all

Bear me true witness—only for this once—

That I have found it here again?

[*She puts it on.*

And thou,

Thy wife am I for ever and evermore.

[*Falls on the body and dies.*

William. Death!—and enough of death for this one day,

The day of St. Calixtus, and the day,
My day, when I was born.

Malet. And this dead king's
Who, king or not, hath kinglike fought
and fallen,

His birthday, too. It seems but yester-
even

I held it with him in his English halls,
His day, with all his rooftree ringing
'Harold,'

Before he fell into the snare of Guy;
When all men counted Harold would be
king,

And Harold was most happy.

William. Thou art half English.
Take them away!

Malet. I vow to build a church to God
Here on this hill of battle; let our high
altar

Stand where their standard fell . . .
where these two lie.

Take them away, I do not love to see
them.

Pluck the dead woman off the dead man,
Malet!

Malet. Faster than ivy. Must I hack
her arms off?

How shall I part them?

William. Leave them. Let them be!
Bury him and his paramour together.

He that was false in oath to me, it seems
Was false to his own wife. We will not
give him

A Christian burial: yet he was a warrior,
And wise, yea truthful, till that blighted
vow

Which God avenged to-day.

Wrap them together in a purple cloak
And lay them both upon the waste sea-
shore

At Hastings, there to guard the land for
which

He did forswear himself—a warrior—ay,
And but that Holy Peter fought for us,
And that the false Northumbrian held
aloof,

And save for that chance arrow which
the Saints

Sharpen'd and sent against him—who
can tell?—

Three horses had I slain beneath me:
twice

I thought that all was lost. Since I
knew battle,

And that was from my boyhood, never
yet—

No, by the splendour of God—have I
fought men

Like Harold and his brethren, and his
guard

Of English. Every man about his king
Fell where he stood. They loved him:
and, pray God

My Normans may but move as true with
me

To the door of death. Of one self-stock
at first,

Make them again one people—Norman,
English;

And English, Norman; we should have
a hand

To grasp the world with, and a foot to
stamp it . . .

Flat. Praise the Saints. It is over.
No more blood!

I am king of England, so they thwart me
not,

And I will rule according to their laws.
(*To Aldwyth.*) Madam, we will entreat
thee with all honour.

Aldwyth. My punishment is more
than I can bear.

ere to guard the land for

himself—a warrior—ay,
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THE LOVER'S TALE.

THE original Preface to 'The Lover's Tale' states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends however who, boylike, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light—accompanied with a reprint of the sequel—a work of my mature life—'The Golden Supper'?

May 1879.

ARGUMENT.

JULIAN, whose cousin and foster-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavours to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel. He speaks (in Parts II. and III.) of having been haunted by visions and the sound of bells, tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.

I.

HERE faraway, seen from the topmost cliff,
Filling with purple gloom the vacancies
Between the tufted hills, the sloping seas
Hung in mid-heaven, and half-way down
rare sails,
White as white clouds, floated from sky
to sky.

Oh! pleasant breast of waters, quiet bay,
Like to a quiet mind in the loud world,
Where the chafed breakers of the outer sea
Sank powerless, as anger falls aside
And withers on the breast of peaceful love;
Thou didst receive the growth of pines
that fledged

The hills that watch'd thee, as Love
watcheth Love,

In thine own essence, and delight thyself
To make it wholly thine on sunny days.

Keep thou thy name of 'Lover's Bay.'

See, sirs,

Even now the Goddess of the Past, that
takes

The heart, and sometimes touches but
one string

That quivers, and is silent, and sometimes
Sweeps suddenly all its half-moulder'd
chords

To some old melody, begins to play
That air which pleased her first. I feel
thy breath;

I come, great Mistress of the ear and
eye:

Thy breath is of the pinewood; and tho'
years

Have hollow'd out a deep and stormy
strait

Betwixt the native land of Love and me,
Breathe but a little on me, and the sail
Will draw me to the rising of the sun,
The lucid chambers of the morning star,
And East of Life.

Permit me, friend, I prythee,
 To pass my hand across my brows, and
 muse
 On those dear hills, that never more will
 meet
 The sight that throbs and aches beneath
 my touch,
 As tho' there beat a heart in either eye ;
 For when the outer lights are darken'd
 thus,
 The memory's vision hath a keener edge.
 It grows upon me now—the semicircle
 Of dark-blue waters and the narrow fringe
 Of curving beach—its wreaths of dripping
 green—
 Its pale pink shells—the summerhouse
 aloft
 That open'd on the pines with doors of
 glass,
 A mountain nest—the pleasure-boat that
 rock'd,
 Light-green with its own shadow, keel to
 keel,
 Upon the dappled dimplings of the wave,
 That blanch'd upon its side.

O Love, O Hope !
 They come, they crowd upon me all at
 once—
 Moved from the cloud of unforgotten
 things,
 That sometimes on the horizon of the mind
 Lies folded, often sweeps athwart in
 storm—
 Flash upon flash they lighten thro' me—
 days
 Of dewy dawning and the amber eyes
 When thou and I, Camilla, thou and I
 Were borne about the bay or safely moor'd
 Beneath a low-brow'd cavern, where the
 tide
 Plash'd, sapping its worn ribs ; and all
 without

The slowly-ridging rollers on the cliffs
 Clash'd, calling to each other, and thro'
 the arch
 Down those loud waters, like a setting
 star,
 Mixt with the gorgeous west the light-
 house shone,
 And silver-smiling Venus ere she fell
 Would often loiter in her balmy blue,
 To crown it with herself.

Here, too, my love
 Waver'd at anchor with me, when day
 hung
 From his mid-dome in Heaven's airy
 halls ;
 Gleams of the water-circles as they broke,
 Flicker'd like doubtful smiles about her
 lips,
 Quiver'd a flying glory on her hair,
 Leapt like a passing thought across her
 eyes ;
 And mine with one that will not pass,
 till earth
 And heaven pass too, dwelt on my
 heaven, a face
 Most starry-fair, but kindled from within
 As 'twere with dawn. She was dark-
 hair'd, dark-eyed :
 Oh, such dark eyes ! a single glance of
 them
 Will govern a whole life from birth to
 death,
 Careless of all things else, led on with light
 In trances and in visions : look at them,
 You lose yourself in utter ignorance ;
 You cannot find their depth ; for they go
 back,
 And farther back, and still withdraw
 themselves
 Quite into the deep soul, that evermore
 Fresh springing from her fountains in the
 brain,

Still pouring thro', floods with redundant
life
Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago

I should have died, if it were possible
To die in gazing on that perfectness
Which I do bear within me : I had died,
But from my farthest lapse, my latest ebb,
Thine image, like a charm of light and
strength

Upon the waters, push'd me back again
On these deserted sands of barren life.
Tho' from the deep vault where the heart
of Hope

Fell into dust, and crumbled in the
dark—

Forgetting how to render beautiful
Her countenance with quick and health-
ful blood—

Thou didst not sway me upward ; could
I perish

While thou, a meteor of the sepulchre,
Did'st swathe thyself all round Hope's
quiet urn

For ever ? He, that saith it, hath o'er-
stept

The slippery footing of his narrow wit,
And fall'n away from judgment. Thou
art light,

To which my spirit leaneth all her flowers,
And length of days, and immortality
Of thought, and freshness ever self-re-
new'd.

For Time and Grief abode too long with
Life,

And, like all other friends i' the world, at
last

They grew weary of her fellowship :
So Time and Grief did beckon unto
Death,

And Death drew nigh and beat the doors
of Life ;

But thou didst sit alone in the inner house,
A wakeful portress, and didst parle with
Death,—

'This is a charmed dwelling which I
hold ;'

So Death gave back, and would no
further come.

Yet is my life nor in the present time,
Nor in the present place. To me alone,
Push'd from his chair of regal heritage,
The Present is the vassal of the Past :

So that, in that I have lived, do I live,
And cannot die, and am, in having been—
A portion of the pleasant yesterday,
Thrust forward on to-day and out of
place ;

A body journeying onward, sick with
toil,

The weight as if of age upon my limbs,
The grasp of hopeless grief about my
heart,

And all the senses weaken'd, save in that,
Which long ago they had glean'd and
garner'd up

Into the granaries of memory—
The clear brow, bulwark of the precious
brain,

Chinked as you see, and seam'd—and
all the while

The light soul twines and mingles with
the growths

Of vigorous early days, attracted, won,
Married, made one with, molten into all
The beautiful in Past of act or place,
And like the all-enduring camel, driven
Far from the diamond fountain by the
palms,

Who toils across the middle moonlit
nights,

Or when the white heats of the blinding
noons

Beat from the concave sand ; yet in him
keeps

A draught of that sweet fountain that he
loves,
To stay his feet from falling, and his
spirit
From bitterness of death.

Ye ask me, friends,
When I began to love. How should I
tell you?

Or from the after-fulness of my heart,
Flow back again unto my slender spring
And first of love, tho' every turn and
depth

Between is clearer in my life than all
Its present flow. Ye know not what ye
ask.

How should the broad and open flower
tell

What sort of bud it was, when, prest
together

In its green sheath, close-lapt in silken
folds,

It seem'd to keep its sweetness to itself,
Yet was not the less sweet for that it
seem'd?

For young Life knows not when young
Life was born,

But takes it all for granted: neither Love,
Warm in the heart, his cradle, can re-
member

Love in the womb, but resteth satisfied,
Looking on her that brought him to the
light:

Or as men know not when they fall asleep
Into delicious dreams, our other life,
So now I not when I began to love.

This my sum of knowledge—that my
being
Grew with myself—say rather, was my
growth,

My inward sap, the hold I have on earth,
My outward circling air wherewith I
breathe,

Which yet upholds my life, and evermore
Is to me daily life and daily death:
For how should I have lived and not
have loved?

Can ye take off the sweetness from the
flower,

The colour and the sweetness from the
rose,

And place them by themselves; or set
apart

Their motions and their brightness from
the stars,

And then point out the flower or the star?
Or build a wall betwixt my life and love,

And tell me where I am? 'Tis even
thus:

In that I live I love; because I love
I live: whate'er is fountain to the one
Is fountain to the other; and whene'er
Our God unknits the riddle of the one,
There is no shade or fold of mystery
Swathing the other.

Many, many years,
(For they seem many and my most of
life,

And well I could have linger'd in that
porch,

So unproportion'd to the dwelling-place,)
In the Maydews of childhood, opposite

The flush and dawn of youth, we lived
together,

Apart, alone together on those hills.

Before he saw my day my father died,
And he was happy that he saw it not;
But I and the first daisy on his grave
From the same clay came into light at
once.

As Love and I do number equal years,
So she, my love, is of an age with me.
How like each other was the birth of
each!

olds my life, and evermore
life and daily death :
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my day my father died,
y that he saw it not ;
daisy on his grave
day came into light at

number equal years,
s of an age with me.
ther was the birth of

On the same morning, almost the same
hour,

Under the selfsame aspect of the stars,
(Oh falsehood of all starcraft!) we were
born.

How like each other was the birth of
each !

The sister of my mother—she that bore
Camilla close beneath her beating heart,
Which to the imprison'd spirit of the
child,

With its true-touch'd pulses in the flow
And hourly visitation of the blood,
Sent notes of preparation manifold,
And mellow'd echoes of the outer world—
My mother's sister, mother of my love,
Who had a twofold claim upon my heart,
One twofold mightier than the other was,
In giving so much beauty to the world,
And so much wealth as God had charged
her with—

Loathing to put it from herself for ever,
Left her own life with it ; and dying thus,
Crowned with her highest act the placid
face
And breathless body of her good deeds
past.

So were we born, so orphan'd. She
was motherless
And I without a father. So from each
Of those two pillars which from earth
uphold
Our childhood, one had fallen away, and
all

The careful burthen of our tender years
Trembled upon the other. He that gave
Her life, to me delightedly fulfill'd
All lovingkindnesses, all offices
Of watchful care and trembling tender-
ness.

He waked for both : he prayed for both :
he slept

Dreaming of both : nor was his love the
less

Because it was divided, and shot forth
Boughs on each side, laden with whole-
some shade,

Wherein we nested sleeping or awake,
And sang aloud the matin-song of life.

She was my foster-sister : on one arm
The flaxen ringlets of our infancies
Wander'd, the while we rested : one soft
lap

Pillow'd us both : a common light of eye
Was on us as we lay : our baby lips,
Kissing one bosom, ever drew from
thence

The stream of life, one stream, one life,
one blood,

One sustenance, which, still as thought
grew large,

Still larger moulding all the house of
thought,
Made all our tastes and fancies like,
perhaps—

All—all but one ; and strange to me,
and sweet,

Sweet thro' strange years to know that
whatsoe'er

Our general mother meant for me alone,
Our mutual mother dealt to both of us :
So what was earliest mine in earliest life,
I shared with her in whom myself
remains.

As was our childhood, so our infancy,
They tell me, was a very miracle
Of fellow-feeling and communion.

They tell me that we would not be
alone,—

We cried when we were parted ; when I
wept,

Her smile lit up the rainbow on my tears,
Stay'd on the cloud of sorrow ; that we
loved

<p>The sound of one-another's voices more Than the gray cuckoo loves his name, and learn'd To hsp in tune together ; that we slept In the same cradle always, face to face. Heart beating time to heart, lip pressing lip, Folding each other, breathing on each other, Dreaming together (dreaming of each other They should have added), till the morn- ing light Sloped thro' the pines, upon the dewy pane Falling, unseal'd our eyelids, and we woke To gaze upon each other. If this be true, At thought of which my whole soul languishes And faints, and hath no pulse, no breath —as tho' A man in some still garden should infuse Rich atar in the bosom of the rose, Till, drunk with its own wine, and over- full Of sweetness, and in smelling of itself, It fall on its own thorns—if this be true— And that way my wish leads me ever- more Still to believe it—'tis so sweet a thought, Why in the utter stillness of the soul Doth question'd memory answer not, nor tell Of this our earliest, our closest-drawn, Most loveliest, earthly-heavenliest har- mony ? O blossom'd portal of the lonely house, Green prelude, April promise, glad new- year Of Being, which, with earliest violets And lavish carol of clear-throated larks</p>	<p>Fill'd all the March of life !—I will not speak of thee These have not seen thee, these can never know thee, They cannot understand me. Pass we then A term of eighteen years. Ye would but laugh, If I should tell you how I hoard in thought The faded rhymes and scraps of ancient crones, Gray relics of the nurseries of the world, Which are as gems set in my memory, Because she learnt them with me ; or what use To know her father left us just before The daffodil was blown ? or how we found The dead man cast upon the shore ? All this Seems to the quiet daylight of your minds But cloud and smoke, and in the dark of mine Is traced with flame. Move with me to the event. There came a glorious morning, such a one As dawns but once a season. Mercury On such a morning would have flung himself From cloud to cloud, and swum with balanced wings To some tall mountain : when I said to her, 'A day for Gods to stoop,' she answered, 'Ay, And men to soar:' for as that other gazed, Shading his eyes till all the fiery cloud, The prophet and the chariot and the steeds,</p>
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March of life !—I will not
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 rning would have flung
 cloud, and swum with
 wings
 mountain : when I said to
 s to stoop,' she answered,
 oar : ' for as that other
 s till all the fiery cloud,
 and the chariot and the

Suck'd into oneness like a little star
 Were drunk into the inmost blue, we
 stood,
 When first we came from out the pines at
 noon,
 With hands for eaves, uplooking and
 almost
 Waiting to see some blessed shape in
 heaven,
 So bathed we were in brilliance. Never
 yet
 Before or after have I known the spring
 Pour with such sudden deluges of light
 Into the middle summer ; for that day
 Love, rising, shook his wings, and
 charged the winds
 With spiced May-sweets from bound to
 bound, and blew
 Fresh fire into the sun, and from within
 Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent his
 soul
 Into the songs of birds, and touch'd far-
 off
 His mountain-altars, his high hills, with
 flame
 Milder and purer.

Thro' the rocks we wound :
 The great pine shook with lonely sounds
 of joy
 That came on the sea-wind. As moun-
 tain streams
 Our bloods ran free : the sunshine seem'd
 to brood
 More warmly on the heart than on the
 brow.
 We often paused, and, looking back, we
 saw
 The clefts and openings in the mountains
 fill'd
 With the blue valley and the glistening
 brooks,

And all the low dark groves, a land of
 love !
 A land of promise, a land of memory,
 A land of promise flowing with the milk
 And honey of delicious memories !
 And down to sea, and far as eye could
 ken,
 Each way from verge to verge a Holy
 Land,
 Still growing holier as you near'd the
 bay,
 For there the Temple stood.

When we had reach'd
 The grassy platform on some hill, I
 stoop'd,
 I gather'd the wild herbs, and for her
 brows
 And mine made garlands of the selfsame
 flower,
 Which she took smiling, and with my
 work thus
 Crown'd her clear forehead. Once or
 twice she told me
 (For I remember all things) to let grow
 The flowers that run poison in their
 veins.
 She said, ' The evil flourish in the world.'
 Then playfully she gave herself the lie—
 ' Nothing in nature is unbeautiful ;
 So, brother, pluck, and spare not.' So
 I wove
 Ev'n the dull-blooded poppy-stem,
 ' whose flower,
 Hued with the scarlet of a fierce sunrise,
 Like to the wild youth of an evil prince,
 Is without sweetness, but who crowns
 himself
 Above the secret poisons of his heart
 In his old age.' A graceful thought of
 hers
 Grav'n on my fancy ! And oh, how like
 a nymph,

<p>A stately mountain nymph she look'd ! how native Unto the hills she trod on ! While I gazed, My coronal slowly disentwined itself And fell between us both ; tho' while I gazed My spirit leap'd as with those thrills of bliss That strike across the soul in prayer, and show us That we are surely heard. Methought a light Burst from the garland I had wov'n, and stood A solid glory on her bright black hair ; A light methought broke from her dark, dark eyes, And shot itself into the singing winds ; A mystic light flash'd ev'n from her white robe As from a glass in the sun, and fell about My footsteps on the mountains.</p>	<p>We mounted slowly ; yet to both there came The joy of life in steepness overcome, And victories of ascent, and looking down On all that had look'd down on us ; and joy In breathing nearer heaven ; and joy to me, High over all the azure-circled earth, To breathe with her as if in heaven it- self ; And more than joy that I to her became Her guardian and her angel, raising her Still higher, past all peril, until she saw Beneath her feet the region far away, Beyond the nearest mountain's bosky brows, Burst into open prospect—heath and hill, And hollow lined and wooded to the lips, And steep-down walls of battlemented rock Gilded with broom, or shatter'd into spires, And glory of broad waters interfused, Whence rose as it were breath and steam of gold, And over all the great wood rioting And climbing, streak'd or starr'd at intervals With falling brook or blossom'd bush— and last, Framing the mighty landscape to the west, A purple range of mountain-cones, between Whose interspaces gush'd in blinding bursts The incorporate blaze of sun and sea.</p>
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At length

<p>Last we came To what our people call 'The Hill of Woe.' A bridge is there, that, look'd at from beneath Seems but a cobweb filament to link The yawning of an earthquake-cloven chasm. And thence one night, when all the winds were loud, A woeful man (for so the story went) Had thrust his wife and child and dash'd himself Into the dizzy depth below. Below, Fierce in the strength of far descent, a stream Flies with a shatter'd foam along the chasm. The path was perilous, loosely strown with crags :</p>	<p>Descending from the point and standing both,</p>
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<p>There on the tremulous bridge, that from beneath Had seem'd a gossamer filament up in air, We paused amid the splendour. All the west And ev'n unto the middle south was ribb'd And barr'd with bloom on bloom. The sun below, Held for a space 'twixt cloud and wave, shower'd down Rays of a mighty circle, weaving over That various wilderness a tissue of light Unparallel'd. On the other side, the moon, Half-melt'd into thin blue air, stood still, And pale and fibrous as a wither'd leaf, Nor yet endured in presence of His eyes To indue his lustre; most unloverlike, Since in his absence full of light and joy, And giving light to others. But this most, Next to her presence whom I loved so well, Spoke loudly even into my inmost heart As to my outward hearing: the loud stream, Forth issuing from his portals in the crag (A visible link unto the home of my heart), Ran amber toward the west, and nigh the sea Parting my own loved mountains was received, Shorn of its strength, into the sympathy Of that small bay, which out to open main Glow'd intermingling close beneath the sun. Spirit of Love! that little hour was bound Shut in from Time, and dedicate to thee:</p>	<p>Thy fires from heaven had touch'd it, and the earth They fell on became hallow'd evermore. We turn'd: our eyes met: hers were bright, and mine Were dim with floating tears, that shot the sunset In lightnings round me; and my name was borne Upon her breath. Henceforth my name has been A hallow'd memory like the names of old, A center'd, glory-circled memory, And a peculiar treasure, brooking not Exchange or currency: and in that hour A hope flow'd round me, like a golden mist Charm'd amid eddies of melodious airs, A moment, ere the onward whirlwind shatter it, Waver'd and floated—which was less than Hope, Because it lack'd the power of perfect Hope; But which was more and higher than all Hope, Because all other Hope had lower aim; Even that this name to which her gracious lips Did lend such gentle utterance, this one name, In some obscure hereafter, might in- wreath (How lovelier, nobler then!) her life, her love, With my life, love, soul, spirit, and heart and strength. 'Brother,' she said, 'let this be call'd henceforth The Hill of Hope;' and I replied, 'O sister,</p>
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My will is one with thine ; the Hill of
Hope.'

Nevertheless, we did not change the
name.

