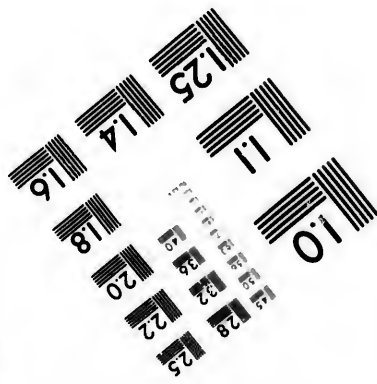
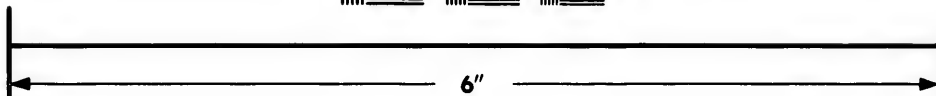
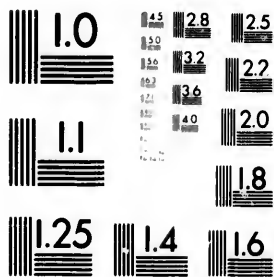


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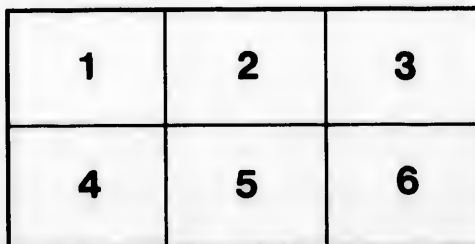
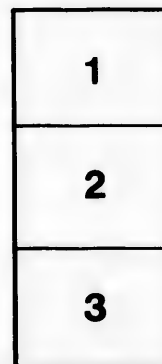
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# POEMS.

BY  
GEORGE MURRAY.



NEW YORK.

1892.

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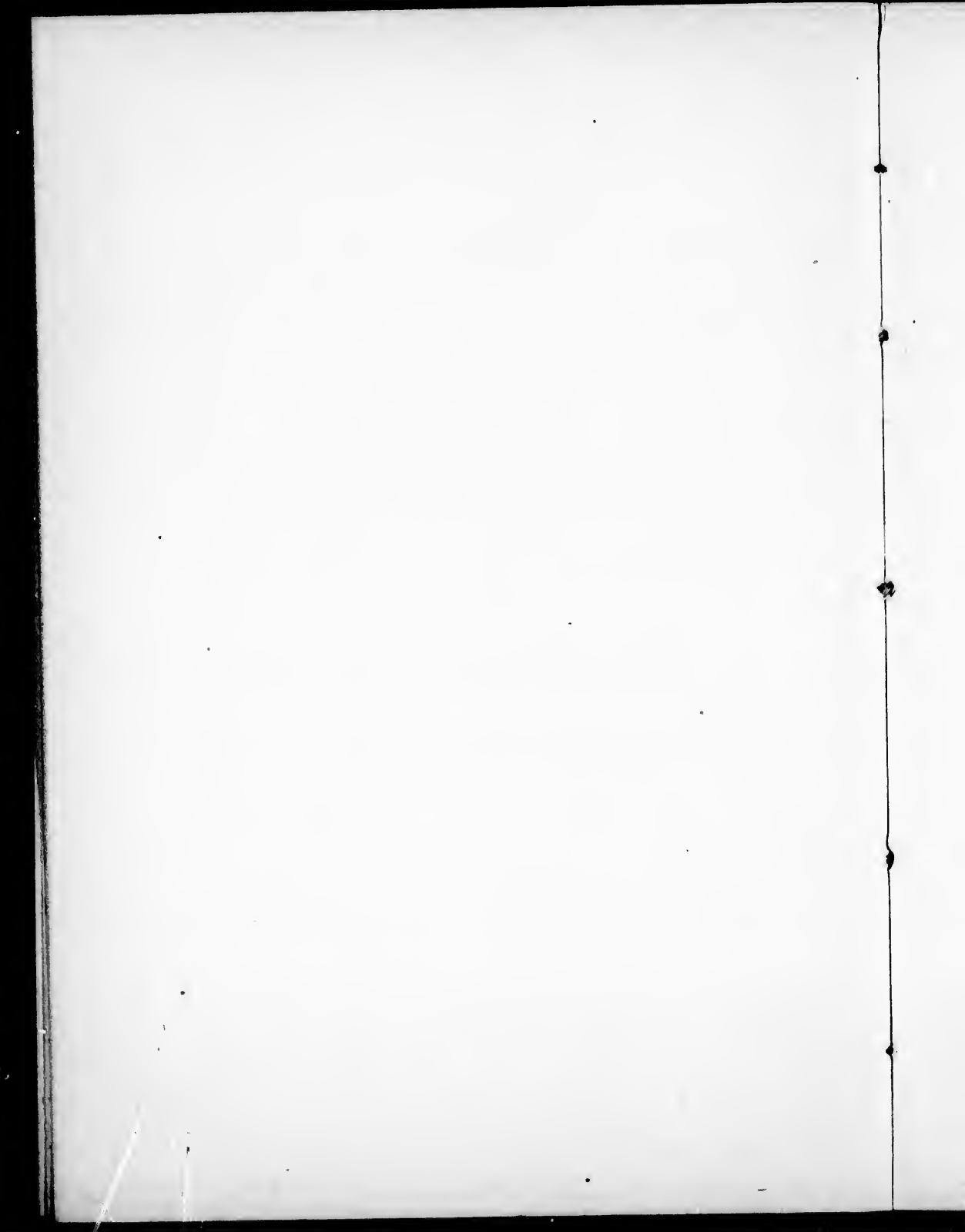
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# POEMS.