I did not speak : I could not speak my
love.

Love lieth deep : Love dwells not in lip-
depths.

Love wraps his wings on either side the
heart,

Constraining it with kisses close and
warm,

Absorbing all the incense of sweet
thoughts

So that they pass not to the shrine of
sound.

Else had the life of that delighted hour
Drunk in the largeness of the utterance

Of Love ; but how should Earthly mea-
sure mete

The Heavenly-unmeasured or unlimited
Love,

Who scarce can tune his high majestic
sense

Unto the thundersong that wheels the
spheres,

Scarce living in the Æolian harmony,
And flowing odour of the spacious air,

Scarce housed within the circle of this
Earth,

Be cabin'd up in words and syllables,
Which pass with that which breathes

them? Sooner Earth
Might go round Heaven, and the strait

girth of Time
Inswathe the fulness of Eternity,

Than language grasp the infinite of Love.

O day which did enwomb that happy
hour,

Thou art blessed in the years, divinest
day !

O Genius of that hour which dost uphold
Thy coronal of glory like a God,
Amid thy melancholy mates far-seen,
Who walk before thee, ever turning round
To gaze upon thee till their eyes are dim
With twelling on the light and depth of
thine,

Thy name is ever worshipp'd among
hours !

Had I died then, I had not seem'd to die,
For bliss stood round me like the light of
Heaven,—

Had I died then, I had not known the
death ;

Yea had the Power from whose right
hand the light

Of Life issueth, and from whose left hand
floweth

The Shadow of Death, perennial efflu-
ences,

Whereof to all that draw the wholesome
air,

Somewhile the one must overflow the
other ;

Then had he stemm'd my day with night,
and driven

My current to the fountain whence it
sprang,—

Even his own abiding excellence—
On me, methinks, that shock of gloom

had fall'n
Unfelt, and in this glory I had merged

The other, like the sun I gazed upon,
Which seeming for the moment due to

death,
And dipping his head low beneath the

verge,
Yet bearing round about him his own day,

In confidence of unabated strength,
Steppeth from Heaven to Heaven, from

light to light,
And holdeth his undimmed forehead far

Into a clearer zenith, pure of cloud.

t hour which dost uphold
 glory like a God,
 choly mates far-seen,
 e thee, ever turning round
 ee till their eyes are dim
 on the light and depth of
 ever worshipp'd among
 , I had not seem'd to die,
 ound me like the light of
 en, I had not known the
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 he sun I gazed upon,
 for the moment due to
 s head low beneath the
 d about him his own day,
 unabated strength,
 Heaven to Heaven, from
 ight,
 undimmed forehead far
 ith, pure of cloud.

<p>We trod the shadow of the downward hill ; We past from light to dark. On the other side Is scoop'd a cavern and a mountain hall, Which none have fathom'd. If you go far in (The country people rumour) you may hear The moaning of the woman and the child, Shut in the secret chambers of the rock. I too have heard a sound—perchance of streams Running far on within its inmost halls, The home of darkness ; but the cavern- mouth, Half overtrailed with a wanton weed, Gives birth to a brawling brook, that passing lightly Adown a natural stair of tangled roots, Is presently received in a sweet grave Of eglantines, a place of burial Far lovelier than its cradle ; for unseen, But taken with the sweetness of the place, It makes a constant bubbling melody That drowns the nearer echoes. Lower down Spreads out a little lake, that, flooding, leaves Low banks of yellow sand ; and from the woods That belt it rise three dark, tall cy- presses,— Three cypresses, symbols of mortal woe, That men plant over graves.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hither we came, And sitting down upon the golden moss, Held converse sweet and low—low con- verse sweet, In which our voices bore least part. The wind Told a lovetail beside us, how he woo'd</p>	<p>The waters, and the waters answering lisped To kisses of the wind, that, sick with love, Fainted at intervals, and grew again To utterance of passion. Ye cannot shape Fancy so fair as is this memory. Methought all excellence that ever was Had drawn herself from many thousand years, And all the separate Edens of this earth, To centre in this place and time. I listen'd, And her words stole with most prevailing sweetness Into my heart, as thronging fancies come To boys and girls when summer days are new, And soul and heart and body are all at ease : What marvel my Camilla told me all ? It was so happy an hour, so sweet a place, And I was as the brother of her blood, And by that name I moved upon her breath ; Dear name, which had too much of near- ness in it And heralded the distance of this time ! At first her voice was very sweet and low, As if she were afraid of utterance ; But in the onward current of her speech, (As echoes of the hollow-banked brooks Are fashion'd by the channel which they keep), Her words did of their meaning borrow sound, Her cheek did catch the colour of her words. I heard and trembled, yet I could but hear ; My heart paused—my raised eyelids would not fall, But still I kept my eyes upon the sky.</p>
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I seem'd the only part of Time stood still,
And saw the motion of all other things ;
While her words, syllable by syllable,
Like water, drop by drop, upon my ear
Fell ; and I wish'd, yet wish'd her not to
speak ;

But she spake on, for I did name no wish.
What marvel my Camilla told me all
Her maiden dignities of Hope and Love—
'Perchance,' she said, 'return'd.' Even
then the stars

Did tremble in their stations as I gazed ;
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,
No wish—no hope. Hope was not wholly
dead,

But breathing hard at the approach of
Death,—

Camilla, my Camilla, who was mine
No longer in the dearest sense of mine—
For all the secret of her inmost heart,
And all the maiden empire of her mind,
Lay like a map before me, and I saw
There, where I hoped myself to reign as
king,

There, where that day I crown'd myself
as king,

There in my realm and even on my
throne,

Another! then it seem'd as tho' a link
Of some tight chain within my inmost
frame

Was riven in twain : that life I heeded not
Flow'd from me, and the darkness of the
grave,

The darkness of the grave and utter night,
Did swallow up my vision ; at her feet,
Even the feet of her I loved, I fell,
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death.

Then had the earth beneath me yawn-
ing cloven

With such a sound as when an iceberg
splits

From cope to base—had Heaven from
all her doors,

With all her golden thresholds clashing,
roll'd

Her heaviest thunder—I had lain as
dead,

Mute, blind and motionless as then I lay ;
Dead, for henceforth there was no life
for me !

Mute, for henceforth what use were
words to me !

Blind, for the day was as the night to
me !

The night to me was kinder than the
day ;

The night in pity took away my day,
Because my grief as yet was newly born
Of eyes too weak to look upon the light ;
And thro' the hasty notice of the ear
Frail Life was startled from the tender
love

Of him she brooded over. Would I had
lain

Until the plaited ivy-tress had wound
Round my worn limbs, and the wild briar
had driven

Its knotted thorns thro' my unpaining
brows,

Leaning its roses on my faded eyes.

The wind had blown above me, and the
rain

Had fall'n upon me, and the gilded snake
Had nestled in this bosom-throne of
Love,

But I had been at rest for evermore.

Long time entrancement held me. All
too soon

Life (like a wanton too-officious friend,
Who will not *hear* denial, vain and rude
With proffer of unwished-for services)
Entering all the avenues of sense
Past thro' into his citadel, the brain,

base—had Heaven from
doors,
olden thresholds clashing,
thunder—I had lain as
d motionless as then I lay ;
ceforth there was no life
nceforth what use were
me !
day was as the night to
ne was kinder than the
ty took away my day,
ef as yet was newly born
k to look upon the light ;
asty notice of the ear
startled from the tender
ded over. Would I had
ivy-tress had wound
limbs, and the wild briar
n
ns thro' my unpaining
on my faded eyes.
own above me, and the
ne, and the gilded snake
this bosom-throne of
rest for evermore.
ancement held me. All
on too-officious friend,
denial, vain and rude
wished-for services)
venues of sense
citadel, the brain,

With hated warmth of apprehensiveness.
And first the chillness of the sprinkled
brook
Smote on my brows, and then I seem'd
to hear
Its murmur, as the drowning seaman
hears,
Who with his head below the surface
dropt
Listens the muffled booming indistinct
Of the confused floods, and dimly knows
His head shall rise no more: and then
came in
The white light of the weary moon above,
Diffused and molten into flaky cloud.
Was my sight drunk that it did shape to
me
Him who should own that name? Were
it not well
If so be that the echo of that name
Ringing within the fancy had updrawn
A fashion and a phantasm of the form
It should attach to? Phantom!—had
the ghastliest
That ever lusted for a body, sucking
The foul steam of the grave to thicken
by it,
There in the shuddering moonlight
brought its face
And what it has for eyes as close to
mine
As he did—better that than his, than he
The friend, the neighbour, Lionel, the
beloved,
The loved, the lover, the happy Lionel,
The low-voiced, tender-spirited Lionel,
All joy, to whom my agony was a joy.
O how her choice did leap forth from his
eyes !
O how her love did clothe itself in
smiles
About his lips ! and—not one moment's
grace—

Then when the effect weigh'd seas upon
my head
To come my way ! to twit me with the
cause !
Was not the land as free thro' all her
ways
To him as me? Was not his wont to
walk
Between the going light and growing
night ?
Had I not learnt my loss before he came ?
Could that be more because he came my
way ?
Why should he not come my way if he
would ?
And yet to-night, to-night—when all my
wealth
Flash'd from me in a moment and I fell
Beggard for ever—why *should* he come
my way
Robed in those robes of light I must not
wear,
With that great crown of beams about his
brows—
Come like an angel to a damned soul,
To tell him of the bliss he had with
God—
Come like a careless and a greedy heir
That scarce can wait the reading of the
will
Before he takes possession? Was mine
a mood
To be invaded rudely, and not rather
A sacred, secret, unapproached woe,
Unspeakable? I was shut up with
Grief ;
She took the body of my past delight,
Narded and swathed and balm'd it for
herself,
And laid it in a sepulchre of rock
Never to rise again. I was led mute
Into her temple like a sacrifice ;

I was the High Priest in her holiest
place,
Not to be loudly broken in upon.

Oh friend, thoughts deep and heavy as
these well-nigh
O'erbore the limits of my brain : but he
Bent o'er me, and my neck his arm up-
stay'd.

I thought it was an adder's fold, and once
I strove to disengage myself, but fail'd,
Being so feeble : she bent above me, too ;
Wan was her cheek ; for whatsoe'er of
blight

Lives in the dewy touch of pity had made
The red rose there a pale one—and her
eyes—

I saw the moonlight glitter on their
tears—

And some few drops of that distressful
rain

Fell on my face, and her long ringlets
moved,

Drooping and beaten by the breeze, and
brush'd

My fallen forehead in their to and fro,
For in the sudden anguish of her heart
Loosed from their simple thrall they had
flow'd abroad,

And floated on and parted round her neck,
Mantling her form halfway. She, when
I woke,

Something she ask'd, I know not what,
and ask'd,

Unanswer'd, since I spake not ; for the
sound

Of that dear voice so musically low,
And now first heard with any sense of
pain,

As it had taken life away before,
Choked all the syllables, that strove to
rise

From my full heart.

The blissful lover, too,
From his great hoard of happiness dis-
till'd

Some drops of solace ; like a vain rich
man,

That, having always prosper'd in the
world,

Folding his hands, deals comfortable
words

To hearts wounded for ever ; yet, in
truth,

Fair speech was his and delicate of
phrase,

Failing in whispers on the sense,
address'd

More to the inward than the outward
ear,

As rain of the midsummer midnight soft,
Scarce-heard, recalling fragrance and the
green

Of the dead spring : but mine was wholly
de d,

No bud, no leaf, no flower, no fruit for
me.

Yet who had done, or who had suffer'd
wrong ?

And why was I to darken their pure love,
If, as I found, they two did love each
other,

Because my own was darken'd ? Why
was I

To cross between their happy star and
them ?

To stand a shadow by their shining doors,
And vex them with my darkness ? Did
I love her ?

Ye know that I did love her ; to this
present

My full-orb'd love has waned not. Did
I love her,

And could I look upon her tearful eyes ?
What had *she* done to weep ? Why
should *she* weep ?

The blissful lover, too,
 at board of happiness dis-
 of solace ; like a vain rich
 always prosper'd in the
 hands, deals comfortable
 uaded for ever ; yet, in
 was his and delicate of
 whispers on the sense,
 and
 forward than the outward
 midsummer midnight soft,
 recalling fragrance and the
 ing : but mine was wholly
 of, no flower, no fruit for
 one, or who had suffer'd
 to darken their pure love,
 they two did love each
 n was darken'd? Why
 en their happy star and
 ow by their shining doors,
 with my darkness? Did
 ?
 I did love her ; to this
 e has waned not. Did
 k upon her tearful eyes?
 done to weep? Why
 weep?

O innocent of spirit—let my heart
 Break rather—whom the gentlest airs of
 Heaven
 Should kiss with an unwonted gentle-
 ness.
 Her love did murder mine? What then?
 She deem'd
 I wore a brother's mind : she call'd me
 brother :
 She told me all her love : she shall not
 weep.
 The brightness of a burning thought,
 awhile
 In battle with the glooms of my dark
 will,
 Moonlike emerged, and to itself lit up
 There on the depth of an unfathom'd woe
 Reflex of action. Starting up at once,
 As from a dismal dream of my own death,
 I, for I loved her, lost my love in Love ;
 I, for I loved her, graspt the hand she
 lov'd.
 And laid it in her own, and sent my cry
 Thro' the blank night to Him who loving
 made
 The happy and the unhappy love, that
 He
 Would hold the hand of blessing over
 them,
 Lionel, the happy, and her, and her, his
 bride !
 Let them so love that men and boys may
 say,
 'Lo ! how they love each other !' till
 their love
 Shall ripen to a proverb, unto all
 Known, when their faces are forgot in
 the land—
 One golden dream of love, from which
 may death
 Awake them with heaven's music in a
 life
 More living to some happier happiness,
 Swallowing its precedent in victory.
 And as for me, Camilla, as for me,—
 The dew of tears is an unwholesome
 dew,
 They will but sicken the sick plant the
 more.
 Deem that I love thee but as brothers do,
 So shalt thou love me still as sisters do ;
 Or if thou dream aught farther, dream
 but how
 I could have loved thee, had there been
 none else
 To love as lovers, loved again by thee.
 Or this, or somewhat like to this, I
 spake,
 When I beheld her weep so ruefully ;
 For sure my love should ne'er indue the
 front
 And mask of Hate, who lives on others'
 moans.
 Shall Love pledge Hatred in her bitter
 draughts,
 And batten on her poisons? Love for-
 bid !
 Love passeth not the threshold of cold
 Hate,
 And Hate is strange beneath the roof of
 Love.
 O Love, if thou'be'st Love, dry up these
 tears
 Shed for the love of Love ; for tho' mine
 image,
 The subject of thy power, be cold in her,
 Yet, like cold snow, it melteth in the
 source
 Of these sad tears, and feeds their down-
 ward flow.
 So Love, arraign'd to judgment and to
 death,
 Received unto himself a part of blame,
 Being guiltless, as an innocent prisoner,

Who, when the woful sentence hath been
past,
And all the clearness of his fame hath
gone
Beneath the shadow of the curse of man,
First falls asleep in swoon, wherefrom
awaked,
And looking round upon his tearful
friends,
Forthwith and in his agony conceives
A shameful sense as of a cleaving crime—
For whence without some guilt should
such grief be?

So died that hour, and fell into the
abysm
Of forms outworn, but not to me out-
worn,
Who never hail'd another—was there
one?
There might be one—one other, worth
the life
That made it sensible. So that hour
died
Like odour rapt into the winged wind
Borne into alien lands and far away.

There be some hearts so airily built,
that they,
They—when their love is wreck'd—if
Love can wreck—
On that sharp ridge of utmost doom ride
highly
Above the perilous seas of Change and
Chance;
Nay, more, hold out the lights of cheer-
fulness;
As the tall ship, that many a dreary year
Knit to some dismal sandbank far at
sea,
All thro' the livelong hours of utter dark,
Showers slanting light upon the dolorous
wave.

For me—what light, what gleam on those
black ways
Where Love could walk with banish'd
Hope no more?

It was ill-done to part you, Sisters
fair;
Love's arms were wreath'd about the
neck of Hope,
And Hope kiss'd Love, and Love drew
in her breath
In that close kiss, and drank her
whisper'd tales,
They said that Love would die when
Hope was gone,
And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd
after Hope;
At last she sought out Memory, and they
trod
The same old paths where Love had
walk'd with Hope,
And Memory fed the soul of Love with
tears.

II.

FROM that time forth I would not see her
more;
But many weary moons I lived alone—
Alone, and in the heart of the great
forest.
Sometimes upon the hills beside the sea
All day I watch'd the floating isles of
shade,
And sometimes on the shore, upon the
sands
Insensibly I drew her name, until
The meaning of the letters shot into
My brain; anon the wanton billow
wash'd
Them over, till they faded like my love.
The hollow caverns heard me—the black
brooks

light, what gleam on those
ays
ould walk with banish'd
o more?

one to part you, Sisters

vere wreath'd about the
Hope,

d Love, and Love drew
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they faded like my love.
ns heard me—the black

THE LOVER'S TALE.

683

Of the midforest heard me—the soft
winds,

Laden with thistledown and seeds of
flowers,

Paused in their course to hear me, for my
voice

Was all of thee : the merry linnet knew
me,

The squirrel knew me, and the dragonfly
Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.

The rough briar tore my bleeding palms ;
the hemlock

Brow-high, did strike my forehead as I
past ;

Yet trod I not the wildflower in my path,
Nor bruised the wildbird's egg.

Was this the end ?

Why grew we then together in one plot ?

Why fed we from one fountain ? drew
one sun ?

Why were our mothers' branches of one
stem ?

Why were we one in all things, save in
that

Where to have been one had been the
cope and crown

Of all I hoped and fear'd ?—if that same
nearness

Were father to this distance, and that
one

Vauntcourier to this *double* ? if Affection

Living slew Love, and Sympathy hew'd
out

The bosom-sepulchre of Sympathy ?

Chiefly I sought the cavern and the hill
Where last we roam'd together, for the
sound

Of the loud stream was pleasant, and the
wind

Came wooingly with woodbine smells.
Sometimes

All day I sat within the cavern-mouth,
Fixing my eyes on those three cypress-
cones

That spired above the wood ; and with
mad hand

Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-
screen,

I cast them in the noisy brook beneath,
And watch'd them till they vanish'd from
my sight

Beneath the bower of wreathed eglan-
tines :

And all the fragments of the living rock
(Huge blocks, which some old trembling
of the world

Had loosen'd from the mountain, till they
fell

Half-digging their own graves) these in
my agony

Did I make bare of all the golden moss,
Wherewith the dashing runnel in the
spring

Had liveried them all over. In my
brain

The spirit seem'd to flag from thought to
thought,

As moonlight wandering thro' a mist : my
blood

Crept like marsh drains thro' all my lan-
guid limbs ;

The motions of my heart seem'd far
within me,

Unfrequent, low, as tho' it told its pulses ;
And yet it shook me, that my frame
would shudder,

As if 'twere drawn asunder by the rack.
But over the deep graves of Hope and
Fear,

And all the broken palaces of the Past,
Brooded one master-passion evermore,

Like to a low-hung and a fiery sky
Above some fair metropolis, earth-
shock'd,—

Hung round with ragged rims and burning folds,—

Embatling all with wild and woful hues,
Great hills of ruins, and collaps'd masses
Of thundershaken columns indistinct,
And fused together in the tyrannous light—

Ruins, the ruin of all my life and me !

Sometimes I thought Camilla was no more,
Some one had told me she was dead,
and ask'd

If I would see her burial : then I seem'd
To rise, and through the forest-shadow borne

With more than mortal swiftness, I ran down

The steepy sea-bank, till I came upon
The rear of a procession, curving round
The silver-sheeted bay : in front of which
Six stately virgins, all in white, upbare
A broad earth-sweeping pall of whitest lawn,

Wreathed round the bier with garlands :
in the distance,

From out the yellow woods upon the hill

Look'd forth the summit and the pinna-
cles

Of a gray steeple—thence at intervals
A low bell tolling. All the pageantry,
Save those six virgins which upheld the bier,

Were stoled from head to foot in flowing black ;

One walk'd abreast with me, and veil'd his brow,

And he was loud in weeping and in praise
Of her, we follow'd : a strong sympathy
Shook all my soul : I flung myself upon him

In tears and cries : I told him all my love,

How I had loved her from the first ;
whereat

He shrank and howl'd, and from his brow
drew back

His hand to push me from him ; and the face,

The very face and form of Lionel
Flash'd thro' my eyes into my innermost brain,

And at his feet I seemed to faint and fall,
To fall and die away. I could not rise
Albeit I strove to follow. They past on,
The lordly Phantasms ! in their floating folds

They past and were no more : but I had fallen

Prone by the dashing runnel on the grass.

Always the inaudible invisible thought,
Artificer and subject, lord and slave,
Shaped by the audible and visible,
Moulded the audible and visible ;
All crisped sounds of wave and leaf and wind,

Flatter'd the fancy of my fading brain ;
The cloud-pavilion'd element, the wood,
The mountain, the three cypresses, the cave,

Storm, sunset, glows and glories of the moon

Below black firs, when silent-creeping winds

Laid the long night in silver streaks and bars,

Were wrought into the tissue of my dream :

The moanings in the forest, the loud brook,

Cries of the partridge like a rusty key
Turn'd in a lock, owl-whoop and dor-
hawk-whirr

Awoke me not, but were a part of sleep,
And voices in the distance calling to me

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but were a part of sleep,
e distance calling to me

And in my vision bidding me dream on,
Like sounds without the twilight realm
of dreams,

Which wander round the bases of the
hills,

And murmur at the low-dropt eaves of
sleep,

Half-entering the portals. Oftentimes
The vision had fair prelude, in the end
Opening on darkness, stately vestibules
To caves and shows of Death : whether
the mind,

With some revenge—even to itself un-
known,—

Made strange division of its suffering
With her, whom to have suffering view'd
had been

Extremest pain ; or that the clear-eyed
Spirit,

Being blunted in the Present, grew at
length

Prophetical and prescient of whate'er
The Future had in store : or that which
most

Enchains belief, the sorrow of my spirit
Was of so wide a compass it took in
All I had loved, and my dull agony,
Ideally to her transferr'd, became
Anguish intolerable.

The day waned ;

Alone I sat with her : about my brow
Her warm breath floated in the utterance
Of silver-chorded tones : her lips were
sunder'd

With smiles of tranquil bliss, which broke
in light

Like morning from her eyes—her elo-
quent eyes,
(As I have seen them many a hundred
times)

Filled all with pure clear fire, thro' mine
down rain'd

Their spirit-searching splendours. As a
vision

Unto a haggard prisoner, iron-stay'd
In damp and dismal dungeons under-
ground,

Confined on points of faith, when strength
is shock'd

With torment, and expectancy of worse
Upon the morrow, thro' the ragged walls,
All unawares before his half-shut eyes,
Comes in upon him in the dead of night,
And with the excess of sweetness and of
awe,

Makes the heart tremble, and the sight
run over

Upon his steely gyves ; so those fair
eyes

Shone on my darkness, forms which ever
stood

Within the magic cirque of memory,
Invisible but deathless, waiting still
The edict of the will to reassume
The semblance of those rare realities
Of which they were the mirrors. Now
the light

Which was their life, burst through the
cloud of thought
Keen, irrepressible.

It was a room

Within the summer-house of which I
spake,

Hung round with paintings of the sea,
and one

A vessel in mid-ocean, her heaved prow
Clambering, the mast bent and the ravin
wind

In her sail roaring. From the outer day,
Betwixt the close-set ivies came a broad
And solid beam of isolated light,
Crowded with driving atomies, and fell
Slanting upon that picture, from prime
youth

<p>Well-known well-loved. She drew it long ago Forthgazing on the waste and open sea, One morning when the upblown billow ran Shoreward beneath red clouds, and I had pour'd Into the shadowing pencil's naked forms Colour and life : it was a bond and seal Of friendship, spoken of with tearful smiles ; A monument of childhood and of love ; The pösy of childhood ; my lost love Symbol'd in storm. We gazed on it together In mute and glad remembrance, and each heart Grew closer to the other, and the eye Was riveted and charm-bound, gazing like The Indian on a still-eyed snake, low- couch'd— A beauty which is death ; when all at once That painted vessel, as with inner life, Began to heave upon that painted sea ; An earthquake, my loud heart-beats, made the ground Reel under us, and all at once, soul, life And breath and motion, past and flow'd away To those unreal billows : round and round A whirlwind caught and bore us ; mighty gyres Rapid and vast, of hissing spray wind- driven Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she shriek'd ; My heart was cloven with pain ; I wound my arms About her : we whirl'd giddily ; the wind Sung ; but I clasped her without fear : her weight</p>	<p>Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim eyes, And parted lips which drank her breath, down-hung The jaws of Death : I, groaning, from me flung Her empty phantom : all the sway and whirl Of the storm dropt to windless calm, and I Down welter'd thro' the dark ever and ever.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">III.</p> <p>I CAME one day and sat among the stones Strewn in the entry of the moaning cave ; A morning air, sweet after rain, ran over The rippling levels of the lake, and blew Coolness and moisture and all smells of bud And foliage from the dark and dripping woods Upon my fever'd brows that shook and throbb'd From temple unto temple. To what height The day had grown I know not. Then came on me The hollow tolling of the bell, and all The vision of the bier. As heretofore I walk'd behind with one who veil'd his brow. Methought by slow degrees the sullen bell Toll'd quicker, and the breakers on the shore Sloped into louder surf : those that went with me, And those that held the bier before my face, Moved with one spirit round about the bay, Trode swifter steps ; and while I walk'd with these</p>
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grasp, and over my dim
which drank her breath,
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ath : I, groaning, from
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III.

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; and while I walk'd

<p>In marvel at that gradual change, I thought Four bells instead of one began to ring, Four merry bells, four merry marriage- bells, In clanging cadence jangling peal on peal— A long loud clash of rapid marriage-bells. Then those who led the van, and those in rear, Rush'd into dance, and like wild Bac- chanals Fled onward to the steeple in the woods : I, too, was borne along and felt the blast Beat on my heated eyelids : all at once The front rank made a sudden halt ; the bells Lapsed into frightful stillness ; the surge fell From thunder into whispers ; those six maids With shrieks and ringing laughter on the sand Threw down the bier ; the woods upon the hill Waved with a sudden gust that sweeping down Took the edges of the pall, and blew it far Until it hung, a little silver cloud Over the sounding seas : I turn'd : my heart Shrank in me, like a snowflake in the hand, Waiting to see the settled countenance Of her I loved, adorn'd with fading flowers. But she from out her death-like chrysalis, She from her bier, as into fresher life, My sister, and my cousin, and my love, Leapt lightly clad in bridal white—her hair</p>	<p>Studded with one rich Provence rose—a light Of smiling welcome round her lips—her eyes And cheeks as bright as when she climb'd the hill. One hand she reach'd to those that came behind, And while I mused nor yet endured to take So rich a prize, the man who stood with me Stept gaily forward, throwing down his robes, And claspt her hand in his : again the bells Jangled and clang'd : again the stormy surf Crash'd in the shingle : and the whirling rout Led by those two rush'd into dance, and fled Wind-footed to the steeple in the woods, Till they were swallow'd in the leafy bowers, And I stood sole beside the vacant bier. There, there, my latest vision—then the event !</p>
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IV.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

(Another speaks.)

HE flies the event : he leaves the event
to me :
Poor Julian—how he rush'd away ; the
bells,
Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear and
heart—
But cast a parting glance at me, you saw,
As who should say 'Continue.' Well he
had

One golden hour—of triumph shall I
say ?

Solace at least—before he left his home.

Would you had seen him in that hour
of his !

He moved thro' a'l of it majestically—
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—
but now—

Whether they *were* his lady's marriage-
bells,

Or prophets of them in his fantasy,
I never ask'd ; but Lionel and the girl
Were wedded, and our Julian came again
Back to his mother's house among the
pines.

But these, their gloom, the mountains
and the Bay,

The whole land weigh'd him down as
Ætna does

The Giant of Mythology : he would go,
Would leave the land for ever, and had
gone

Surely, but for a whisper, 'Go not yet,'
Some warning—sent divinely—as it
seem'd

By that which follow'd—but of this I
deem

As of the visions that he told—the event
Glanced back upon them in his after life,
A *nd* partly made them—tho' he knew it
not.

And thus he stay'd and would not look
at her—

No not for months : but, when the
eleventh moon

After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,
Heard yet once more the tolling bell, and
said,

Would you could toll me out of life, but
found—

All softly as his mother broke it to him—
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,
For that low knell tolling his lady dead—
Dead—and had lain three days without
a pulse :

All that look'd on her had pronounced
her dead.

And so they bore her (for in Julian's land
They never nail a dumb head up in elm),
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of
heaven,

And laid her in the vault of her own kin.

What did he then ? not die : he is here
and hale—

Not plunge headforemost from the
mountain there,

And leave the name of Lover's Leap :
not he :

He knew the meaning of the whisper now,
Thought that he knew it. 'This, I
stay'd for this ;

O love, I have not seen you for so long.
Now, now, will I go down into the
grave,

I will be all alone with all I love,
And kiss her on the lips. She is his
no more :

The dead returns to me, and I go down
To kiss the dead.'

The fancy stirr'd him so

He rose and went, and entering the dim
vault,

And, making there a sudden light, beheld
All round about him that which all will
be.

The light was but a flash, and went again.
Then at the far end of the vault he saw
His lady with the moonlight on her face ;
Her breast as in a shadow-prison, bars
Of black and bands of silver, which the
moon

mother broke it to him—
 on than a crazy ear,
 ell tolling his lady dead—
 lain three days without

on her had pronounced
 e her (for in Julian's land
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then? not die: he is here
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ning of the whisper now,
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The fancy stirr'd him so
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re a sudden light, beheld
 him that which all will

a flash, and went again.
 nd of the vault he saw
 moonlight on her face;
 shadow-prison, bars
 nds of silver, which the

Struck from an open grating overhead
 High in the wall, and all the rest of her
 Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the
 vault.

'It was my wish,' he said, 'to pass, to
 sleep,
 To rest, to be with her—till the great
 day
 Peal'd on us with that music which rights
 all,

And raised us hand in hand.' And
 kneeling there
 Down in the dreadful dust that once was
 man,
 Dust, as he said, that once was loving
 hearts,
 Hearts that had beat with such a love as
 mine—

Not such as mine, no, nor for such as
 her—
 He softly put his arm about her neck
 And kissed her more than once, till help-
 less death

And silence made him bold—nay, but I
 wrong him,
 He revered his dear lady even in
 death;

But, placing his true hand upon her heart,
 'O, you warm heart,' he moan'd, 'not
 even death

Can chill you all at once:' then starting,
 thought

His dreams had come again. 'Do I
 wake or sleep?

Or am I made immortal, or my love
 Mortal once more?' It beat—the heart
 —it beat:

Faint—but it beat: at which his own
 began

To pulse with such a vehemence that it
 drown'd

The feebler motion underneath his hand.

But when at last his doubts were satisfied,
 He raised her softly from the sepulchre,
 And, wrapping her all over with the cloak
 He came in, and now striding fast, and
 now

Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
 Holding his golden burthen in his arms,
 So bore her thro' the solitary land
 Back to the mother's house where she
 was born.

There the good mother's kindly
 ministering,
 With half a night's appliances, recall'd
 Her fluttering life: she rais'd an eye that
 ask'd

'Where?' till the things familiar to her
 youth

Had made a silent answer: then she
 spoke

'Here! and how came I here?' and
 learning it

(They told her somewhat rashly as I
 think)

At once began to wander and to wail,
 'Ay, but you know that you must give
 me back:

Send! bid him come;' but Lionel was
 away—

Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none
 knew where.

'He casts me out,' she wept, 'and goes'
 —a wail

That seeming something, yet was nothing,
 born

Not from believing mind, but shatter'd
 nerve,

Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof
 At some precipitance in her burial.

Then, when her own true spirit had
 return'd,

'O yes, and you,' she said, 'and none
 but you?

For you have given me life and love
again,
And none but you yourself shall tell him
of it,
And you shall give me back when he
returns.'

'Stay then a little,' answer'd Julian,
'here,
And keep yourself, none knowing, to
yourself;

And I will do your will. I may not stay,
No, not an hour; but send me notice of
him

When he returns, and then will I return,
And I will make a solemn offering of you
To him you love.' And faintly she
replied,

'And I will do *your* will, and none shall
know.'

Not know? with such a secret to be
known.

But all their house was old and loved
them both,

And all the house had known the loves
of both;

Had died almost to serve them any
way,

And all the land was waste and solitary:

And then he rode away; but after this,
An hour or two, Camilla's travail came
Upon her, and that day a boy was born,
Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,
And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,
There fever seized upon him: myself was
then

Travelling that land, and meant to rest
an hour;

And sitting down to such a *oase* repast,
It makes me angry yet to speak of it—
I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd

The moulder'd stairs (for everything was
vile)

And in a loft, with none to wait on him,
Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,
Raving of dead men's dust and beating
hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,
A flat malarian world of reed and rush!
But there from fever and my care of him
Sprang up a friendship that may help us
yet.

For while we roam'd along the dreary
coast,

And waited for her message, piece by
piece

I learnt the drearier story of his life;
And, tho' he loved and honour'd Lionel,
Found that the sudden wail his lady made
Dwelt in his fancy: did he know her
worth,

Her beauty even? should he not be
taught,

Ev'n by the price that others set upon it,
The value of that jewel he had to guard?

Suddenly came her notice and we past,
I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the
soul:

That makes the sequel pure; tho' some
of us

Beginning at the sequel know no more.
Not such am I: and yet I say the bird
That will not hear my call, however
sweet,

But if my neighbour whistle answers
him—

What matter? there are others in the
wood.

Yet when I saw her (and I thought him
crazed,

Tho' not with such a craziness as needs
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of
hers—

Oh ! such dark eyes ! and not her eyes
alone,

But all from these to where she touch'd
on earth,

For such a craziness as Julian's look'd
No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came
To greet us, her young hero in her arms !
'Kiss him,' she said. 'You gave me
life again.

He, but for you, had never seen it once.
His other father you ! Kiss him, and then
Forgive him, if his name be Julian too.'

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart !
his own

Sent such a flame into his face, I knew
Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him
there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,
And sent at once to Lionel, praying him
By that great love they both had borne
the dead,

To come and revel for one hour with him
Before he left the land for evermore ;
And then to friends—they were not many
—who lived

Scatteringly about that lonely land of his,
And bade them to a banquet of farewells.

And Julian made a solemn feast : I
never

Sat at a costlier ; for all round his hall
From column on to column, as in a wood,
Not such as here—an equatorial one,
Great garlands swung and blossom'd ;
and beneath,
Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,

Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven
knows when,

Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten
sun,

And kept it thro' a hundred years of
gloom,

Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups
Where nymph and god ran ever round in
gold—

Others of glass as costly—some with
gems

Moveable and resettable at will,
And trebling all the rest in value—Ah
heavens !

Why need I tell you all ?—suffice to say
That whatsoever such a house as his,
And his was old, has in it rare or fair
Was brought before the guest : and they,
the guests,

Wonder'd at some strange light in Julian's
eyes

(I told you that he had his golden hour),
And such a feast, ill-suited as it seem'd
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his,
And that resolved self-exile from a land
He never would revisit, such a feast
So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n
than rich,

But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the
hall

Two great funereal curtains, looping
down,

Parted a little ere they met the floor,
About a picture of his lady, taken
Some years before, and falling hid the
frame.

And just above the parting was a lamp :
So the sweet figure folded round with
night

Seem'd stepping out of darkness with a
smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate
and drank,
And might—the wines being of such
nobleness—
Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes,
And something weird and wild about it
all :

What was it ? for our lover seldom spoke,
Scarce touch'd the meats ; but ever and
anon

A priceless goblet with a priceless wine
Arising, show'd he drank beyond his use ;
And when the feast was near an end, he
said :

'There is a custom in the Orient,
friends—

I read of it in Persia—when a man
Will honour those who feast with him, he
brings

And shows them whatsoever he accounts
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.
This custom ——'

Pausing here a moment, all
The guests broke in upon him with
meeting hands
And cries about the banquet—' Beautiful !
Who could desire more beauty at a
feast ? '

The lover answer'd, ' There is more
than one
Here sitting who desires it. Laud me not
Before my time, but hear me to the close.
This custom steps yet further when the
guest
Is loved and honour'd to the uttermost.
For after he hath shown him gems or gold,
He brings and sets before him in rich
guise
That which is thrice as beautiful as these,

The beauty that is dearest to his heart—
" O my heart's lord, would I could show
you," he says,
" Ev'n my heart too." And I propose to-
night
To show you what is dearest to my heart,
And my heart too.

' But solve me first a doubt.
I knew a man, nor many years ago ;
He had a faithful servant, one who loved
His master more than all on earth be-
side.
He falling sick, and seeming close on
death,
His master would not wait until he died,
But bade his menials bear him from the
door,
And leave him in the public way to die.
I knew another, not so long ago,
Who found the dying servant, took him
home,
And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved
his life.
I ask you now, should this first master
claim
His service, whom does it belong to ?
him
Who thrust him out, or him who saved
his life ? '

This question, so flung down before
the guests,
And balanced either way by each, at
length
When some were doubtful how the law
would hold,
Was handed over by consent of all
To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of
phrase.
And he beginning languidly—his loss

Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as he
went,
Glanced at the point of law, to pass it by,
Affirming that as long as either lived,
By all the laws of love and gratefulness,
The service of the one so saved was due
All to the saver—adding, with a smile,
The first for many weeks—a semi-smile
As at a strong conclusion—'body and
soul
And life and limbs, all his to work his
will.'

Then Julian made a secret sign to me
To bring Camilla down before them all.
And crossing her own picture as she
came,

And looking as much lovelier as herself
Is lovelier than all others—on her head
A diamond circlet, and from under this
A veil, that seemed no more than gilded
air,

Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gauze
With seeds of gold—so, with that grace
of hers,

Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,
That flings a mist behind it in the sun—
And bearing high in arms the mighty babe,
The younger Julian, who himself was
crown'd

With roses, none so rosy as himself—
And over all her babe and her the jewels
Of many generations of his house
Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked
them out

As for a solemn sacrifice of love—
So she came in :—I am long in telling it,
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,
Sad, sweet, and strange together—floated
in—

While all the guests in mute amazement
rose—

And slowly pacing to the middle hall,

Before the board, there paused and
stood, her breast

Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her
feet,

Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.

But him she carried, him nor lights nor
feast

Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men ; who
cared

Only to use his own, and staring wide
And hungering for the gilt and jewell'd
world

About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,
When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.

'My guests,' said Julian : 'you are
honour'd now

Ev'n to the uttermost : in her behold
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,
Of all things upon earth the dearest to
me.'

Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.

And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again

Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,
And heard him muttering, 'So like, so
like ;

She never had a sister. I knew none.
Some cousin of his and hers—O God, so
like !'

And then he suddenly ask'd her if she
were.

She shook, and cast her eyes down, and
was dumb.

And then some other question'd if she
came

From foreign lands, and still she did not
speak.

Another, if the boy were hers : but she
To all their queries answer'd not a word,
Which made the amazement more, till
one of them

Said, shuddering, 'Her spectre !' But
his friend

Replied, in half a whisper, 'Not at least
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.
Terrible pity, if one so beautiful
Prove, as I almost dread to find her,
dumb !'

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd all :
'She is but dumb, because in her you
see

That faithful servant whom we spoke
about,

Obedient to her second master now ;
Which will not last. I have here to-
night a guest

So bound to me by common love and
loss—

What ! shall I bind him more ? in his
behalf,

Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him
That which of all things is the dearest to
me,

Not only showing ? and he himself pro-
nounced

That my rich gift is wholly mine to give.

'Now all be dumb, and promise all of
you

Not to break in on what I say by word
Or whisper, while I show you all my
heart.'

And then began the story of his love

As here to-day, but not so wordily—

The passionate moment would not suffer
that—

Past thro' his visions to the burial ; thence
Down to this last strange hour in his own
hall ;

And then rose up, and with him all his
guests

Once more as by enchantment ; all but
he,

Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell again,
And sat as if in chains—to whom he said :

'Take my free gift, my cousin, for
your wife ;

And were it only for the giver's sake,
And tho' she seem so like the one you
lost,

Yet cast her not away so suddenly,
Lest there be none left here to bring her
back :

I leave this land for ever.' Here he
ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one
hand,

And bearing on one arm the noble babe,
He slowly brought them both to Lionel.
And there the widower husband and dead
wife

Rush'd each at each with a cry, that rather
seem'd

For some new death than for a life re-
new'd ;

Whereat the very babe began to wail ;
At once they turn'd, and caught and
brought him in

To their charm'd circle, and, half-killing
him

With kisses, round him closed and claspt
again.

But Lionel, when at last he freed himself
From wife and child, and lifted up a face

All over glowing with the sun of life,
And love, and boundless thanks—the
sight of this

So frightened our good friend, that turning
to me

And saying, 'It is over : let us go'—
There were our horses ready at the
doors—

We bade them no farewell, but mounting
these

He past for ever from his native land ;
And I with him, my Julian, back to
mine.

THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

I.

'WAIT a little,' you say, 'you are sure
it 'll all come right,'
But the boy was born i' trouble, an' looks
so wan an' so white :
Wait ! an' once I ha' waited—I hadn't to
wait for long.
Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry.—No,
no, you are doing me wrong !
Harry and I were married : the boy can
hold up his head,
The boy was born in wedlock, but after
my man was dead ;
I ha' work'd for him fifteen years, an' I
work an' I wait to the end.
I am all alone in the world, an' you are
my only friend.

II.

Doctor, if *you* can wait, I'll tell you the
tale o' my life.
When Harry an' I were children, he call'd
me his own little wife ;
I was happy when I was with him, an'
sorry when he was away,
An' when we play'd together, I loved him
better than play ;
He workt me the daisy chain—he made
me the cowslip ball,
He fought the boys that were rude an' I
loved him better than all.
Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at
home in disgrace,

I never could quarrel with Harry—I had
but to look in his face.

III.

There was a farmer in Dorset of Harry's
kin, that had need
Of a good stout lad at his farm ; he sent,
an' the father agreed ;
So Harry was bound to the Dorsetshire
farm for years an' for years ;
I walked with him down to the quay,
poor lad, an' we parted in tears.
The boat was beginning to move, we
heard them a-ringing the bell,
'I'll never love any but you, God bless
you, my own little Nell.'

IV.

I was a child, an' he was a child, an' he
came to harm ;
There was a girl, a hussy, that workt with
him up at the farm,
One had deceived her an' left her alone
with her sin an' her shame,
And so she was wicked with Harry ; the
girl was the most to blame.

V.

And years went over till I that was little
had grown so tall,
The men would say of the maids. 'Our
Nelly's the flower of 'em all.'
I didn't take heed o' *them*, but I taught
myself all I could
To make a good wife for Harry, when
Harry came home for good.