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## I. THE CHORISTER.

'Twas Easter morn. The sanctuary long  
Had ope'd its doors to the fast ent'ring throng,  
Which soon had filled each space where seat was  
found,

And e'en stood ranged, deep-row'd, expectant round.  
Magnificent assembly! Varied, tho',  
Its aspect was, as it was grand in show.  
For congregated there were gathered all  
Who in that day saw Freedom's broken thrall;  
And many more beside, of every heart,  
Some to take earnest and some trivial part;  
For as each one the season's gifts did price,  
Each came with hearts attuned to sacrifice:  
Gay Pleasure's priestesses and Fashion's fawn,  
Who only blessed the day because withdrawn  
Then was dull Lent's drear mask of penitence,  
Which forty fretful days the radiance  
Of their loved deities had hid from view;  
Enchanting, haughty, sweeping to their pew,  
Came Beauty, Pride and Wealth, to whom the time  
Seemed one for joy because spring's gentler clime,  
Succeeding sombre winter, ope'd fresh ways,

By decking out in all soft, rich arrays,  
To wake new rapture, envyings and awe;  
While back in shadows, scarce within the door,  
Stood those who this dark life's worst burdens bear,—  
Sorrow and want,—the poor. What did *they* there?  
Surely to them the day brought no great joy!  
It freed them not from poverty's annoy,  
Nor lifted sorrow's burden from their breasts,  
Save, 'chance, that while the hour they stood as guests  
In that high house, some gentler spirit of peace—  
Instilled with music and perfumes that cease  
Not to rise from the trembling organ reed  
And the lillies and sweet blooms rich banked, and  
spread

Round chancel and round fane—with subtle charm,  
Shed o'er their troubled souls a transient calm.  
There men and youths, from pleasure brief unbound,  
Passed whispered jests or light-smiled greetings  
round;

There, too, was sneer-lipped Infidelity,  
Gazing upon the scene with faithless eye  
And smile of scorn, forgetful that his own  
High-patterned life is possible alone  
Because the light of God's benignant law  
Through ages past hath drawn, and still doth draw,  
This moth-eyed and weak world into its rays,  
Lighting the paths to heaven-leading ways;  
Forgetting that his wisdom hath upgrown  
From seed that in dim historied time was sown,  
In patience planted, by lives for God lived firm.  
These seeds' rare fruits, of century-ripened term,  
He plucks, and on their health imbibed grown strong,

Employs health's restless strength to find whence  
sprung

Wide virtue's tree whose bough doth nourish him.  
With human memory weak and reason dim—  
Which are themselves faulty reflections faint  
From that One Source of Light with which acquaint  
He strives with crooked vanity to be—  
He, with eye distance-dimmed, essays to see,  
And seeing, mark and trace with sure descry,  
Amid the foliage thick-webbed on high,  
The proper stem and twig and bough and branch,  
Back to the Root of All from which all launch.  
So some do seek ; but while the tangled twine  
Aloft, with 'maged sight and judgment fine,  
They thread,—following false lines seeming true,  
And curving courses, which, while they pursue,  
Seem straight,—their unwatched feet, with faulty stride,  
And many a 'wildered slip and stumble wide,  
Lead them through sloughs, 'gainst thorn and bruising  
rock,