VI.

Often I seem'd unhappy, and often as
happy too,
For I heard it abroad in the fields 'I'll
never love any but you ;'

'I'll never love any but you' the morning
song of the lark,
'I'll never love any but you' the rightin-
gale's hymn in the dark.

VII.

And Harry came home at last, but he
look'd at me sidelong and shy,
Vext me a bit, till he told me that so
many years had gone by,
I had grown so handsome and tall—that
I might ha' forgot him somel'ow—
For he thought—there were other lads—
he was fear'd to look at me now.

VIII.

Hard was the frost in the field, we were
married o' Christmas day,
Married among the red berries, an' all as
merry as May—
Those were the pleasant times, my house
an' my man were my pride,
We seem'd like ships i' the Channel a-
sailing with wind an' tide.

IX.

But work was scant in the Isle, tho' he
tried the villages round,
So Harry went over the Solent to see if
work could be found;
An' he wrote 'I ha' six weeks' work,
little wife, so far as I know;
I'll come for an hour to-morrow, an' kiss
you before I go.'

X.

So I set to righting the house, for wasn't
he coming that day?
An' I hit on an old deal-box that was
push'd in a corner away,
It was full of old odds an' ends, an' a
letter along wi' the rest,
I had better ha' put my naked hand in a
hornets' nest.

XI.

'Sweetheart'—this was the letter—this
was the letter I read—
'You promised to find me work near you,
an' I wish I was dead—
Didn't you kiss me an' promise? you
haven't done it, my lad,
An' I almost died o' your going away,
an' I wish that I had.'

XII.

I too wish that I had—in the pleasant
times that had past,
Before I quarrell'd with Harry—*my*
quarrel—the first an' the last.

XIII.

For Harry came 'in, an' I flung him the
letter that drove me wild,
An' he told it me all at once, as simple as
any child,
'What can it matter, my lass, what I did
wi' my single life?
I ha' been as true to you as ever a man o'
his wife;
An' *she* wasn't one o' the worst.' 'Then,'
I said, 'I'm none o' the best.'
An' he smiled at me, 'Ain't you, my
love? Come, come, little wife, let
it rest!
The man isn't like the woman, no need to
make such a stir.'
But he anger'd me all the more, an' I said
'You were keeping with her,
When I was a-loving you all along an' the
same as before.'
An' he didn't speak for a while, an' he
anger'd me more and more.
Then he patted my hand in his gentle
way, 'Let bygones be!'
'Bygones! you kept yours hush'd,' I said,
'when you married me!
By-gones ma' be come-agains; an' *she*—
in her shame an' her sin—

XI.

this was the letter—this
letter I read—
to find me work near you,
h I was dead—
s me an' promise? you
one it, my lad,
ed o' your going away,
n that I had.'

XII.

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t had past,
ell'd with Harry—*my*
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XIII.

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a stir.'
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ing you all along an' the
fore.'

peak for a while, an' he
more and more.
my hand in his gentle
by-gones be!'
pt yours hush'd, I said,
married me!
come-agains; an' *she*—
ne an' her sin—

You'll have her to nurse my child, if I
die o' my lying in!
You'll make her its second mother! I hate
her—an' I hate you!'
Ah, Harry, my man, you had better ha'
beaten me black an' blue
Than ha' spoken as kind as you did,
when I were so crazy wi' spite,
'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all
come right.'

XIV.

An' he took three turns in the rain, an' I
watch'd him, an' when he came in
I felt that my heart was hard, he was all
wet thro' to the skin,
An' I never said 'off wi' the wet, I never
said 'on wi' the dry,'
So I knew my heart was hard, when he
came to bid me goodbye.
'You said that you hated me, Ellen, but
that isn't true, you know;
I am going to leave you a bit—you'll kiss
me before I go.'

XV.

'Going! you're going to her—kiss her—
if you will,' I said,—
I was near my time wi' the boy, I must
ha' been light i' my head—
'I had sooner be cursed than kiss'd!'
I didn't know well what I meant,
But I turn'd my face from *him*, an' he
turn'd *his* face an' he went.

XVI.

And then he sent me a letter, 'I've gotten
my work to do;
You wouldn't kiss me, my lass, an' I
never loved any but you;
I am sorry for all the quarrel an' sorry for
what she wrote,
I ha' six weeks' work in Jersey an' go to-
night by the boat.'

XVII.

An' the wind began to rise, an' I thought
of him out at sea,
An' I felt I had been to blame; he was
always kind to me.
'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all
come right—'
An' the boat went down that night—the
boat went down that night.

RIZPAH.

17—

I.

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind
over land and sea—
And Willy's voice in the wind, 'O mother,
come out to me.'
Why should he call me to-night, when he
knows that I cannot go?
For the downs are as bright as day, and
the full moon stares at the snow.

II.

We should be seen, my dear; they would
spy us out of the town.
The loud black nights for us, and the
storm rushing over the down,
When I cannot see my own hand, but am
led by the creak of the chain,
And grovel and grope for my son till I
find myself drenched with the rain.

III.

Anything fallen again? nay—what was
there left to fall?
I have taken them home, I have number'd
the bones, I have hidden them all.
What am I saying? and what are *you*?
do you come as a spy?
Falls? what falls? who knows? As the
tree falls so must it lie.

IV.

Who let her in? how long has she been?
 you—what have you heard?
 Why did you sit so quiet? you never have
 spoken a word.
 O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none
 of their spies—
 But the night has crept into my heart,
 and begun to darken my eyes.

V.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what
 should *you* know of the night,
 The blast and the burning shame and the
 bitter frost and the fright?
 I have done it, while you were asleep—
 you were only made for the day.
 I have gather'd my baby together—and
 now you may go your way.

VI.

Nay—for it's kind of you, Madam, to sit
 by an old dying wife.
 But say nothing hard of my boy, I have
 only an hour of life.
 I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he
 went out to die.
 'They dared me to do it,' he said, and he
 never has told me a lie.
 I whipt him for robbing an orchard once
 when he was but a child—
 'The farmer dared me to do it,' he said;
 he was always so wild—
 And idle—and couldn't be idle—my
 Willy—he never could rest.
 The King should have made him a soldier,
 he would have been one of his best.

VII.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and
 they never would let him be good;
 They swore that he dare not rob the
 mail, and he swore that he would;

And he took no life, but he took one
 purse, and when all was done
 He slung it among his fellows—I'll none
 of it, said my son.

VIII.

I came into court to the Judge and the
 lawyers. I told them my tale,
 God's own truth—but they kill'd him,
 they kill'd him for robbing the mail.
 They hang'd him in chains for a show—
 we had always borne a good name—
 To be hang'd for a thief—and then put
 away—isn't that enough shame?
 Dust to dust—low down—let us hide!
 but they set him so high
 That all the ships of the world could
 stare at him, passing by.
 God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and
 horrible fowls of the air,
 But not the black heart of the lawyer who
 kill'd him and hang'd him there.

IX.

And the jailer forced me away. I had
 bid him my last goodbye;
 They had fasten'd the door of his cell.
 'O mother!' I heard him cry.
 I couldn't get back tho' I tried, he had
 something further to say,
 And now I never shall know it. The
 jailer forced me away.

X.

Then since I couldn't but hear that cry
 of my boy that was dead,
 They seized me and shut me up: they
 fasten'd me down on my bed.
 'Mother, O mother!'—he call'd in the
 dark to me year after year—
 They beat me for that, they beat me—
 you know that I couldn't but hear;

no life, but he took one
and when all was done
ing his fellows—I'll none
t my son.

VIII.

rt to the Judge and the
I told them my tale,
h—but they kill'd him,
him for robbing the mail.
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X.

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that was dead,
and shut me up: they
e down on my bed.
ner I!—he call'd in the
year after year—
er that, they beat me—
hat I couldn't but hear;

RIZPAH.

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And then at the last they found I had
grown so stupid and still
They let me abroad again—but the
creatures had worked their will.

XI.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of
my bone was left—
I stole them all from the lawyers--and
you, will you call it a theft?—
My baby, the bones that had suck'd me, the
bones that had laughed and had
cried—
Theirs? O no! they are mine—not
theirs—they had moved in my side.

XII.

Do you think I was scared by the bones?
I kiss'd 'em, I buried 'em all—
I can't dig deep, I am old—in the night
by the churchyard wall.
My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the
trumpet of judgment 'ill sound,
But I charge you never to say that I laid
him in holy ground.

XIII.

They would scratch him up—they would
hang him again on the cursed tree.
Sin? O yes—we are sinners, I know—
let all that be,
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's
good will toward men—
'Full of compassion and mercy, the
Lord'—let me hear it again;
'Full of compassion and mercy—long-
suffering.' Yes, O yes!
For the lawyer is born but to murder—
the Saviour lives but to bless.
He'll never put on the black cap except
for the worst of the worst,
And the first may be last—I have heard it
in church—and the last may be first.

Suffering—O long-suffering—yes, as the
Lord must know,
Year after year in the mist and the wind
and the shower and the snow.

XIV.

Heard, have you? what? they have told
you he never repented his sin.
How do they know it? are *they* his
mother? are *you* of his kin?
Heard! have you ever heard, when the
storm on the downs began,
The wind that 'ill wail like a child and
the sea that 'ill moan like a man?

XV.

Election, Election and Reprobation—it's
all very well.
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall
not find him in Hell.
For I cared so much for my boy that the
Lord has look'd into my care,
And He means me I'm sure to be happy
with Willy, I know not where.

XVI.

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my* soul,
that is all your desire:
Do you think that I care for *my* soul if
my boy be gone to the fire?
I have been with God in the dark—go,
go, you may leave me alone—
You never have borne a child—you are
just as hard as a stone.

XVII.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think
that you mean to be kind,
But I cannot hear what you say for my
Willy's voice in the wind—
The snow and the sky so bright—he used
but to call in the dark,

And he calls to me now from the church
and not from the gibbet—for hark!
Nay—you can hear it yourself—it is
coming—shaking the walls—
Willy—the moon's in a cloud—Good
night. I am going. He calls.

THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

I.

WAÄIT till our Sally cooms in, fur thou
mun a' sights¹ to tell.
Eh, but I be maain glad to seeä tha sa
'arty an' well.
'Cast awaäy on a disolut land wi' a
vartical soon² !'
Strange fur to goä fur to think what
saailors a' seeän an' a' doon ;
'Summat to drink—sa' 'ot ?' I 'a nowt
but Adam's wine :
What's the 'eät o' this little 'ill-side to
the 'eät o' the line ?

II.

'What's i' tha bottle a-stanning theer ?'
I'll tell tha. Gin.
But if thou wants thy grog, tha mun goä
fur it down to the inn.
Naay—fur I be maain-glad, but thaw tha
was iver sa dry,
Thou gits naw gin fro' the bottle theer,
an' I'll tell tha why.

III.

Meä an' thy sister was married, when
wur it ? brook-end o' June,

¹ The vowels *ai*, pronounced separately though in the closest conjunction, best render the sound of the long *i* and *y* in this dialect. But since such words as *cratin'*, *daäin'*, *what*, *ai* (I), &c., look awkward except in a page of express phonetics, I have thought it better to leave the simple *i* and *y*, and to trust that my readers will give them the broader pronunciation.

² The *oo* short, as in 'wood.'

Ten year sin', and wa 'greed as well as a
fiddle i' tunc :
I could fettle and clump owd booöts and
shoes wi' the best on 'em all,
As fer as fro' Thursby thurn hup to
Harmsby and Hutterby Hall.
We was busy as beeäs i' the bloom an'
as 'appy as 'art could think,
An' then the babby wur burn, and then
I taäkes to the drink.

IV.

An' I weänt gaäinsaäy it, my lad, thaw I
be hafe shaämed on it now,
We could sing a good song at the Plow, we
could sing a good song at the Plow ;
Thaw once o' a frosty night I slither'd an'
hurt my huck,¹
An' I coom'd neck-an-crop soomtimes
slaäpe down i' the squad an' the
muck :
An' once I fowt wi' the Taäilör—not
hafe ov a man, my lad—
Fur he scrawm'd an' scatted my faäce
like a cat, an' it maäde 'er sa mad
That Sally she turn'd a tongue-banger,²
an' raäted ma, 'Sottin' thy braäins
Guzzlin' an' soäkin' an' smoäkin' an'
hawmin'³ about i' the laänes,
Soä sow-droonk that tha docsn not touch
thy 'at to the Squire ;'
An' I looök'd cock-eyed at my noäse an'
I seeäd 'im a-gittin' o' fire ;
But sin' I wur hallus i' liquor an' hallus as
droonk as a king,
Foälks' coostom flitted awaäy like a kite
wi' a brokken string.

V.

An' Sally she wesh'd foälks' cloäths to
keep the wolf fro' the door,

¹ Hip.

² Scold.

³ Lounging.

nd wa 'greed as well as a
tune :

d clump owd booöts and
the best on 'em all,
Thursby thurn hup to
and Hutterby Hall.
beäs i' the bloom an'
as 'art could think,
bby wur burn, and then
to the drink.

IV.

insaäy it, my lad, thaw I
naamed on it now,
good song at the Plow, we
a good song at the Plow;
rosty night I slither'd an'
y huck,¹
neck-an-crop soomtimes
own i' the squad an' the

rt wi' the Taäilör—not
man, my lad—
an' an' scratted my faäce
an' it maäde 'er sa mad
urn'd a tongue-banger,²
ma, 'Sottin' thy braäins
ikin' an' smoäkin' an'
about i' the laänes,
that tha does not touch
the Squire ;'
ck-eyed at my noäse an'
n a-gittin' o' fire ;
llus i' liquor an' hallus as
a king,
flitted awaäy like a kite
ken string.

V.

esh'd föälsk's cloäths to
volf fro' the door,

cold. ³ Lounging.

THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

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Eh but the moor she riled me, she druv
me to drink the moor,
Fur I fun', when 'er back wur turn'd,
wheer Sally's owd stockin' wur'id,
An' I grabb'd the munny she ma' i',
and I weär'd it o' liquor, I di

VI.

An' one night I cooms 'oäm like a bull
gotten loose at a faäir,
An' she wur a-waäitin' fo'mma, an'
cryin' and teärin' 'er 'aäir,
An' I tumbled athurt the craädle an'
sweär'd as I'd break ivry stick
O' furnitur 'ere i' the 'ouse, an' I gied
our Sally a kick,
An' I mash'd the taäbles an' chairs, an'
she an' the babby beäl'd,¹
Fur I know'd paw moor what I did nor
a mortal beäst o' the feäld.

VII.

An' when I waäked i' the murnin' I secäd
that our Sally went lüim'd
Cos' o' the kick as I gied er, an' I wur
dreädful ashaämed ;
An' Sally wur sloomy ² an' draggle-taäil'd
in an owd turn gown,
An' the babby's faäce wurn't wesh'd an'
the 'ole 'ouse hupside down.

VIII.

An' then I minded our Sally sa pratty
an' neät an sweät,
Straät as a pole an' cleän as a flower fro'
'eäd to feeät :
An' then I minded the fust kiss I gied
'er by Thursby thurn ;
Theer wur a lark a-singin' 'is best of a
Sunday at murn,

¹ Bellowed, cried out.

² Sluggish, out of spirits.

Couldn't see 'im, we 'eärd 'im a-mountin'
oop 'igher an' 'igher,
An' then 'e turn'd to the sun, an' 'e
shined like a sparkle o' fire.
'Doesn't tha see 'im,' she axes, 'fur I
can see 'im?' an I
Seeäd nobbut the smile o' the sun as
danced in 'er pratty blue eye ;
An' I says 'I mun gie tha a kiss,' an'
Sally says 'Noä, thou moänt,'
But I gied 'er a kiss, an' then anoother,
an' Sally says 'doänt !'

IX.

An' when we coom'd into Meeätin', at
fust she wur all in a tew,
But, arter, we sing'd the 'ymn together
like birds on a beugh ;
An' Muggins 'e preäch'd o' Hell-fire an'
the loov o' God fur men,
An' then upo' coomin' awaäy Sally gied
me a kiss ov 'ersen.

X.

Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick like
Saätan as fell
Down out o' heaven i' Hell-fire—thaw
theer's naw drinkin' i' Hell ;
Meä fur to kick our Sally as kep the wolf
fro' the dcor,
All along o' the drink, fur I loov'd 'er
as well as afoor.

XI.

Sa like a graät num-cumpus I blubber'd
awaäy o' the bed—
'Weänt niver do it naw moor ;' an'
Sally loökt up an' she said,
'I'll upowd it' tha weänt ; thou'r't laike
the rest o' the men,
Thou'll goä sniffin' about the tap till tha
does it agcan.

¹ I'll uphold it.

Theer's thy hennemy, man, an' I knaws,
as knaws tha sa well,
That, if tha seeäs 'im an' smells 'im tha'll
foller 'im slick into Hell.'

XII.

'Naäy,' says I, 'fur I weänt goä sniffin'
about the tap.'
'Weänt tha?' she says, an' mysen I
thowt i' mysen 'mayhap.'
'Noä : ' an' I started awaäy like a shot,
an' down to the Hinn,
An' I browt what tha seeäs stannin' theer,
yon big black bottle o' gin.

XIII.

'That caps owt,' says Sally, an' saw she
begins to cry,
But I puts it inter 'er 'ands an' I says to
'er, 'Sally,' says I,
'Stan' 'im theer i' the naäme o' the Lord
an' the power ov 'is Graäce,
Stan' 'im theer, fur I'll loök my hennemy
straît i' the faäce,
Stan' 'im theer i' the winder, an' let ma
looök at 'im then,
E' seeäms naw moor nor watter, an' 'e's
the Devil's oän sen.'

XIV.

An' I wur down i' tha mouth, couldn't do
naw work an' all,
Nasty an' snaggy an' shaäky, an' poonch'd
my 'and wi' the hawl,
But she wur a power o' coomfut, an'
sattled 'ersen o' my knee,
An' coäx'd an' coödl'd me oop till agäan
I feel'd mysen free.

XV.

An' Sally she tell'd it about, an' foälk
stood a-gawmin'² in,

¹ That's beyond everything.

² Staring vacantly.

As thaw it wur summat bewitch'd instead
of a quart o' gin ;
An' some on 'em said it wur watter—an'
I wur chousin' the wife,
Fur I couldn't 'owd 'ands off gin, wur it
nobbut to säave my life ;
An' blacksmith 'e strips me the thick ov
'is airm, an' 'e shaws it to me,
'Feäl thou this ! thou can't grow this
upo' watter ! ' says he.
An' Doctor 'e calls o' Sunday an' just as
candles waş lit,
'Thou moänt do it,' he says, 'tha mun
break 'im off bit by bit.'
'Thou'rt but a Methody-man,' says Par-
son, and laäys down 'is 'at,
An' 'e points to the bottle o' gin, 'but I
respecks tha fur that ;'
An' Squire, his oän verysen, walks down
fro' the 'All to see,
An' 'e spansks 'is 'and into mine, 'fur I
respecks tha,' says 'e ;
An' coostom agäan draw'd in like a wind
fro' far an' wide,
And browt me the booöts to be cobbled
fro' hafe the coontryside.

XVI.

An' theer 'e stans an' theer 'e shall stan
to my dying daäy ;
I 'a gotten to loov 'im agäan in anoother
kind of a waäy,
Proud on 'im, like, my lad, an' I kecäps
'im cleän an' bright,
Loovs 'im, an' roobs 'im, an' doosts 'im,
an' puts 'im back i' the light.

XVII.

Wouldn't a pint a' sarved as well as a
quart ? Naw doubt :
But I liked a bigger feller to fight wi' an'
fowt it out.

ummat bewitch'd istsad
o' gin ;
said it wur watter—an'
isin' the wife,
vd 'ands off gin, wur it
saäve my life ;

strips me the thick ov
'e shaws it to me,
! thou can't graw this
r ! ' says he.
s o' Sunday an' just as
s lit,

it,' he says, 'tha mun
off bit by bit.'

ethody-man,' says Par-
äys down 'is 'at,
he bottle o' gin, 'but I
a fur that ;'

in very sen, walks down
ll to see,

'and into mine, 'fur I
a,' says 'e ;

a draw'd in like a wind
wide,

ee booöts to be cobbled
ee countryside.

XVI.

an' theer 'e shall stan
g daäy ;

'im ageän in anoother
räy,

e, my lad, an' I keäps
n' bright,

bs 'im, an' doosts 'im,
n back i' the light.

XVII.

a' sarved as well as a
aw doubt :

er feller to fight wi'an'

Fine an' meller 'e mun be by this, if I
cared to taäste,
But I moänt, my lad, and I weänt, fur
I'd feäl mysen cleän disgräaced.

XVIII.

An' once I said to the Missis, 'My lass,
when I cooms to die,

Smash the bottle to smithers, the Devil's
in 'im,' said I.

But arter I chaänged my mind, an' if
Sally be left aloän,

I'll hev 'im a-buried wi'mma an' taäke
'im afor the Throän.

XIX.

Coom thou 'eer--yon laädy a-steppin'
along the streeät,

Doesn't tha knaw 'er--sa pratty, an' feät,
an' neät, an' sweät ?

Look at the cloäths on 'er back, thebbe
ammost spick-span-new,

An' Tommy's faäce is as fresh as a codlin
'at's wesh'd i' the dew.

XX.