Bringing them toil and cruel stab and shock,  
Till, line all gone, weary, despairing, sick,  
Lost in the forest of their fancies thick,  
They hopeless die ; and some of hardier mind,  
But wiser none, when they at last do find  
Their search, keen led with all the trusted light  
Of learning's lamp, with logic'd step aright  
Fruitless to follow virtue through time's shroud,  
Turn in presumptuousness of spirit, proud  
In man's paltry knowledge of five thousand years,  
And God and Heaven, and all the healthy fears  
And blessed hopes thereto connect, abjure ;

Declaring that what good doth now inure  
To child of man, spontaneous did spring,  
Was fostered, and now fruits in that base ring  
Of soil,—which of itself ne'er bore but weeds  
Of folly, or the rank and polson beads  
Of evil's choking vine,—the human heart.  
Ah ! ye vain fools who take such haughty part  
For majesty of man ! Why do ye rend  
From him his attribute of noblest bend ;  
And turn on him your ignorant, vandal shears,  
Clipping his bough of the best bloom it bears,  
Pure Faith ?—faith, whose essence, whose fairest flower  
Is sweet belief past human sight's poor power :  
When Reason faints, Trust bright-eyed still on tower.  
But oh, my Muse, return to gentler themes !  
Sure some beneath those rainbow-tinctured beams  
That crept and blazed through yon bright sculptured  
glass,  
Sure some within those holy doors did pass  
With proper mind ?—sweet maids of simple way,  
And boys free, fresh and fair as morn in May ;  
The new made widow seeking in her grief  
For some dim understood, far off relief ;  
Gray men, still toiled-tossed, longing still for rest ;  
These, like the poor, came with half ready breast ;  
And last—but oh, how sadly few were they !  
Were those who came to worship and to pray ;  
Whose gentle mien and humble, reverent care,  
Seemed to ray out a peace upon the air,  
A tranquil breath, within whose circle small  
A quiet hush dropped softly upon all.  
But list ! that hush is spreading, and still spreads !

The rustling multitude, like barley heads  
Kissed by day's dying breath, did shift and bow,  
Trembled, and then hung motionless ; for now,  
Commencing faint in distant alcoves dim,  
Rose the first notes of the procession hymn.  
Soft, sweet, yet clear they came ; soft as a bell  
Sounding on summer eve from some far dell  
Where peaceful hamlet lies ; clear as a horn  
Heard wound o'er Alpine vale at wake of morn ;  
Sweet as the bird of sorrow's tend'rest note,  
When, pressing to the thorn her gentle throat,  
She to the stars warbles her song of woe.  
So woke the strains ; but they did ever grow  
And swell, falling but louder yet to prove,  
As with slow march th' advancing choir did move  
Through recess'd room and secret cell, until  
The cloister opened, and straightway did fill  
The whole grand lofty square such flood of song  
As our dull souls imagine that bright throng  
Struck forth, which hov'ring o'er Judea's plain,  
The night-bound shepherds charmed. On trod the  
train,

Their robes of sabled snow brushing the crowd  
Which rearward pressed upon the aisles, while loud  
And louder, full of every grand and rich  
Involvement of sweet sound, with every pitch  
Of harmony's infinite subtleties  
Which Orpheus-taught musician, from the keys  
And pipes of organ, from loud tubes of brass,  
From bow-swept strings, the silver flute's soft pass,  
And the vocal reed of man, could skillful weld,—  
With such rich range of music's wealth upswelled

The mighty anthem, a wave of melody,  
A rolling torrent of tune, a grand, a free,  
A glorious peal of praise. Of praise? That form  
And fine array of pomp, that finer storm  
Of harmony,—was all that praise? Ah no,  
'Twas all a mockery! 'Twas all a show,  
Not for God's glory, but for man's delight!  
How could that hymn ascend to heaven's height  
If no hearts bore it there? And oh, alas!  
How many hearts, in all that human mass,  
Turned heavenward that anthem to upraise?  
(And if the heart doth not no lip can praise).  
For those who sat with silent breathèd lungs,  
But made a mock of praise through other's tongues;  
And those who sang,—ah! listless seemèd their eyes,  
Steps dull, and all their manner otherwise  
Than spirit held! And why not so? They did  
A duty well; and if at their trained bid,  
Music bestowed her every precious gift,  
'Twas task enough. Then to assume and lift  
Those strains with soulful service to heaven's gate,  
Were meet for those who soft in cushions sate.  
But they, poor victims of a hungry pride,  
A flattered ear, a love of ease allied  
To laziness, or aught that hobbles man,  
Teth'ring his powers in an oft' cropped span,  
Each to his little clayey idol clung,  
Nor sought to rise to free those notes that rung  
In lingering echoes round the gilded roof,  
Waiting with heaven-bound hearts to wing aloof—  
Waiting the chariots that never came.  
But stay, my hasty mind! thine is the blame

Of those who, stubborn bent on censure, do,  
In blaming many, o'er look the noble few.  
How knowest thou but that thy travelling sight,  
In that great throng did miss the secret flight  
Of some good hearts?—for ever noblest good  
Doth hide her head 'neath secrecy's large hood.  
Perchance that very robed, melodius line  
Of singers did contain some natures fine  
With hearts too noble from their tongues to part ;—  
For turn of manners points not every heart.  
Yea, e'en among the foremost of the fore,  
Where no just eye could ever have passed o'er  
And failed to notice him, there stepped a youth,  
A boy of rosy years, who, if forsooth  
Eye ever spake or poised head did hint,  
Was spirited above the common tint.  
His brow and reverent eyes were raised to heaven,  
His useless, well con'd print was never given  
A glance, but hung loose-claspéd by his side ;  
His soul gave motion to his lips, their tide  
Of sweetness having that full, tender reach  
Of sympathy which only souls can teach.  
Ah, 'twas a sight no stern censorious frown  
Dare wrinkle on ! 'Twould draw joy's bright tears  
down  
From smiling angels' eyes ! But oh ! the sound,  
When Silence laid her deadening finger round  
On voice and instrument, till, company  
By company and chord by chord, did die  
To dumbness all their notes, save his alone !  
Ah, then, and only then, was full made known  
Their single loveliness : e'en as the lark,



Singing to coax the bright sun from his dark  
House of clouds when the June shower is past,  
But yet while still upon the sinking blast  
The remnant thunders roll, cannot be heard  
In all the music her sweet voice hath stirred,  
Till heaven's tremendous symphony is hushed.  
Thus, when to silence that great song was crushed,  
The lad's voice rose, exquisite in relief  
Upon the stillness. Ah! if ever grief  
Could enter heaven, then would it have come in,  
Led by that strongest, smallest of all sin—  
That bland and smooth lieutenant Satan sends  
When other deputies, to gain his ends  
Of evil, all have failed—the subtle, sly,  
Insidious envy; for the hosts on high,  
That faultless, tireless celestial choir,  
Might well have grieved, envying earth such fire  
And spirit of true song as that young voice  
Poured richly forth;—not that it was more choice  
In tone, sweeter in accent, or more clear  
Than song that many a mortal tongue could rear;  
Yet in each note such tenderness did dwell,  
As forced the ear to hark with honeyed spell,  
While every word such freight of feeling bore,  
As thrilled the heart and left it yearning sore  
Within itself for loftier nobleness.  
Such magic it did hold that it could dress  
With beauteous images the dullest brain  
That heard; could ease of half its guilty pain  
The blackest heart: and in the arctic soul  
Could cause love's sun to rise again and roll  
The icy fogs of selfishness away,

Thaw mercy's spring and make its waters play  
In generous surfeit o'er its melting cup,  
And at each other virtue's roots warm up  
The sap of life once more, making them all,  
From charity's great oak, towering tall,  
To the sweet violet of pity, bloom  
Into full loveliness and sweet perfume,  
Filling a soul, once waste, with verdure rare ;  
Turning Sahara into Eden fair.  
Sure these were wonders, wondrous wonders ! Yet,  
Like many a seeming marvel that doth set  
Earth's wise to vainly beat high heaven o'er  
To find its cause, a cause which at the door  
Of their own vision plain in view doth lie—  
Too plain, alas, for note of learned eye !—  
They were not wrought by the mysterions touch  
Of any mighty power divine ; not such  
Their origin ; but their creation came  
From cause which no divinity could claim,  
Unless divineness lies in rarity,  
And whose best might was in simplicity :  
This was the cause of all, and this alone—  
A human heart and human soul at one ;  
For such a heart that young child's breast did bear,  
And such a soul was dwelling also there.  
Sweet child ! Sign of promise, emblem of hope  
For future man, of all his strife the scope  
And final goal ! God's steward upon earth !  
Would that thy song's great stream had had a girth  
Wide as this whirling globe's ; a life and motion  
Deathless and ceaseless as the beat of ocean !  
So might the lips of every human ear