'Ere's our Sally an' Tommy, an' we be
a-goin to dine,

Baäcon an' taätes, an' a beslings-pud-
din' 'an' Adam's wine ;

But if tha wants ony grog tha mun goä
fur it down to the Hinn,

Fur I weänt shed a drop on 'is blood,
noa, not fur Sally's oän kin.

THE REVENGE.

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

I.

AT FLORES in the Azores Sir Richard
Grenville lay,

And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came
flying from far away :

¹ A pudding made with the first milk of the cow
after calving.

'Spanish ships of war at sea ! we have
sighted fifty-three !'

Then sware Lord Thomas Howard :
'Fore God I am no coward ;

But I cannot meet them here, for my
ships are out of gear,

And the half my men are sick. I must
fly, but follow quick.

We are six ships of the line ; can we
fight with fifty-three ?'

II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville : 'I
know you are no coward ;

You fly them for a moment to fight with
them again.

But I've ninety men and more that are
lying sick ashore.

I should count myself the coward if I left
them, my Lord Howard,

To these Inquisition dogs and the devil-
doms of Spain.'

III.

So Lord Howard past away with five
ships of war that day,

Till he melted like a cloud in the silent
summer heaven ;

But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick
men from the land

Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,

And we laid them on the ballast down
below ;

For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that they
were not left to Spain,

To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the
glory of the Lord.

IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work
the ship and to fight,

And he sailed away from Flores till the
Spaniard came in sight,

With his huge sea-castles heaving upon
the weather bow.
'Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time
this sun be set.'

And Sir Richard said again: 'We be all
good English men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the
children of the devil,
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or
devil yet.'

v.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and
we roar'd a hurrah, and so
The little Revenge ran on sheer into the
heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and
her ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and
half to the left were seen,
And the little Revenge ran on thro' the
long sea-lane between.

vi.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down
from their decks and laugh'd,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at
the mad little craft
Running on and on, till delay'd
By their mountain-like San Philip that,
of fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with
her yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we
stay'd.

vii.

And while now the great San Philip hung
above us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away

From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon
the starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them
all.

viii.

But anon the great San Philip, she be-
thought herself and went
Having that within her womb that had left
her ill content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and
they fought us hand to hand,
For a dozen times they came with their
pikes and musqueteers,
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a
dog that shakes his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.

ix.

And the sun went down, and the stars
came out far over the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of
the one and the fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long,
their high-built galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long,
with her battle-thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew
back with her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk and many were shat-
ter'd, and so could fight no more—
God of battles, was ever a battle like this
in the world before?

x.

For he said 'Fight on! fight on!'
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the
short summer night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he had
left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing
it suddenly dead,

sh fleet that day,
ne larboard and two upon
ard lay,
hunder broke from them

VIII.
reat San Philip, she be-
erself and went
in her womb that had left
ntent ;
ey came aboard us, and
t us hand to hand,
es they came with their
musqueteers,
es we shook 'em off as a
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IX.
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X.
t on ! fight on !'
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er night was gone,
nd to be drest he had
k,
him that was dressing
dead,

THE REVENGE.

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And himself he was wounded again in the
side and the head,
And he said ' Fight on ! fight on !'

XI.

And the night went down, and the sun
smiled out far over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides
lay round us all in a ring ;
But they dared not touch us again, for
they fear'd that we still could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were
slain,

And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the
desperate strife ;

And the sick men down in the hold were
most of them stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent,
and the powder was all of it spent ;
And the masts and the rigging were
lying over the side ;

But Sir Richard cried in his English
pride,

' We have fought such a fight for a day
and a night

As may never be fought again !
We have won great glory, my men !
And a day less or more

At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when ?

Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink
her, split her in twain !
Fall into the hands of God, not into the
hands of Spain !'

XII.

And the gunner said ' Ay, ay,' but the
seamen made reply :
' We have children, we have wives,

And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if
we yield, to let us go ;
We shall live to fight again and to strike
another blow.'
And the lion there lay dying, and they
yielded to the foe.

XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their
flagship Lore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old
Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with
their courtly foreign grace ;
But he rose upon their decks, and he
cried :

' I have fought for Queen and Faith like
a valiant man and true ;

I have only done my duty as a man is
bound to do :

With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Gren-
ville die !'

And he fell upon their decks, and he
died.

XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had
been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of
Spain so cheap

That he dared her with one little ship
and his English few ;

Was he devil or man ? He was devil
for aught they knew,

But they sank his body with honour down
into the deep,

And they mann'd the Revenge with a
swarthier alien crew,

And away she sail'd with her loss and
long'd for her own ;

When a wind from the lands they had
ruin'd awoke from sleep,

And the water began to heave and the
weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great
gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised
by an earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails
and their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on
the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,
And the little Revenge herself went down
by the island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

THE SISTERS.

THEY have left the doors ajar ; and by
their clash,
And prelude on the keys, I know the
song,
Their favourite—which I call 'The
Tables Turned.'
Evelyn begins it 'O diviner Air.'

EVELYN.

O diviner Air,
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust, the
glare,
Far from out the west in shadowing
showers,
Over all the meadow baked and bare,
Making fresh and fair
All the bowers and the flowers.
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,
Over all this weary world of ours,
Breath, diviner Air !

A sweet voice that—you scarce could
better that.
Now follows Edith echoing Evelyn.

EDITH.

O diviner light,
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon with
night,

Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding
showers,
Far from out a sky for ever bright,
Over all the woodland's flooded bowers,
Over all the meadow's drowning flowers,
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,
Break, diviner light !

Marvellously like, their voices—and
themselves !

Tho' one is somewhat deeper than the
other,

As one is somewhat graver than the
other—

Edith than Evelyn. Your good Uncle,
whom

You count the father of your fortune,
longs

For this alliance : let me ask you then,
Which voice most takes you ? for I do
not doubt

Being a watchful parent, you are taken
With one or other : tho' sometimes I
fear

You may be flickering, fluttering in a
doubt

Between the two—which must not be—
which might

Be death to one : they both are beautiful:
Evelyn is gayer, wittier, prettier, says
The common voice, if one may trust it :
she ?

No ! but the paler and the graver, Edith.
Woo her and gain her then : no waver-
ing, boy !

The graver is perhaps the one for you
Who jest and laugh so easily and so well.
For love will go by contrast, as by likes.

No sisters ever prized each other more.
Not so : their mother and her sister loved
More passionately still.

But that my best

otting mist, the blinding
s,
a sky for ever bright,
woodland's flooded bowers,
meadow's drowning flowers,
ruin'd world of ours,
r light !

like, their voices—and
lves !
somewhat deep.r than the
somewhat graver than the

elyn. Your good Uncle,
e father of your fortune,

e : let me ask you then,
most takes you ? for I do
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al parent, you are taken
other : tho' sometimes I

flickering, fluttering in a
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other and her sister loved
y still.

But that my best

THE SISTERS.

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And oldest friend, your Uncle, wishes it,
And that I know you worthy everyway
To be my son, I might, perchance, be
loath

To part them, or part from them : and
yet one

Should marry, or all the broad lands in
your view

From this bay window—which our house
has held

Three hundred years—will pass collater-
ally.

My father with a child on either knee,
A hand upon the head of either child,
Smoothing their locks, as golden as his
own

Were silver, 'get them wedded' would
he say.

And once my prattling Edith ask'd him
'why?'

Ay, why? said he, 'for why should I go
lame?'

Then told them of his wars, and of
his wound.

For sec—this wine—the grape from
whence it flow'd

Was blackening on the slopes of Portugal,
When that brave soldier, down the
terrible ridge

Plunged in the last fierce charge at
Waterloo,

And caught the laming bullet. He left
me this,

Which yet retains a memory of its youth,
As I of mine, and my first passion.
Come !

Here's to your happy union with my
child !

Yet must you change your name : no
fault of mine !

You say that you can do it as willingly

As birds make ready for their bridal-
time

By change of feather : for all that, my
boy,

Some birds are sick and sullen when they
moult.

An old and worthy name ! but mine that
stirr'd

Among our civil wars and earlier too

Among the Roscs, the more venerable.

I care not for a name—no fault of mine.

Once more—a happier marriage than my
own !

You see you Lombard poplar on the
plain.

The highway running by it leaves a
breadth

Of sward to left and right, where, long
ago,

One bright May morning in a world of
song,

I lay at leisure, watching overhead

The aerial poplar wave, an amber spire.

I dozed ; I woke. An open landaulet
Whirl'd by, which, after it had past me,
show'd

Turning my way, the loveliest face on
earth.

The face of one there sitting opposite,
On whom I brought a strange unhappi-
ness,

That time I did not see.

Love at first sight
May seem—with goodly rhyme and
reason for it—

Possible—at first glimpse, and for a
face

Gone in a moment—strange. Yet once,
when first

I came on lake Llanberis in the dark,
Z Z

A moonless night with storm—one light-
ning-fork

Flash'd out the lake ; and tho' I loiter'd
there

The full day after, yet in retrospect
That less than momentary thunder-sketch
Of lake and mountain conquers all the day.

The Sun himself has limn'd the face
for me.

Not quite so quickly, no, nor half as well.
For look you here—the shadows are too
deep,

And like the critic's blurring comment
make

The veriest beauties of the work appear
The darkest faults : the sweet eyes frown :
the lips

Seem but a gash. My sole memorial
Of Edith—no, the other,—both indeed.

So that bright face was flash'd thro'
sense and soul

And by the poplar vanish'd—to be found
Long after, as it seem'd, beneath the tall
Tree-bowers, and those long-sweeping
beechen boughs

Of our New Forest. I was there alone :
The phantom of the whirling landaulet
or ever past me by : when one quick
peal

Of laughter drew me thro' the glimmer-
ing glades

Down to the snowlike sparkle of a cloth
On fern and foxglove. Lo, the face
again,

My Rosalind in this Arden—Edith—all
One bloom of youth, health, beauty,
happiness,

And moved to merriment at a passing jest.

There one of those about her knowing

Call'd me to join them ; so with these I
spent

What seem'd my crowning hour, my day
of days.

I woo'd her then, nor unsuccessfully,
The worse for her, for me ! was I con-
tent ?

Ay—no, not quite ; for now and then I
thought

Laziness, vague love-longings, the bright
May,

Had made a heated haze to magnify
The charm of Edith—that a man's ideal

Is high in Heaven, and lodged with
Plato's God,

Not findable here—content, and not
content,

In some such fashion as a man may be
That having had the portrait of his friend
Drawn by an artist, looks at it, and says,
' Good ! very like ! not altogether he.'

As yet I had not bound myself by
words,

Only, believing I loved Edith, made
Edith love *me*. Then came the day
when I,

Flattering myself that all my doubts were
fools

Born of the fool this Age that doubts of
all—

Not I that day of Edith's love or mine—
Had braced my purpose to declare my-
self :

I stood upon the stairs of Paradise.
The golden gates would open at a word.

I spoke it—told her of my passion, seen
And lost and found again, had got so far,

Had caught her hand, her eyelids fell—I
heard

Wheels, and a noise of welcome at the
doors—

in them ; so with these I
 y crowning hour, my day
 hen, nor unsuccessfully,
 her, for me ! was I con-
 ite ; for now and then I
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 ted haze to magnify
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 er of my passion, seen
 d again, had got so far,
 and, her eyelids fell—I
 se of welcome at the

THE SISTERS.

709

On a sudden after two Italian years
 Had set the blossom of her health again,
 The younger sister, Evelyn, enter'd—
 there,
 There was the face, and altogether she.
 The mother fell about the daughter's
 neck,
 The sisters closed in one another's arms,
 Their people throng'd about them from
 the hall,
 And in the thick of question and reply
 I fled the house, driven by one angel face,
 And all the Furies.

I was bound to her ;

I could not free myself in honour—bound
 Not by the sounded letter of the word,
 But counterpressures of the yielded hand
 That timorously and faintly echoed mine,
 Quick blushes, the sweet dwelling of her
 eyes
 Upon me when she thought I did not
 see—
 Were these not bonds ? nay, nay, but
 could I wed her
 Loving the other ? do her that great
 wrong ?
 Had I not dream'd I loved her yester-
 morn ?
 Had I not known where Love, at first a
 fear,
 Grew after marriage to full height and
 form ?
 Yet after marriage, that mock-sister
 there—
 Brother-in-law—the fiery nearness of it—
 Unlawful and disloyal brotherhood—
 What end but darkness could ensue from
 this
 For all the three ? So Love and Honour
 jarr'd
 Tho' Love and Honour join'd to raise
 the full

High-tide of doubt that sway'd me up
 and down
 Advancing nor retreating.

Edith wrote :

'My mother bids me ask ' (I did not tell
 you—
 A widow with less guile than many a
 child.
 God help the wrinkled children that are
 Christ's
 As well as the plump cheek—she wrought
 us harm,
 Poor soul, not knowing) 'are you ill ?'
 (so ran
 The letter) 'you have not been here of
 late.
 You will not find me here. At last I go
 On that long-promised visit to the North.
 I told your wayside story to my mother
 And Evelyn. She remembers you.
 Farewell.
 Pray come and see my mother. Almost
 blind
 With ever-growing cataract, yet she thinks
 She sees you when she hears. Again
 farewell.'

Cold words from one I had hoped to
 warm so far
 That I could stamp my image on her
 heart !
 'Pray come and see my mother, and
 farewell.'
 Cold, but as welcome as free airs of
 heaven
 After a dungeon's closeness. Selfish,
 strange !
 What dwarfs are men ! my strangled
 vanity
 Utter'd a stifled cry—to have vext myself
 And all in vain for her—cold heart or
 none—

No bride for me. Yet so my path was
clear
To win the sister.

Whom I woo'd and won.

For Evelyn knew not of my former suit,
Because the simple mother work'd upon
By Edith pray'd me not to whisper of it.
And Edith would be bridesmaid on the
day.

But on that day, not being all at ease,
I from the altar glancing back upon her,
Before the first 'I will' was utter'd, saw
The bridesmaid pale, statuelike, passion-
less—

'No harm, no harm' I turn'd again, and
placed
My ring upon the finger of my bride.

So, when we parted, Edith spoke no
word,
She wept no tear, but round my Evelyn
clung

In utter silence for so long, I thought
'What, will she never set her sister free?'

We left her, happy each in each, and
then,
As tho' the happiness of each in each
Were not enough, must fain have torrents,
lakes,
Hills, the great things of Nature and the
fair,
To lift us as it were from commonplace,
And help us to our joy. Better have
sent
Our Edith thro' the glories of the earth,
To change with her horizon, if true Love
Were not his own imperial all-in-all.

Far off we went. My God, I would
not live
Save that I think this gross hard-seeming
world

Is our misshaping vision of the Powers
Behind the world, that make our griefs
our gains.

For on the dark night of our marriage-
day

The great Tragedian, that had quenched
herself

In that assumption of the bridesmaid—
she

That loved me—our true Edith—her
brain broke

With over-acting, till she rose and fled
Beneath a pitiless rush of Autumn rain
To the deaf church—to be let in—to pray
Before *that* altar—so I think; and there
They found her beating the hard Protest-
ant doors.

She died and she was buried ere we
knew.

I learnt it first. I had to speak. At
once

The bright quick smile of Evelyn, that
had sunn'd

The morning of our marriage, past away:
And on our home-return the daily want
Of Edith in the house, the garden, still
Haunted us like her ghost; and by and
by,

Either from that necessity for talk
Which lives with blindness, or plain
innocence

Of nature, or desire that her lost child
Should earn from both the praise of
heroism,

The mother broke her promise to the
dead,

And told the living daughter with what
love

Edith had welcomed my brief wooing of
her,

And all her sweet self-sacrifice and death.

THE SISTERS—THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR, THE ENTAIL. 711

Henceforth that mystic bond betwixt
the twins—
Did I not tell you they were twins?—
prevail'd

So far that no caress could win my wife
Back to that passionate answer of full
heart

I had from her at first. Not that her
love,

Tho' scarce as great as Edith's power of
love,

Had lessen'd, but the mother's garrulous
wail

For ever woke the unhappy Past again,
Till that dead bridesmaid, meant to be
my bride,

Put forth cold hands between us, and I
fear'd

The very fountains of her life were
chill'd ;

So took her thence, and brought her
here, and here

She bore a child, whom reverently we
call'd

Edith ; and in the second year was born
A second—this I named from her own
self,

Evelyn ; then two weeks—no more—she
joined,

In and beyond the grave, that one she
loved.

Now in this quiet of declining life,
Thro' dreams by night and trances of the
day,

The sisters glide about me hand in hand,
Both beautiful alike, nor can I tell

One from the other, no, nor care to tell
One from the other, only know they
come,

They smile upon me, till, remembering
a'll

The love they both have borne me, and
the love

I bore them both—divided as I am
From either by the stillness of the grave—
I know not which of these I love the
best.

But *you* love Edith ; and her own true
eyes

Are traitors to her ; our quick Evelyn—
The merrier, prettier, wittier, as they talk,
And not without good reason, my good
son—

Is yet untouched : and I that hold them
both

Dearest of all things—well, I am not
sure—

But if there lie a preference eitherway,
And in the rich vocabulary of Love
'Most dearest' be a true superlative—
I think I likewise love your Edith most.

THE VILLAGE WIFE ; OR,
THE ENTAIL.¹

I.

'HOUSE-KEEPER sent tha my lass, fur New
Squire coom'd last night.

Butter an' heggs—yis—yis. I'll goä wi'
tha back : all right ;

Butter I warrants be prime, an' I
warrants the heggs be as well,

Hafe a pint o' milk runs out when ya
breaks the shell.

II.

Sit thysen down fur a bit : hev a glass o'
cowslip wine !

I liked the owd Squire an' 'is gells as
thaw they was gells o' mine,

Fur then we was all es one, the Squire
an' 'is darters an' me,

Hall but Miss Annie, the heldest, I niver
not took to she :

¹ See note to 'Northern Cobbler.'

But Nelly, the last of the cletoh,¹ I liked
'er the fust on 'em all,
Fur hoffsens we talkt o' my darter es died
o' the fever at fall :

An' I thowt 'twur the will o' the Lord, but
Miss Annie she said it wurdraäins,
Fur she hedn't naw coomfut in 'er, an'
arn'd naw thanks fur 'er pääins.
Eh ! thebbe all wi' the Lord my childer,
I han't gotten none !
Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is tääl in 'is
'and, an' owd Squire's gone.

III.

Fur 'staäte be i' tääl, my lass : tha dosn'
knew what that be ?
But I knows the law, I does, for the
lawyer ha tow'd it me.
'When theer's naw 'eäd to a 'Ouse by
theer's o' that ere määle—
The gells they counts fur nowt, and the
next un he teäkes the tääl.'

IV.

What be the next un like ? can tha tell
ony harm on 'im lass ?—
Naay sit down—naw 'urry—sa cowl !—
hev another glass !
Straänge an' cowl fur the time ! we may
happen a fall o' snaw—
Not es I cares fur to hear ony harm, but
I likes to know.
An' I 'oäps es 'e beänt boooklarn'd : but
'e dosn not coom fro' the shere ;
We'd anew o' that wi' the Squire, an' we
haätes boooklarnin' ere.

V.

Fur Squire wur a Varsity scholard, an'
niver lookt arter the land—
Whoäts or turmut's or täätes—'e 'ed
hallus a boök i' 'is 'and,
Hallus a boök wi' 'is boöks, thaw nigh
'eäp' a verry year.

¹ A brood of chickens.

An' boooks, what's boooks ? thou knows
thebbe neyther 'ere nor theer.

VI.

An' the gells, they hedn't naw tääls, an'
the lawyer he tow'd it me
That 'is tääl were soä tied up es he
couldn't cut down a tree !
'Drat the trees,' says I, to be sewer I
haätes 'em, my lass,
Fur we puts the muck o' the land, an'
they sucks the muck fro' the grass.

VII.

An' Squire wur hallus a-smilin', an' gied
to the tramps goin' by—
An' all o' the wust i' the parish—wi'
hoffsens a drop in 'is eye.
An' ivry darter o' Squire's hed her awn
ridin-erse to 'ersen,
An' they rampaged about wi' their grooms,
an' was 'untin' arter the men,
An' hallus a-dallackt¹ an' dizen'd out,
an' a-buyin' new cloäthes,
While 'e sit like a graät glimmer-gowk²
wi' 'is glasses athurt 'is noäse,
An' 'is noäse sa gruffed wi' snuff es it
couldn't be scroob'd awaäy,
Fur atween 'is reädin' an' writin' 'e
snift up a box in a daäy,
An' 'e niver runn'd arter the fox, nor
arter the birds wi' 'is gun,
An' 'e niver not shot one 'arc, but 'e
leäved it to Charlie 'is son,
An' 'e niver not fish'd 'is awn ponds, but
Charlie 'e cotch'd the pike,
Fur 'e warn't not burn to the land, an' 'e
didn't take kind to it like ;
But I eärs es 'e'd gie fur a howry³ owd
book thutty pound an' moor,
An' 'e'd wrote an owd book, his awn sen,
sa I know'd es 'e'd coom to be poor ;

¹ Overdrest in gay colours.² Owl.³ Filthy.

that's hooöks? thou knows
neither 'ere nor theer.

VI.

they hedn't naw taäils, an'
er he tow'd it me
were soä tied up es he
cut down a tree!
's, says I, to be sewer I
m, my lass,
he muck o' the land, an'
ks the muck fro' the grass.

VII.

hallus a-smilin', an' gied
umps goin' by—
wust i' the parish—wi'
drop in 'is eye.
o' Squire's hed her awn
e to 'ersen,
ed about wi' their grooms,
antin' arter the men,
lackt' an' dizen'd out,
in' new cloäthes,
a graät glimmer-gowk?
sses athurt 'is noäse,
t grufted wi' snuff es it
oe scroob'd awaäiy,
reädin' an' writin' 'e
box in a daäy,
nn'd arter the fox, nor
birds wi' 'is gun,
t shot one 'are, but 'e
o Charlie 'is son,
ish'd 'is awn ponds, but
cotch'd the pike,
burn to the land, an' 'e
e kind to it like;
gie fur a howry³ owd
y pound an' moor,
owd book, his awn sen,
tes 'e'd coom to be poor;
ay colours. ³ Owl.
Filthy.

An' 'e gied—I be fear'd fur to tell tha 'ow
much—fur an owd scratted stoän,
An' 'e digg'd up a loomp i' the land an'
'e got a brown pot an' a boän,
An' 'e bowt owd money, es wouldn't goä,
wi' good gowd o' the Queen,
An' 'e bowt little statutes all-naäkt an'
which was a shaame to be seen;
But 'e niver loökt ower a bill, nor 'e
niver not seed to owt,
An' 'e niver knawd nowt but booöks, an'
booöks, as thou knaws, beänt nowt.

VIII.

But owd Squire's laädy es long es she
lived she kep 'em all clear,
Thaw es long es she lived I niver hed
none of 'er darters 'ere;
But arter she died we was all es one, the
childer an' me,
An' sarvints runn'd in an' out, an' offens
we hed 'em to tea.
Lawk! 'ow I laugh'd when the lasses 'ud
talk o' their Missis's waäys,
An' the Missis's talk'd o' the lasses.—I'll
tell tha some o' these daäys.
Hoänly Miss Annie were saw stuck oop,
like 'er mother afoor—
'Er an' 'er blessed darter—they niver
derken'd my door.

IX.

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled till 'e'd
gotten a fright at last,
An' 'e calls fur 'is son, fur the 'turney's
letters they foller'd sa fast;
But Squire wur afear'd o' 'is son, an' 'e
says to 'im, meek as a mouse,
'Lad, thou mun cut off thy taäil, or the
gells 'ull goä to the 'Ouse,
Fur I finds es I be that i' debt, es I 'oäps
es thou'll 'elp me a bit,
An' if thou'll 'gree to cut off thy taäil I
may saäve mysen yit.'

X.

But Charlie 'e sets back 'is ears, an' 'e
swears, an' 'e says to 'im 'Noa.'
'I've gotten the 'staäte by the taäil an'
be dang'd if I iver let goä!
Coom! coom! feyther, 'e says, 'why
sholdn't thy booöks be sowd?
I hears es soom o' thy booöks mebbe
worth their weight i' gowd.'

XI.

Heäps an' heäps o' booöks, I ha' see'd
'em, belong'd to the Squire,
But the lasses 'ed teärd out leaves i' the
middle to kindle the fire;
Sa moäst on 'is owd big booöks fetch'd
nigh to nowt at the saäle,
And Squire were at Charlie ageän to git
'im to cut off 'is taäil.

XII.

Ya wouldn't find Charlie's likes—'e were
that outdacious at 'oäm,
Not thaw ya went fur to raäke out Hell
wi' a small-tooth coämb—
Droonk wi' the Quoloty's wine, an' droonk
wi' the farmer's aäle,
Mad wi' the lasses an' all—an' 'e wouldn't
cut off the taäil.

XIII.

Thou's coom'd oop by the beck; and a
thurn be a-grawin' theer,
I niver ha seed it sa white wi' the Maäy
es I see'd it to-year—
Theerabouts Charlie joompt—and it gied
me a scare tother night,
Fur I thowt i wur Charlie's ghoäst i'
the derk, fur it loökt sa white.
'Billy,' says 'e, 'hev a joomp!—thaw
the banks o' the beck be sa high,
Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un, thaw
niver a hair wur awry;

But Billy fell bakkuds o' Charlie, an'
Charlie 'e brok 'is neck,
So theer wur a hend o' the taail, fur 'e lost
'is taail i' the beck.

XIV.

Sa 'is taail wur lost an' 'is booöks wur
gone an' 'is boy wur deääd,
An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled, but 'e
niver not lift oop 'is 'eääd :
Hallus a soft un Squire ! an' 'e smiled,
fur 'e hedn't naw friend,
Sa feyther ar' son was buried together,
an' this wur the hend.

XV.

An' Parson as hesn't the call, nor the
mooney, but hes the pride,
'E reäds of a sewer an' sartan 'oäp o' the
tother side ;
But I beänt that sewer es the Lord, how-
siver they praäy'd an' praäy'd,
Lets them inter 'eaven eäsy es leäves their
debts to be paäid.
Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo' poor
owd Squire i' the wood,
An' I cried along wi' the gells, fur they
weänt niver coom to naw good.

XVI.

Fur Molly the long 'un she walkt awaäy
wi' a hoffer lad,
An' nawbody 'eärd on 'er sin, sa o' coarse
she be gone to the bad !
An' Lucy wur laäme o' one leg, sweet-
'arts she niver 'ed none—
Straänge an' unheppen ! Miss Lucy ! we
naämed her 'Dot an' gaw one !'
An' Hetty wur weak i' the hattics, wi'out
ony harm i' the legs,
An' the fever 'er baäked Jinny's 'eääd as
bald as one o' them heggs,
An' Nelly wur up fro' the craädle as big
'i the mouth as a cow,

¹ Ungainly, awkward.

An' saw she mun hammergrate,¹ lass, or
she weänt git a maäte onyhow !
An' es fur Miss Annie es call'd me afoor
my awn foilks to my faäce
'A hignorant village wife as 'ud hev to be
larn'd her awn plaäce,'
Hes fur Miss Hannie the heldest hes now
be a-grawin' sa howd,
I knaws that mooch o' sheä, es it beänt
not fit to be tow'd !

XVII.

Sa I didn't not taäke it kindly ov owd
Miss Annie to saäy
Es I should be talkin ageän 'em, es soon
es they went awaäy,
Fur, lawks ! 'ow I cried when they went,
an' our Nelly she gied me 'er 'and,
Fur I'd ha done owt fur the Squire an' 'is
gells es belong'd to the land ;
Booöks, es I said afoor, thebbe neyther
'ere nor theer !
But I sarved 'em wi' butter an' heggs fur
huppuds o' twenty year.

XVIII.

An' they hallus paäid what I hax'd, sa I
hallus deal'd wi' the Hall,
An' they knaw'd what butter wur, an' they
knaw'd what a hegg wur an' all ;
Hugger-mugger they lived, but they
wasn't that eäsy to pleäse,
Till I gied 'em Hinjian curn, an' they
laäid big heggs es tha seas ;
An' I niver puts saäme² i' my butter,
they does it at Willis's farm,
Taäste another drop o' the wine—tweänt
do tha naw harm.

XIX.

Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is taail in 'is
'and, an' owd Squire's gone ;

¹ Emigrate.² Lard.

un hammergrate, 'lass, or
nt git a maäte onyhow!
Annie es call'd me afor
foilks to my faäce
illage wife as 'ud hev to be
er awn plaäce,'
Annie the heldest hes now
win' sa howd,
nooch o' sheä, es it beänt
to be towd!

XVII.

t taäke it kindly ov owd
nie to saäy
talkin ageän 'em, es soon
went awaäy,
I cried when they went,
felly she gied me 'er 'and,
owt fur the Squire an' 'is
elond'd to the land;
id afor, thebbe neyther
heer!
a wi' butter an' heggs fur
o' twenty year.

XVIII.

paäid what I hax'd, sa I
l'd wi' the Hall,
what butter wur, an' they
hat a hegg wur an' all;
they lived, but they
at eäsy to pleäse,
Hinjian eurn, an' they
heggs es tha seäs;
s saäme 'i' my butter,
it at Willis's farm,
rop o' the wine—tweänt
w harm.

XIX.

coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is
owd Squire's gone;

* Lard.

IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

715

I heard 'im a roomlin' by, but arter my
nightcap wur on;
Sa I han't clapt eyes on 'im yit, fur he
coom'd last night sa laäte—
Pluksh!!! the hens i' the peäs! why
didn't tha hesp the gaäte?

IN THE CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL.

EMMIE.

I.

OUR doctor had call'd in another, I never
had seen him before,
But he sent a chill to my heart when I
saw him come in at the door,
Fresh from the surgery-schools of France
and of other lands—
Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big
merciless hands!

Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but
they said too of him
He was happier using the knife than in
trying to save the limb,
And that I can well believe, for he look'd
so coarse and so red,
I could think he was one of those who
would break their jests on the dead,
And mangle the living dog that had loved
him and fawn'd at his knee—
Drench'd with the hellish ooral—that
ever such things should be!

II.

Here was a boy—I am sure that some of
our children would die
But for the voice of Love, and the smile,
and the comforting eye—
Here was a boy in the ward, every bone
seem'd out of its place—

¹ A cry accompanied by a clapping of hands
to scare trespassing fowl.

Caught in a mill and crush'd—it was
all but a hopeless case:
And he handled him gently enough; but
his voice and his face were not kind,
And it was but a hopeless case, he had
seen it and made up his mind,
And he said to me roughly 'The lad will
need little more of your care.'
'All the more need,' I told him, 'to seek
the Lord Jesus in prayer;
They are all his children here, and I pray
for them all as my own.'
But he turn'd to me, 'Ay, good woman,
can prayer set a broken bone?'
Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I
know that I heard him say
'All very well—but the good Lord Jesus
has had his day.'

III.

Had? has it come? It has only dawn'd.
It will come by and by.
O how could I serve in the wards if the
hope of the world were a lie?
How could I bear with the sights and the
loathsome smells of disease
But that He said 'Ye do it to me, when ye
do it to these'?

IV.

So he went. And we past to this ward
where the younger children are laid:
Here is the cot of our orphan, our dar-
ling, our meek little maid;
Empty you see just now! We have lost
her who loved her so much—
Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive
plant to the touch;
Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often
moved me to tears,
Hers was the gratefulest heart I have
found in a child of her years—

Nay you remember our Emmie; you
used to send her the flowers;
How she would smile at 'em, play with
'em, talk to 'em hours after hours!
They that can wander at will where the
works of the Lord are reveal'd
Little guess what joy can be got from a
cowslip out of the field;
Flowers to these 'spirits in prison' are all
they can know of the spring,
They freshen and sweeten the wards like
the waft of an Angel's wing;
And she lay with a flower in one hand and
her thin hands crost on her breast—
Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire,
and we thought her at rest,
Quietly sleeping—so quiet, our doctor
said 'Poor little dear,
Nurse, I must do it to-morrow; she'll
never live thro' it, I fear.'

v.

I walk'd with our kindly old Doctor as
far as the head of the stair,
Then I return'd to the ward; the child
didn't see I was there.

vi.

Never since I was nurse, had I been so
grieved and so vex't!
Emmie had heard him. Softly she call'd
from her cot to the next,
'He says I shall never live thro' it, O
Annie, what shall I do?'
Annie consider'd. 'If I,' said the wise
little Annie, 'was you,
I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to
help me, for, Emmie, you see,
It's all in the picture there: "Little
children should come to me."'
(Meaning the print that you gave us, I
find that it always can please
Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with
children about his knees.)

'Yes, and I will,' said Emmie, 'but then
if I call to the Lord,
How should he know that it's me? such
a lot of beds in the ward!'
That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she
consider'd and said:
'Emmie, you put out your arms, and you
leave 'em outside on the bed—
The Lord has so *much* to see to! but,
Emmie, you tell it him plain,
It's the little girl with her arms lying out
on the counterpane.'

vii.

I had sat three nights by the child—I
could not watch her for four—
My brain had begun to reel—I felt I
could do it no more.
That was my sleeping-night, but I
thought that it never would pass.
There was a thunderclap once, and a
clatter of hail on the glass,
And there was a phantom cry that I heard
as I tost about,
The motherless bleat of a lamb in the
storm and the darkness without;
My sleep was broken besides with dreams
of the dreadful knife
And fears for our delicate Emmie who
scarce would escape with her life;
Then in the gray of the morning it seem'd
she stood by me and smiled,
And the doctor came at his hour, and we
went to see to the child.

viii.

He had brought his ghastly tools: we
believed her asleep again—
Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out
on the counterpane;
Say that His day is done! Ah why should
we care what they say?
The Lord of the children had heard her,
and Emmie had past away.

will,' said Emmie, 'but then
all to the Lord,
he know that it's me? such
of beds in the ward!'—
puzzle for Annie. Again she
er'd and said:

put out your arms, and you
em outside on the bed—
s so much to see to! but,
e, you tell it him plain,
girl with her arms lying out
counterpane.'

VII.

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VIII.

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e children had heard her,
nie had past away.

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE PRINCESS ALICE.

717

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE
PRINCESS ALICE.

DEAD PRINCESS, living Power, if that,
which lived

True life, live on—and if the fatal kiss,
Born of true life and love, divorce thee not
From earthly love and life—if what we call
The spirit flash not all at once from out
Thiss shadow into Substance—then perhaps
The mellow'd murmur of the people's

praise
From thine own State, and all our
breadth of realm,

Where Love and Longing dress thy deeds
in light,

Ascends to thee; and this March morn
that sees

Thy Soldier-brother's bridal orange-bloom
Break thro' the yews and cypress of thy
grave,

And thine Imperial mother smile again,
May send one ray to thee! and who can
tell—

Thou—England's England-loving daugh-
ter—thou

Dying so English thou wouldst have her
flag

Borne on thy coffin—where is he can swear
But that some broken gleam from our
poor earth

May touch thee, while remembering thee,
I lay

At thy pale feet this ballad of the deeds
Of England, and her banner in the East?

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

I.

BANNER of England, not for a season, O
banner of Britain, hast thou
Floated in conquering battle or flapt to
the battle-cry!

Never with mightier glory than when we
had rear'd thee on high
Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly
siege of Lucknow—
Shot thro' the staff or the halcyon, but
ever we raised thee anew,
And ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew.

II.

Frail were the works that defended the
hold that we held with our lives—
Women and children among us, God help
them, our children and wives!

Hold it we might—and for fifteen days or
for twenty at most.

'Never surrender, I charge you, but
every man die at his post!'

Voice of the dead whom we loved, our
Lawrence the best of the brave:

Cold were his brows when we kiss'd
him—we laid him that night in his
grave.

'Every man die at his post!' and there
hail'd on our houses and halls

Death from their rifle-bullets, and death
from their cannon-balls,

Death in our innermost chamber, and
death at our slight barricade,

Death while we stood with the musket, and
death while we stooped to the spade,

Death to the dying, and wounds to the
wounded, for often there fell,

Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro'
it, their shot and their shell,

Death—for their spies were among us, their
marksmen were told of our best,

So that the brute bullet broke thro' the
brain that could think for the rest;

Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and
bullets would rain at our feet—

Fire from ten thousand at once of the
rebels that girdled us round—

Death at the glimpse of a finger from
o'er the breadth of a street,
Death from the heights of the mosque and
the palace, and death in the ground !
Mine ? yes, a mine ! Countermine ! down,
down ! and creep thro' the hole !
Keep the revolver in hand ! you can hear
him—the murderous mole !
Quiet, ah ! quiet—wait till the point of
the pickaxe be thro' !
Click with the pick, coming nearer and
nearer again than before—
Now let it speak, and you fire, and the
dark pioneer is no more ;
And ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew !

III.

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many
times, and it chanced on a day
Soon as the blast of that underground
thunderclap echo'd away,
Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur like
so many fiends in their hell—
Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on
volley, and yell upon yell—
Fiercely on all the defences our myriad
enemy fell.
What have they done ? where is it ? Out
yonder. Guard the Redan !
Storm at the Water-gate ! storm at the
Bailey-gate ! storm, and it ran
Surging and swaying all round us, as
ocean on every side
Plunges and heaves at a bank that is
daily drown'd by the tide—
So many thousands that if they be bold
enough, who shall escape ?
Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall
know we are soldiers and men !
Ready ! take aim at their leaders—their
masses are gapp'd with our grape—

Backward they reel like the wave, like
the wave flinging forward again,
Flying and foil'd at the last by the hand-
ful they could not subdue ;
And ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew.

IV.

Handful of men as we were, we were
English in heart and in limb,
Strong with the strength of the race to
command, to obey, to endure,
Each of us fought as if hope for the garri-
son hung but on him ;
Still—could we watch at all points ? we
were every day fewer and fewer.
There was a whisper among us, but only
a whisper that past :
' Children and wives—if the tigers leap
into the fold of our arms—
Every man die at his post—and the foe
may outlive us at last—
Better to fall by the hands that they love,
than to fall into theirs !'
Roar upon roar in a moment two mines
by the enemy sprung
Clove into perilous chasms our walls and
our poor palisades.
Rifleman, true is your heart, but be sure
that your hand be as true !
Sharp is the fire of assault, better aimed
are your flank fusillades—
Twice do we hurl them to earth from the
ladders to which they had clung,
Twice from the ditch where they shelter
we drive them with our grenades ;
And ever upon the topmost roof of our
banner of England blew.

V.

Then on another wild morning another
wild earthquake out-tore
Clean from our lines of defence ten or
twelve good paces or more.

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flinging forward again,
d at the last by the hand-
could not subdue ;
n the topmost roof our
f England blew.

IV.

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THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW

719

Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden there
from the light of the sun—

One has leapt up on the breach, crying
out : ' Follow me, follow me !'—

Mark him—he falls ! then another, and
him too, and down goes he.

Had they been bold enough then, who
can tell but the traitors had won ?

Boardings and rafters and doors—an em-
brasure ! make way for the gun !

Now double-charge it with grape ! It is
charged and we fire, and they run.

Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the
dark face have his due !

Thanks to the kindly dark faces who
fought with us, faithful and few,

Fought with the bravest among us, and
drove them, and smote them, and
slew,

That ever upon the topmost roof our
banner in India blew.

VI.

Men will forget what we suffer and not
what we do. We can fight

But to be soldier all day and be sentinel
all thro' the night—

Ever the mine and assault, our sallies,
their lying alarms.

Bugles and drums in the darkness, and
shoutings and soundings to arms,

Ever the labour of fifty that had to be
done by five,

Ever the marvel among us that one should
be left alive,

Ever the day with its traitorous death
from the loopholes around,

Ever the night with its coffinless corpse
to be laid in the ground,

Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge
of cataract skies,

Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite
torment of flies,

Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing
over an English field

Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound
that *would* not be heal'd,

Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-
pitiless knife,—

Torture and trouble in vain,—for it never
could save us a life.

Valour of delicate women who tended the
hospital bed,

Horror of women in travail among the
dying and dead,

Grief for our perishing children, and
never a moment for grief,

Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering
hopes of relief,

Havelock baffled, or beater, or butcher'd
for all that we knew,—

Then day and night, day and night, coming
down on the still-shatter'd walls

Millions of musket-bullets, and thousands
of cannon-balls,—

But ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew.

VII.

Hark cannonade, fusillade ! is it true what
was told by the scout,

Outram and Havelock breaking their way
through the fell mutineers ?

Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing
again in our ears !

All on a sudden the garrison utter a jubi-
lant shout,

Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer
with conquering cheers,

Sick from the hospital echo them, women
and children come out,

Blessing the wholesome white faces of
Havelock's good fusileers,

Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the
Highlander wet with their tears !

Dance to the pibroch!—saved! we are
 saved!—is it you? is it you?
 Saved by the valour of Havelock, saved
 by the blessing of Heaven!
 'Hold it for fifteen days!' we have held
 it for eighty-seven!
 And ever aloft on the palace roof the old
 banner of England blew.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD
 COBHAM.

(IN WALES.)

My friend should meet me somewhere
 hereabout
 To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I have broke their cage, no gilded one,
 I trow—
 I read no more the prisoner's mute wail
 Scribbled or carved upon the pitiless stone;
 I find hard rocks, hard life, hard cheer, or
 none,
 For I am emptier than a friar's brains;
 But God is with me in this wilderness,
 These wet black passes and foam-churn-
 ing chasms,—
 And God's free air, and hope of better
 things.

I would I knew their speech; not now
 to glean,
 Not now—I hope to do it—some scatter'd
 ears,
 Some ears for Christ in this wild field of
 Wales—
 But, bread, merely for bread. This
 tongue that wagg'd
 They said with such heretical arrogance
 Against the proud archbishop Arundel—
 So much God's cause was fluent in it—is
 here

But as a Latin Bible to the crowd;
 'Bread!'—what use? The Shepherd,
 when I speak,
 Vailing a sullen eyelid with his hard
 'Dim *Saernes*' passes, wroth at things
 of old—
 No fault of mine. Had he God's word
 in Welsh
 He might be kindlier: happily come the
 day!

Not least art thou, thou little Bethle-
 hem
 In Judah, for in thee the Lord was born;
 Nor thou in Britain, little Lutterworth,
 Least, for in thee the word was born again.

Heaven-sweet Evangel, ever-living
 word,
 Who whilome spakest to the South in
 Greek
 About the soft Mediterranean shores,
 And then in Latin to the Latin crowd,
 As good need was—thou hast come to
 talk our isle.
 Hereafter thou, fulfilling Pentecost,
 Must learn to use the tongues of all the
 world.
 Yet art thou thine own witness that thou
 bringest
 Not peace, a sword, a fire.

What did he say,
 My frighted Wiclif-preacher whom I
 crost
 In flying hither? that one night a crowd
 Throng'd the waste field about the city
 gates:
 The king was on them suddenly with a
 host.
 Why there? they came to hear their
 preacher. Then
 Some cried on Cobham, on the good
 Lord Cobham;

in Bible to the crowd ;
 at use ? The Shepherd,
 speak,
 on eyelid with his hard
 ' passes, wroth at things
 ine. Had he God's word
 sh
 indlier : happily come the

thou, thou little Bethle-
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rd, a fire.
 What did he say,
 iclif-preacher whom I

that one night a crowd
 ste field about the city

then suddenly with a
 y came to hear their
 Then

Cobham, on the good
 am ;

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD COBHAM.

721

Ay, for they love me I but the king—nor
 voice
 Nor finger rais'd against him—took and
 hang'd,
 Took, hang'd and burnt—how many—
 thirty-nine—
 Call'd it rebellion—hang'd, poor friends,
 as rebels
 And burn'd alive as heretics ! for your
 Priest
 Labels—to take the king along with
 him—
 All heresy, treason : but to call men
 traitors
 May make men traitors.

Rose of Lancaster,
 Red in thy birth, redder with household
 war,

Now reddest with the blood of holy men,
 Redder to be, red rose of Lancaster—
 If somewhere in the North, as Rumour
 sang

Fluttering the hawks of this crown-lust-
 ing line—

By firth and loch thy silver sister grow,¹
 That were my rose, there my allegiance
 due.

Self-starved, they say—nay, murder'd,
 doubtless dead.

So to this king I cleaved : my friend was
 he,

Once my fast friend : I would have given
 my life

To help his own from scathe, a thousand
 lives

To save his soul. He might have come
 to learn

Our Wiclif's learning : but the worldly
 Priests

Who fear the king's hard common-sense
 should find

¹ Richard II.

What rotten piles uphold their mason-
 work,
 Urge him to foreign war. O had he
 will'd

I might have stricken a lusty stroke for
 him,
 But he would not ; far liever led my
 friend

Back to the pure and universal church,
 But he would not : whether that heirless
 flaw

In his throne's title make him feel so
 frail,

He leans on Antichrist ; or that his
 mind,

So quick, so capable in soldiery,
 In matters of the faith, alas the while !
 More worth than all the kingdoms of
 this world,

Runs in the rut, a coward to the Priest.

Burnt—good Sir Roger Acton, my
 dear friend !

Burnt too, my faithful preacher, Beverley !
 Lord give thou power to thy two wit-
 nesses !

Lest the false faith make merry over
 them !

Two—nay but thirty-nine have risen and
 stand,

Dark with the smoke of human sacrifice,
 Before thy light, and cry continually—

Cry—against whom ?

Him, who should bear the sword
 Of Justice—what ! the kingly, kindly
 boy ;

Who took the world so easily heretofore,
 My boon companion, tavern-fellow—him
 Who gibed and japed—in many a merry
 tale

That shook our sides—at Pardoners,
 Summoners,

Friars, absolution-sellers, monkeries

And, nunneries, when the wild hour and
the wine
Had set the wits aflame.

Harry of Monmouth,
Or Amurath of the East ?

Better to sink
Thy fleurs-de-lys in slime again, and
fling

Thy royalty back into the riotous fits
Of wine and narlotry—thy shame, and
mine,

Thy comrade—than to persecute the
Lord,

And play the Saul that never will be Paul.

Burnt, burnt ! and while this mitred
Arundel

Dooms our unlicensed preacher to the
flame,

The mitre-sanction'd harlot draws his
clerks

Into the suburb—their hard celibacy,
Sworn to be veriest ice of pureness,
molten

Into adulterous living, or such crimes
As holy Paul—a shame to speak of
them—

Among the heathen—

Sanctuary granted
To bandit, thief, assassin—yea to him
Who hacks his mother's throat—denied
to him,

Who finds the Saviour in his mother
tongue.

The Gospel, the Priest's pearl, flung
down to swine—

The swine, lay-men, lay-women, who
will come,

God willing, to outlearn the filthy friar.

Ah rather, Lord, than that thy Gospel,
meant

To course and range thro' all the world,
should be

Tether'd to these dead pillars of the
Church—

Rather than so, if thou wilt have it so,
Burst vein, snap sinew, and crack heart,
and life

Pass in the fire of Babylon ! but how
long,

O Lord, how long !

My friend should meet me here.

Here is the copse, the fountain and—a
Cross !

To thee, dead wood, I bow not head nor
knees.

Rather to thee, green boscage, work of
God,

Black holly, and white-flower'd wayfar-
ing-tree !

Rather to thee, thou living water, drawn
By this good Wiclif mountain down from
heaven,

And speaking clearly in thy native
tongue—

No Latin—He that thirsteth, come and
drink !

Eh ! how I anger'd Arundel asking me
To worship Holy Cross ! I spread mine
arms,

God's work, I said, a cross of flesh and
blood

And holier. That was heresy. (My
good friend

By this time should be with me.)
'Images?'

'Bury them as God's truer images
Are daily buried.' 'Heresy.--Pen-

ance?' 'Fast,
Hairshirt and scourge—nay, let a man

repent,

Do penance in his heart, God hears him.'
'Heresy—

Not shriven, not saved?' 'What profits
an ill Priest

these dead pillars of the
—
O, if thou wilt have it so,
ap sinew, and crack heart,
ire of Babylon! but how
ong!
end should meet me here.
pse, the fountain and—a
wood, I bow not head nor
green bosage, work of
d white-flower'd wayfar-
thou living water, drawn
clif mountain down from
clearly in thy native
hat thirsteth, come and
ger'd Arundel asking me
Cross! I spread mine
id, a cross of flesh and
hat was heresy. (My
I should be with me.)
d's truer images
d.' 'Heresy.--Pen-
Fast,
urge—nay, let a man
heart, God hears him.'
ved?' 'What profits

Between me and my God? I would not
spurn
Good counsel of good friends, but shrive
myself
No, not to an Apostle.' 'Heresy.'
(My friend is long in coming.) 'Pil-
grimages?'
'Drink, bagpipes, revelling, devil's-
dances, vice.
The poor man's money gone to fat the
friar.
Who reads of begging saints in Scrip-
ture?'—'Heresy'—
(Hath he been here—not found me—gone
again?
Have I mislearnt our place of meeting?)
'Bread—
Bread left after the blessing?' how they
stared,
That was their main test-question—
glared at me!
'He veil'd Himself in flesh, and now He
veils
His flesh in bread, body and bread
together.'
Then rose the howl of all the cassock'd
wolves,
'No bread, no bread. God's body!'
Archbishop, Bishop,
Priors, Canons, Friars, bellringers,
Parish-clerks—
'No bread, no bread!'—'Authority of
the Church,
Power of the keys!'—Then I, God help
me, I
So mock'd, so spurn'd, so baited two
whole days—
I lost myself and fell from evenness,
And rail'd at all the Popes, that ever
since
Sylvester shed the venom of world-wealth
Into the church, had only prov'n them-
selves
Poisoners, murderers. Well—God
pardon all—
Me, them, and all the world—yea, that
proud Priest,
That mock-meek mouth of utter Anti-
christ,
That traitor to King Richard and the
truth,
Who rose and doom'd me to the fire.
Amen!
Nay, I can burn, so that the Lord of life
Be by me in my death.
Those three! the fourth
Was like the son of God. Not burnt
were they.
On them the smell of burning had not
past.
That was a miracle to convert the king.
These Pharisees, this Caiaphas-Arundel
What miracle could turn? *He* here
again,
He thwarting their traditions of Himself,
He would be found a heretic to Himself,
And doom'd to burn alive.
So, caught, I burn.
Burn? heathen men have borne as much
as this,
For freedom, or the sake of those they
loved,
Or some less cause, some cause far less
than mine;
For every other cause is less than mine.
The moth will singe her wings, and
singed return,
Her love of light quenching her fear of
pain—
How now, my soul, we do not heed the
fire?
Faint-hearted? tut!—faint-stomach'd!
faint as I am,
God willing, I will burn for Him
Who comes?
A thousand marks are set upon my head.

Friend?—for perhaps—a tussle for it then !
 Nay, but my friend. Thou art so well disguised,
 I knew thee not. Hast thou brought bread with thee ?
 I have not broken bread for fifty hours.
 None? I am damn'd already by the Priest
 For holding there was bread where bread was none—
 No bread. My friends await me yonder ?
 Yes.
 Lead on then. *Up* the mountain ? Is it far ?
 Not far. Climb first and reach me down thy hand,
 I am not like to die for lack of bread,
 For I must live to testify by fire.'

COLUMBUS.

CHAINS, my good lord : in your raised brows I read
 Some wonder at our chamber ornaments.
 We brought this iron from our Isles of gold.

Does the king know you deign to visit him
 Whom once he rose from off his throne to greet
 Before his people, like his brother king ?
 I saw your face that morning in the crowd.

At Barcelona—tho' you were not then
 So bearded. Yes. The city deck'd herself
 To meet me, roar'd my name ; the king, the queen
 Bad me be seated, speak, and tell them all

¹ He was burnt on Christmas Day, 1417.

The story of my voyage, and while I spoke
 The crowd's roar fell as at the 'Peace, be still !'
 And when I ceased to speak, the king, the queen,
 Sank from their thrones, and melted into tears,
 And knelt, and lifted hand and heart and voice
 In praise to God who led me thro' the waste.
 And then the great 'Laudanians' rose to heaven.

Chains for the Admiral of the Ocean !
 chains

For him who gave a new heaven, a new earth,

As holy John had prophesied of me,
 Gave glory and more empire to the kings
 Of Spain than all their battles ! chains for him

Who push'd his prow into the setting sun,

And made West East, and sail'd the Dragon's mouth,

And came upon the Mountain of the World,

And saw the rivers roll from Paradise !

Chains ! we are Admirals of the Ocean,
 we,

We and our sons for ever. Ferdinand
 Hath sign'd it and our Holy Catholic queen—

Of the Ocean—of the Indies—Admirals
 we—

Our title, which we never mean to yield,
 Our guerdon not alone for what we did,
 But our amends for all we might have done—

The vast occasion of our stronger life—

my voyage, and while I
 oar fell as at the 'Peace,
 ceased to speak, the king,
 en,
 r thrones, and melted into
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 od who led me thro' the
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 prows into the settling
 st East, and sail'd the
 mouth,
 the Mountain of the
 rs roll from Paradise !
 e Admirals of the Ocean,
 for ever. Ferdinand
 and our Holy Cathol
 the Indies—Admirals
 re never mean to yield,
 alone for what we did,
 for all we might have
 of our stronger life—

Eighteen long years of waste, seven in
 your Spain,
 Lost, showing courts and kings a truth
 the babe
 Will suck in with his milk hereafter—
 earth
 A sphere.

Were *you* at Salamanca ? No.
 We fronted there the learning of all
 Spain;
 All their cosmogonies, their astronomies :
 Guess-work *they* guess'd it, but the
 golden guess
 Is morning-star to the full round of truth.
 No guess-work ! I was certain of my goal ;
 Some thought it heresy, but that would
 not hold.
 King David call'd the heavens a hide, a
 tent
 Spread over earth, and so this earth was
 flat :
 Some cited old *Laudantius* : could it be
 That trees grew downward, rain fell up-
 ward, men
 Walk'd like the fly on ceilings ? and
 besides,
 The great Augustine wrote that none
 could breathe
 Within the zone of heat ; so might there
 be
 Two Adams, two mankind, and that
 was clean
 Against God's word : thus was I beaten
 back,
 And chiefly to my sorrow by the Church,
 And thought to turn my face from Spain,
 appeal
 Once more to France or England ; but
 our Queen
 Recall'd me, for at last their Highnesses
 Were half-assured this earth might be a
 sphere.

All glory to the all-blessed Trinity,
 All glory to the mother of our Lord,
 And Holy Church, from whom I never
 swerved
 Not even by one hair's-breadth of heresy,
 I have accomplish'd what I came to do.

Not yet—not all—last night a dream—
 I sail'd
 On my first voyage, harass'd by the frigh'ts
 Of my first crew, their curses and their
 groans.
 The great flame-banner borne by Tene-
 riffe,
 The compass, like an old friend false at last
 In our most need, appall'd them, and the
 wind
 Still westward, and the weedy seas—at
 length
 The land l'rd, and the branch with berries
 on it,
 The carven staff—and last the light, the
 light
 On Guanahani ! but I changed the name ;
 San Salvador I call'd it ; and the light
 Grew as I gazed, and brought out a broad
 sky
 Of dawning over—not those alien palms,
 The marvel of that fair new nat —not
 That Indian isle, but our most ancient
 East
 Moriah with Jerusalem ; and I saw
 The glory of the Lord flash up, and beat
 Thro' all the homely town from jasper,
 sapphire,
 Chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius,
 Chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase,
 Jacynth, and amethyst—and those twelve
 gates,
 Pearl—and I woke, and thought—death
 —I shall die—
 I am written in the Lamb's own Book of
 Life

To walk within the glory of the Lord
 Sunless and moonless, utter light—but
 no !
 The Lord had sent this bright, strange
 dream to me
 To mind me of the secret vow I made
 When Spain was waging war against the
 Moor—
 I strove myself with Spain against the
 Moor.
 There came two voices from the Sepul-
 chre,
 Two friars crying that if Spain should
 oust
 The Moslem from her limit, he, the fierce
 Soldan of Egypt, would break down and
 raze
 The blessed tomb of Christ ; whereon I
 vow'd
 That, if our Princes harken'd to my
 prayer,
 Whatever wealth I brought from that new
 world
 Should, in this old, be consecrate to lead
 A new crusade against the Saracen,
 And free the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

 Gold ? I had brought your Princes
 gold enough
 If left alone ! Being but a Genovese,
 I am handled worse than had I been a
 Moor,
 And breach'd the belting wall of Cam-
 balu,
 And given the Great Khan's palaces to
 the Moor,
 Or clutch'd the sacred crown of Pres'er
 John,
 And cast it to the Moor : but *had* I
 brought
 From Solomon's now-recover'd Ophir all
 The gold that Solomon's navies carried
 home,
 Would that have gilded *me*? Blue blood
 of Spain,
 Tho' quartering your own royal arms of
 Spain,
 I have not : blue blood and black blood
 of Spain,
 The noble and the convict of Castile,
 Howl'd me from Hispaniola ; for you
 know
 The flies at home, that ever swarm about
 And cloud the highest heads, and murmur
 down
 Truth in the distance—these outbuzz'd
 me so
 That even our prudent king, our righteous
 queen—
 I pray'd them being so calumniated
 They would commission one of weight
 and worth
 To judge between my slander'd self and
 me—
 Fonseca my main enemy at their court,
 They send me out *his* tool, Bovadilla, one
 As ignorant and impolitic as a beast—
 Blockish irreverence, brainless greed—
 who sack'd
 My dwelling, seized upon my papers,
 loosed
 My captives, feed the rebels of the crown,
 Sold the crown-farms for all but nothing,
 gave
 All but free leave for all to work the
 mines,
 Drove me and my good brothers home in
 chains,
 And gathering ruthless gold—a single
 piece
 Weigh'd nigh four thousand Castillanos
 —so
 They tell me—weigh'd him down into the
 abysm—
 The hurricane of the latitude on him fell,
 The seas of our discovering over-roll

Him and his gold ; the frailer caravel,
With what was mine, came happily to the
shore.

There was a glimmering of God's hand.

And God

Hath more than glimmer'd on me. O
my lord,

I swear to you I heard his voice between
The thunders in the black Veragua nights,
'O soul of little faith, slow to believe !
Have I not been about thee from thy
birth ?

Given thee the keys of the great Ocean-
sea ?

Set thee in light till time shall be no
more ?

Is it I who have deceived thee or the
world ?

Endure ! thou hast done so well for men,
that men

Cry out against thee : was it otherwise
With mine own Son ?'

And more than once in days
Of doubt and cloud and storm, when
drowning hope
Sank all but out of sight, I heard his
voice,

'Be not cast down. I lead thee by the
hand,

Fear not.' And I shall hear his voice
again—

I know that he has led me all my life,
I am not yet too old to work his will—
His voice again.

Still for all that, my lord,
I lying here bedridden and alone,
Cast off, put by, scouted by court and
king—

The first discoverer starves—his followers,
all

Flower into fortune—our world's way—
and I,

Without a roof that I can call mine own,
With scarce a coin to buy a meal withal,
And seeing what a door for scoundrel
scum

I open'd to the West, thro' which the lust,
Villany, violence, avarice, of your Spain
Pour'd in on all those happy naked isles—
Their kindly native princes slain or slaved,
Their wives and children Spanish concu-
bines,

Their innocent hospitalities quench'd in
blood,

Some dead of hunger, some beneath the
scourge,

Some over-labour'd, some by their own
hands,—

Yea, the dear mothers, crazing Nature,
kill

Their babies at the breast for hate of
Spain—

Ah God, the harmless people whom we
found

In Hispaniola's island-Paradise !

Who took us for the very Gods from
Heaven,

And we have sent them very fiends from
Hell ;

And I myself, myself not blameless, I
Could sometimes wish I had never led
the way.

Only the ghost of our great Catholic
Queen

Smiles on me, saying, 'Be thou com-
forted !

This creedless people will be brought to
Christ

And own the holy governance of Rome.'

But who could dream that we, who
bore the Cross

Thither, were excommunicated there,
For curbing crimes that scandalised the
Cross,

By him, the Catalonian Minorite,
Rome's Vicar in our Indies? who believe
These hard memorials of our truth to
Spain

Clung closer to us for a longer term
Than any friend of ours at Court? and
yet

Pardon—too harsh, unjust. I am rack'd
with pains.

You see that I have hung them by my
bed,
And I will have them buried in my grave.

Sir, in that flight of ages which are
God's
Own voice to justify the dead—perchance
Spain once the most chivalric race on
earth,
Spain then the mightiest, wealthiest realm
on earth,

So made by me, may seek to unbury me,
To lay me in some shrine of this old Spain,
Or in that vaster Spain I leave to Spain.
Then some one standing by my grave
will say,

'Behold the bones of Christopher
Colón'—

'Ay, but the chains, what do *they* mean
—the chains?'—

I sorrow for that kindly child of Spain
Who then will have to answer, 'These
same chains

Bound these same bones back thro' the
Atlantic sea,

Which he unchain'd for all the world to
come.'

O Queen of Heaven who seest the souls
in Hell

And purgatory, I suffer all as much
As they do—for the moment. Stay, my
son

Is here anon : my son will speak for me
Ablier than I can in these spasms that
grind

Bone against bone. You will not. One
last word.

You move about the Court, I pray you
tell

King Ferdinand who plays with me, that
one,

Whose life has been no play with him
and his

Hidalgos—shipwrecks, famines, fevers,
fights,

Mutinies, treacheries—wink'd at, and
condoned—

That I am loyal to him till the death,
And ready—tho' our Holy Catholic
Queen,

Who fain had pledged her jewels on my
first voyage,

Whose hope was mine to spread the
Catholic faith,

Who wept with me when I return'd in
chains,

Who sits beside the blessed Virgin now,
To whom I send my prayer by night and
day—

She is gone—but you will tell the King,
that I,

Rack'd as I am with gout, and wrench'd
with pains

Gain'd in the service of His Highness,
yet

Am ready to sail forth on one last voyage,
And readier, if the King would hear, to
lead

One last crusade against the Saracen,
And save the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

I suffer all as much
for the moment. Stay, my

my son will speak for me
can in these spasms that

me. You will not. One
l.

out the Court, I pray you

who plays with me, that

been no play with him

recks, famines, fevers,

heries—wink'd at, and

to him till the death,

' our Holy Catholic

edged her jewels on my

s mine to spread the

faith,

me when I return'd in

he blessed Virgin now,

my prayer by night and

you will tell the King,

with gout, and wrench'd

vice of His Highness,

orth on one last voyage,

e King would hear, to

gainst the Saracen,

Sepulchre from thrall.

Going? I am old and slighted : you
have dared

Somewhat perhaps in coming? my poor
thanks !

I am but an alien and a Genovese.

THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

(FOUNDED ON AN IRISH LEGEND.

A.D. 700.)

I.

I WAS the chief of the race—he had
stricken my father dead—

But I gather'd my fellows together, I
swore I would strike off his head.

Each of them look'd like a king, and was
noble in birth as in worth,

And each of them boasted he sprang from
the oldest race upon earth.

Each was as brave in the fight as the
bravest hero of song,

And each of them liefer had died than
have done one another a wrong.

He lived on an isle in the ocean—we
sail'd on a Friday morn—

He that had slain my father the day before
I was born.

II.

And we came to the isle in the ocean,
and there on the shore was he.

But a sudden blast blew us out and away
thro' a boundless sea.

III.

And we came to the Silent Isle that we
never had touch'd at before,

Where a silent ocean always broke on a
silent shore,

And the brooks glitter'd on in the light
without sound, and the long water-
falls

Pour'd in a thunderless plunge to the base
of the mountain walls,

And the poplar and cypress unshaken by
storm flourish'd up beyond sight,

And the pine shot aloft from the crag to
an unbelievable height,

And high in the heaven above it there
flicker'd a songless lark,

And the cock couldn't crow, and the bull
couldn't low, and the dog couldn't
bark.

And round it we went, and thro' it, but
never a murmur, a breath—

It was all of it fair as life, it was all of it
quiet as death,

And we hated the beautiful Isle, for
whenever we strove to speak

Our voices were thinner and fainter than
any flittermouse-shriek ;

And the men that were mighty of tongue
and could raise such a battle-cry

That a hundred who heard it would rush
on a thousand lances and die—

O they to be dumb'd by the charm !—so
fluster'd with anger were they

They almost fell on each other ; but after
we sail'd away.

IV.

And we came to the Isle of Shouting, we
landed, a score of wild birds

Cried from the topmost summit with
human voices and words ;

Once in an hour they cried, and whenever
their voices peal'd

The steer fell down at the plow and the
harvest died from the field,

And the men dropt dead in the valleys
and half of the cattle went lame,

And the roof sank in on the hearth, and
the dwelling broke into flame ;

And the shouting of these wild birds ran
into the hearts of my crew,

Till they shouted along with the shouting
and seized one another and slew ;

But I drew them the one from the other ;
 I saw that we could not stay,
 And we left the dead to the birds and we
 sail'd with our wounded away.

v.

And we came to the Isle of Flowers :
 their breath met us out on the seas,
 For the Spring and the middle Summer
 sat each on the lap of the breeze ;
 And the red passion-flower to the cliffs,
 and the dark-blue clematis, clung,
 And starr'd with a myriad blossom the
 long convolvulus hung ;
 And the topmost spire of the mountain
 was lilies in lieu of snow,
 And the lilies like glaciers winded down,
 running out below
 Thro' the fire of the tulip and poppy, the
 blaze of gorse, and the blush
 Of millions of roses that sprang without
 leaf or a thorn from the bush ;
 And the whole isle-side flashing down
 from the peak without ever a tree
 Swept like a torrent of gems from the
 sky to the blue of the sea ;
 And we roll'd upon capes of crocus and
 vaunted our kith and our kin,
 And we wallow'd in beds of lilies, and
 chanted the triumph of Finn,
 Till each like a golden image was
 pollen'd from head to feet
 And each was as dry as a cricket, with
 thirst in the middle-day heat.
 Blossom and blossom, and promise of
 blossom, but never a fruit !
 And we hated the Flowering Isle, as we
 hated the isle that was mute,
 And we tore up the flowers by the million
 and flung them in bight and bay,
 And we left but a naked rock, and in
 anger we sail'd away.

vi.

And we came to the Isle of Fruits : all
 round from the cliffs and the capes,
 Purple or amber, dangled a hundred
 fathoms of grapes,
 And the warm melon lay like a little sun
 on the tawny sand,
 And the fig ran up from the beach and
 rioted over the land,
 And the mountain arose like a jewell'd
 throne thro' the fragrant air,
 Glowing with all-colour'd plums and with
 golden masses of pear,
 And the crimson and scarlet of berries
 that flamed upon bine and vine,
 But in every berry and fruit was the
 poisonous pleasure of wine ;
 And the peak of the mountain was apples,
 the hugest that ever were seen,
 And they prest, as they grew, on each other,
 with hardly a leaflet between,
 And all of them redder than rosiest health
 or than utterest shame,
 And setting, when Even descended, the
 very sunset aflame ;
 And we stay'd three days, and we gorged
 and we madden'd, till every one
 drew
 His sword on his fellow to slay him, and
 ever they struck and they slew ;
 And myself, I had eaten but sparingly, and
 fought till I sunder'd the fray,
 Then I bad them remember my father's
 death, and we sail'd away.

vii.

And we came to the Isle of Fire : we were
 lured by the light from afar,
 For the peak sent up one league of fire
 to the Northern Star ;
 Lured by the glare and the blare, but
 scarcely could stand upright,

VI.

to the Isle of Fruits : all
 om the cliffs and the capes,
 er, dangled a hundred
 of grapes,
 melon lay like a little sun
 awny sand,
 up from the beach and
 er the land,
 ain arose like a jewell'd
 ro' the fragrant air,
 l-colour'd plums and with
 asses of pear,
 on and scarlet of berries
 ed upon bine and vine,
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 s pleasure of wine ;
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 en Even descended, the
 et aflame ;
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 madden'd, till every one

s fellow to slay him, and
 struck and they slew ;
 d eaten but sparingly, and
 I sunder'd the fray,
 n remember my father's
 d we sail'd away.

VII.

the Isle of Fire : we were
 the light from afar,
 t up one league of fire
 thern Star ;
 are and the blare, but
 ould stand upright,

THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

731

For the whole isle shudder'd and shook
 like a man in a mortal affright ;
 We were giddy besides with the fruits we
 had gorged, and so crazed that at
 last

There were some leap'd into the fire ;
 and away we sail'd, and we past
 Over that undersea isle, where the water
 is clearer than air :

Down we look'd : what a garden ! O
 bliss, what a Paradise there !

Towers of a happier time, low down in
 a rainbow deep

Silent palaces, quiet fields of eternal
 sleep !

And three of the gentlest and best of my
 people, whate'er I could say,

Plunged head down in the sea, and the
 Paradise trembled away.

VIII.

And we came to the Bounteous Isle, where
 the heavens lean low on the land,
 And ever at dawn from the cloud glitter'd
 o'er us a sunbright hand,

Then it open'd and dropt at the side of
 each man, as he rose from his rest,
 Bread enough for his need till the labour-
 less day dipt under the West ;

And we wander'd about it and thro' it.
 O never was time so good !

And we sang of the triumphs of Finn, and
 the boast of our ancient blood,

And we gazed at the wandering wave as
 we sat by the gurgle of springs,

And we chanted the songs of the Bards
 and the glories of fairy kings ;

But at length we began to be weary, to
 sigh, and to stretch and yawn,

Till we hated the Bounteous Isle and the
 sunbright hand of the dawn,

For there was not an enemy near, but the
 whole green Isle was our own,

And we took to playing at ball, and we
 took to throwing the stone,
 And we took to playing at battle, but
 that was a perilous play,
 For the passion of battle was in us, we
 slew and we sail'd away.

IX.

And we came to the Isle of Witches and
 heard their musical cry—

'Come to us, O come. come' in the
 stormy red of a sky

Dashing the fires and the shadows of
 dawn on the beautiful shapes,

For a wild witch naked as heaven stood
 on each of the loftiest capes,

And a hundred ranged on the rock like
 white sea-birds in a row,

And a hundred gamboll'd and pranced
 on the wrecks in the sand below,

And a hundred splash'd from the ledges,
 and bosom'd the burst of the spray,

But I knew we should fall on each other,
 and hastily sail'd away.

X.

And we came in an evil time to the Isle
 of the Double Towers,

One was of smooth-cut stone, one carved
 all over with flowers,

But an earthquake always moved in the
 hollows under the dells,

And they shock'd on each other and butted
 each other with clashing of bells,

And the daws flew out of the Towers and
 jangled and wrangled in vain,

And the clash and boom of the bells
 rang into the heart and the brain,

Till the passion of battle was on us, and
 all took sides with the Towers,

There were some for the clean-cut stone,
 there were more for the carven
 flowers,

And the wrathful thunder of God peal'd
 .over us all the day,
 For the one half slew the other, and after
 we sail'd away.

XI.

And we came to the Isle of a Saint who
 had sail'd with St. Brendan of yore,
 He had lived ever since on the Isle and
 his winters were fifteen score,
 And his voice was low as from other
 worlds, and his eyes were sweet,
 And his white hair sank to his heels and
 his white beard fell to his feet,
 And he spake to me, 'O Maeldune, let
 be this purpose of thine !
 Remember the words of the Lord when
 he told us "Vengeance is mine !"
 His fathers have slain thy fathers in war
 or in single strife,
 Thy fathers have slain his fathers, each
 taken a life for a life,
 Thy father had slain his father, how long
 shall the murder last ?
 Go back to the Isle of Finn and suffer
 the Past to be Past.'
 And we kiss'd the fringe of his beard and
 we pray'd as we heard him pray,
 And the Holy man he assoil'd us, and
 sadly we sail'd away.

XII.

And we came to the Isle we were blown
 from, and there on the shore was he,
 The man that had slain my father. I
 saw him and let him be.
 O weary was I of the travel, the trouble,
 the strife and the sin,
 When I landed again, with a tithe of my
 men, on the Isle of Finn.

DE PROFUNDIS:

THE TWO GREETINGS.

I.

OUT of the deep, my child, out of the
 deep.

Where all that was to be, in all that was,
 Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the vast
 Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddy
 light—

Out of the deep, my child, out of the
 deep,

Thro' all this changing world of change-
 less law,

And every phase of ever-heightening life,
 And nine long months of antenatal gloom,
 With this last moon, this crescent—her
 dark orb

Touch'd with earth's light—thou comest,
 darling boy ;

Our own ; a babe in lineament and limb
 Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man ;
 Whose face and form are hers and mine
 in one,

Indissolubly married like our love ;
 Live, and be happy in thyself, and serve
 This mortal race thy kin so well, that men
 May bless thee as we bless thee, O young
 life

Breaking with laughter from the dark ;
 and may

The fated channel where thy motion lives
 Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy
 course

Along the years of haste and random
 youth

Unshatter'd ; then full-current thro' full
 man ;

And last in kindly curves, with gentlest
 fall,

By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,
 To that last deep where we and thou are
 still.

PROFUNDIS:

TWO GREETINGS.

I.

ep, my child, out of the
was to be, in all that was,
million æons thro' the vast
of multitudinous-eddy

ep, my child, out of the

changing world of change-

e of ever-heightening life,
months of antenatal gloom,
moon, this crescent—her

arth's light—thou comest,
boy;

be in lineament and limb
phet of the perfect man;
form are hers and mine

ried like our love;
ppy in thyself, and serve
thy kin so well, that men
s we bless thee, O young

laughter from the dark;

el where thy motion lives
y shaped, and sway thy

s of haste and random

en full-current thro' full

ly curves, with gentlest

s slowly-dying power,
o where we and thou are

II.

I.

OUT of the deep, my child, out of the
deep,

From that great deep, before our world
begins,

Whereon the Spirit of God moves as he
will—

Out of the deep, my child, out of the
deep,

From that true world within the world
we see,

Whereof our world is but the bounding
shore—

Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,
With this ninth moon, that sends the
hidden sun

Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling
boy.

II.

For in the world, which is not ours, They
said

'Let us make man' and that which
should be man,

From that one light no man can look upon,
Drew to this shore lit by the suns and
moons

And all the shadows. O dear Spirit
half-lost

In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign
That thou art thou—who wailest being
born

And banish'd into mystery, and the pain
Of this divisible-indivisible world
Among the numerable-innumerable
Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite
space

In finite-infinite Time—our mortal veil
And shatter'd phantom of that infinite
One,

Who made thee unconceivably Thyself

Out of His whole World-self and all in
all—

Live thou! and of the grain and husk,
the grape

And ivyberry, choose; and still depart
From death to death thro' life and life,
and find

Nearer and ever nearer Him, who
wrought

Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,
But this main-miracle, that thou art thou,
With power on thine own act and on the
world.

THE HUMAN CRY.

I.

HALLOWED be Thy name—Halleluia!—
Infinite Ideality!

Immeasurable Reality!

Infinite Personality!

Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluia!

II.

We feel we are nothing—for all is Thou
and in Thee;

We feel we are something—that also has
come from Thee;

We know we are nothing—but Thou wilt
help us to be.

Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluia!

PREFATORY SONNET

TO THE 'NINETEENTH CENTURY.'

THOSE that of late had fled far and fast
To touch all shores, now leaving to the
skill

Of others their old craft seaworthy still,
Have charter'd this; where, mindful of
the past,

Our true co-mates regather round the
mast;

Of diverse tongue, but with a common
will

Here, in this roaring moon of daffodil
And crocus, to put forth and brave the
blast ;

For some, descending from the sacred
peak

Of hoar high-templed Faith, have leagued
again

Their lot with ours to rove the world
about ;

And some are wilder comrades, sworn to
seek

If any golden harbour be for men
In seas of Death and sunless gulfs of
Doubt.

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOK-
FIELD.

BROOKS, for they call'd you so that knew
you best,

Old Brooks, who loved so well to mouth
my rhymes,

How oft we two have heard St. Mary's
chimes !

How oft the Cantab supper, host and
guest,

Would echo helpless laughter to your
jest !

How oft with him we paced that walk of
limes,

Him, the lost light of those dawn-golden
times,

Who loved you well ! Now both are gone
to rest.

Yon man of humorous melancholy mark,
Dead of some inward agony—is it so ?

Our kindlier, trustier Jaques, past away !
I cannot laud this life, it looks so dark :

Σκιάς ὕψος—dream of a shadow, go—
God' bless you. I shall join you in a
day.

MONTENEGRO.

THEY rose to where their sovran eagle
sails,

They kept their faith, their freedom, on
the height,

Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day and
night

Against the Turk ; whose inroad nowhere
scales

Their headlong passes, but his footstep
fails,

And red with blood the Crescent reels
from fight

Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone
fight

By thousands down the crags and thro'
the vales.

O smallest among peoples ! rough rock-
throne

Of Freedom ! warriors beating back the
swarm

Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,
Great Tsernogora ! never since thine own

Black ridges drew the cloud and brake
the storm

Has breathed a race of mightier moun-
taineers.

TO VICTOR HUGO.

VICTOR in Drama, Victor in Romance,
Cloud-weaver of phantasmal hopes and
fears,

French of the French, and Lord of human
tears ;

Child-lover ; Bard whose fame-lit laurels
glance

Darkening the wreaths of all that would
advance,

Beyond our strait, their claim to be thy
peers ;

ONTENEGRO.

where their sovran eagle
 ir faith, their freedom, on
 ht,
 savage, arm'd by day and
 rk; whose inroad nowhere
 g passes, but his footstep
 blood the Crescent reels
 ht
 untless hundreds, in prone
 own the crags and thro'
 .
 ng peoples! rough rock-
 warriors beating back the
 m for five hundred years,
 ra! never since thine own
 ew the cloud and brake
 .
 race of mightier moun-

VICTOR HUGO.

na, Victor in Romance,
 f phantasmal hopes and
 ench, and Lord of human
 rd whose fame-lit laurels
 reaths of all that would
 t, their claim to be thy

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

735

Weird Titan by thy winter weight of years
 As yet unbroken, Stormy voice of France!
 Who dost not love our England—so they
 say;
 I know not—England, France, all man
 to be

Will make one people ere man's race be
 run:
 And I, desiring that diviner day,
 Yield thee full thanks for thy full courtesy
 To younger England in the boy my son.

TRANSLATIONS, ETC.

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

Constantinus, King of the Scots, after having
 sworn allegiance to Athelstan, allied himself with
 the Danes of Ireland under Anlaf, and invading
 England, was defeated by Athelstan and his
 brother Edmund with great slaughter at Brunan-
 burh in the year 937.

I.

¹ ATHELSTAN King,
 Lord among Earls,
 Bracelet-bestower and
 Baron of Barons,
 He with his brother,
 Edmund Atheling,
 Gaining a lifelong
 Glory in battle,
 Slew with the sword-edge
 There by Brunanburh,
 Brake the shield-wall,
 Hew'd the lindenwood,²
 Hack'd the battleshield,
 Sons of Edward with hammer'd brands.

II.

Theirs was a greatness
 Got from their Grandsires—
 Theirs that so often in
 Strife with their enemies
 Struck for their hoards and their hearths
 and their homes.

¹ I have more or less availed myself of my
 son's prose translation of this poem in the *Con-
 temporary Review* (November 1876).

² Shields of lindenwood.

III.

Bow'd the spoiler,
 Bent the Scotsman,
 Fell the shipcrews
 Doom'd to the death.
 All the field with blood of the fighters
 Flow'd, from when first the great
 Sun-star of morningtide,
 Lamp of the Lord God
 Lord everlasting,
 Glode over earth till the glorious creature
 Sunk to his setting.

IV.

There lay many a man
 Marr'd by the javelin,
 Men of the Northland
 Shot over shield.
 There was the Scotsman
 Weary of war.

V.

We the West-Saxons,
 Long as the daylight
 Lasted, in companies
 Troubled the track of the host that we
 hated,
 Grimly with swords that were sharp from
 the grindstone,
 Fiercely we hack'd at the flyers before
 us.

VI.

Mighty the Mercian,
 Hard was his hand-play,
 Sparing not any of
 Those that with Anlaf,
 Warriors over the
 Weltering waters
 Borne in the bark's-bosom,
 Drew to this island,
 Doom'd to the death.

VII.

Five young kings put asleep by the sword-
 stroke,
 Seven strong Earls of the army of Anlaf
 Fell on the war-field, numberless numbers,
 Shipmen and Scotsmen.

VIII.

Then the Norse leader,
 Dire was his need of it,
 Few were his following,
 Fled to his warship :
 Fleeted his vessel to sea with the king in it,
 Saving his life on the fallow flood.

IX.

Also the crafty one,
 Constantinus,
 Crept to his North again,
 Hoar-headed hero !

X.

Slender reason had
He to be proud of
 The welcome of war-knives—
 He that was reft of his
 Folk and his friends that had
 Fallen in conflict,
 Leaving his son too
 Lost in the carnage,
 Mangled to morsels,
 A youngster in war !

XI.

Slender reason had
He to be glad of
 The clash of the war-glaive—
 Traitor and trickster
 And spurner of treaties—
 He nor had Anlaf
 With armies so broken
 A reason for bragging
 That they had the better
 In perils of battle
 On places of slaughter—
 The struggle of standards,
 The rush of the javelins,
 The crash of the charges,¹
 The wielding of weapons—
 The play that they play'd with
 The children of Edward.

XII.

Then with their nail'd prows
 Parted the Norsemen, a
 Blood-redden'd relic of
 Javelins over
 The jarring breaker, the deep-
 sea billow,
 Shaping their way toward Dy-
 fen² again,
 Shamed in their souls.

XIII.

Also the brethren,
 King and Atheling,
 Each in his glory,
 Went to his own in his own West-Saxon-
 land,
 Glad of the war.

XIV.

Many a carcase they left to be carrion,
 Many a livid one, many a sallow-skin—

¹ Lit. 'the gathering of men.' ² Dublin.

Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear it,
and
Left for the horny-nibb'd raven to rend
it, and
Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to
gorge it, and
That gray beast, the wolf of the weald.

XV.

Never had huger
Slaughter of heroes
Slain by the sword-edge—
Such as old writers
Have writ of in histories—
Hapt in this isle, since
Up from the East hither
Saxon and Angle from
Over the broad billow
Broke into Britain with
Haughty war-workers who
Harried the Welshman, when
Earls that were lured by the
Hunger of glory gat
Hold of the land.

ACHILLES OVER THE TRENCH.

ILIAD, XVIII. 202.

So saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away.
Then rose Achilles dear to Zeus; and
round
The warrior's puissant shoulders Pallas
flung
Her fringed ægis, and around his head
The glorious goddess wreath'd a golden
cloud,
And from it lighted an all-shining flame.
As when a smoke from a city goes to
heaven
Far off from out an island girt by foes,
All day the men contend in grievous
war

From their own city, but with set of
sun
Their fires flame thickly, and aloft the
glare
Flies streaming, if perchance the neigh-
bours round
May see, and sail to help them in the
war;
So from his head the splendour went to
heaven.
From wall to dyke he stept, he stood,
nor join'd
The Achæans—honouring his wise
mother's word—
There standing, shouted, and Pallas far
away
Call'd; and a boundless panic shook the
foe.
For like the clear voice when a trumpet
shrills,
Blown by the fierce beleaguers of a
town,
So rang the clear voice of Æakidēs;
And when the brazen cry of Æakidēs
Was heard among the Trojans, all their
hearts
Were troubled, and the full-maned horses
whirl'd
The chariots backward, knowing griefs
at hand;
And sheer-astounded were the charioteers
To see the dread, unweariable fire
That always o'er the great Peleion's
head
Burn'd, for the bright-eyed goddess made
it burn.
Thrice from the dyke he sent his mighty
shout,
Thrice backward reel'd the Trojans and
allies;
And there and then twelve of their
noblest died
Among their spears and chariots.

XI.

reason had
e glad of
sh of the war-glaive—
and trickster
rner of treaties—
had Anlaf
mies so broken
a for bragging
y had the better
of battle
es of slaughter—
ggle of standards,
a of the javelins,
h of the charges,
ding of weapons—
that they play'd with
ren of Edward.

XII.

h their nail'd prows
e Norsemen, a
lden'd relie of
over
ng breaker, the deep-
a billow,
their way toward Dy-
n^a again,
n their souls.

XIII.

brethren,
Atheling,
is glory,
his own West-Saxon-
ue war.

XIV.

y left to be carrion,
many a swallow-skin—

of men.^a ^a Dublin.

*TO THE PRINCESS FEDERICA
ON HER MARRIAGE.*

O YOU that were eyes and light to the
King till he past away
From the darkness of life—
He saw not his daughter—he blest her :
the blind King sees you to-day,
He blesses the wife.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.
ON THE CENOTAPH IN WESTMINSTER
ABBEY.

NOT here ! the white North has thy
bones ; and thou,
Heroic sailor-soul,
Art passing on ~~thine~~ happier voyage now
Toward no earthly pole.

TO DANTE.

(WRITTEN AT REQUEST OF THE
FLORENTINES.)

KING, that hast reign'd six hundred
years, and grown
In power, and ever growest, since thine
own
Fair Florence honouring thy nativity,
Thy Florence now the crown of Italy,
Hath sought the tribute of a verse from
me,
I, wearing but the garland of a day,
Cast at thy feet one flower that fades
away.

—TO DANTE.

TO DANTE.

N AT REQUEST OF THE
FLORENTINES.)

hast reign'd six hundred
and grown
d ever growest, since thine

e honouring thy nativity,
e now the crown of Italy,
the tribute of a verse from

ut the garland of a day,
feet one flower that fades

Syl
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