Be ever plunged deep within its clear,  
Life-giving waters, drinking in their strength,  
Till every heart should feel along the length  
Of all its arteries and veins the thrill  
Of purging power ; feel the fresh blood fill  
Each scummed and reeking marsh and stagnant pool,  
Before its flushing torrent, sweet and cool,  
Sweeping their filth and heating poisons out,  
Making each alley, duct and channel spout  
With sanguine streams full, healthy, rich and bright  
As the swift rills, that, 'neath the dazzling light  
Of June's unclouded sun and blue heaven's steeps,  
Dart from their parent springs' green, moss-lined deeps ;  
Making the heart itself all undefiled,  
And pulsing pure as heart of little child.  
Then might at last man, finished, perfect, creep  
From his outgrown cocoon, his weary sleep  
In wisdom blind and blinder love complete,  
And in the perfect love, whose two-fold seat  
Would be within the heart and in the soul,  
Making concordant peace in both, a whole  
From what were former warring parts, commence  
His happy life ; his fears and griefs fled hence ;  
His long, self-waged rebellion at an end ;  
Himself in peace unto himself surrender,  
His own arch foe no more, but his own friend.

## 2. THE YOUNG HUNTER AND THE FAWN.

Far in a wide and silent forest's shade,  
Upon a thick and fragrant bed of moss,  
Whose thousand tiny, sweet and tangled flowers  
Were stained with blood, that from its wounded breast  
Did ebb away, a gentle faun did lie;  
And from its quivering lips and panting side,  
Its short and painful breath came gasping forth,  
Blowing sweet incense soft upon the palm  
Of a young lad, who, in his tender hand,  
Bore up upon his lap its drooping head,—  
The author and the pitier of its plight.  
For 'twas that hand that but a space before  
Had loosed the deadly dart into that breast  
Which now lay throbbing 'neath his eye. And yet  
'Twas not a wanton hand or cruel eye  
That there did kneel; for one in misty dews  
Of sweet compassion had dimmed its wonted light,  
The while the other from the unslung horn  
Had cast its deadly charges to the wind,  
And at some sought out spring its hollow curves  
Had filled with water cool, the which it now  
Unto that bleeding breast did softly lave.  
And while he thus did minister, his tongue,  
A melancholy sadness sitting there,  
Did gently thus the double office do  
Of penitent and mourner: "Thou sweet child,

Thou dumb infant of the wood! Alas,  
Poor hapless animal, that life so young,  
So free, so shy, so fragile as thine own,  
Should be so rudely spent! 'Tis pity great,  
That here, where Nature doth her store-house make  
For all her peace and quiet,—even here  
Must busy man intrude, and with his coming  
Bring pain and woe where neither was before.  
But yet I am not all without defence:  
Let those faint, drooping ears hear my poor cause.—  
Hear with charity, with mercy judge;  
For charity, wide as it is, could ne'er  
Cloak up my huge and hideous fault alone.  
Nay! turn not up such soft reproachful eyes!  
Oh! I would rather meet the flaming eye  
Burning above the hungry, armored jaw  
Of some fierce beast, with stealthy crouching paw  
And lashing tail, watching me for its prey,  
Than look into those pure and purple depths  
That make me feel so like a murderer.  
Alas, had these dim lights that are mine eyes  
But burned one half so honest, true and clear,  
But owned a power one half so far as these  
Possessed ten minutes past, then would they not  
Have this unwitting hand so foul betrayed.  
For when yon thicket cracked, thither they flew;  
And with their truer judgment all o'er thrown  
With eager expectation, misled quite  
By quick imagination's wish, they saw,  
Not what was there but what they would see there,  
And bade this foolish, witless hand to shoot  
Where through the leaves did shine a golden spot,

Which eagerly they vouched,—oh cruel fraud !  
Was sure the tawny skin and shaggy fur  
That some great, savage, bloody beast did wear.  
And when I thought, in answer to my act,  
To hear the forest shake with roar on roar,  
See bushes stripped of leaves and rooted up,  
The solid ground itself torn up and cast  
About in the magnificent mad fury  
Of some sore wounded brute, Lo! from the bush,  
Rising as if these little hoofs bore wings,  
Did'st thou bound forth in air, and here, at my feet,  
Camest thou to earth again. There was no roar,  
No angry fang gnashing to clutch on me,  
No wounded strength destroying in its reach,  
Nothing that tricky reason might present  
As justifier to accusing conscience;  
Only this form of thine that lies so still,  
Only these piteous groans that from it yet  
Do faintly heave,—alas! I would their tones  
Came not so near unto the human voice,  
For while my heart doth grieve and weep to hear them,  
They make my superstitious soul to quake.  
Could things like these make any mortal proud?  
They do not me. But they do make me feel  
Like a base coward that strikes where he doth fear  
No blow returned; like a smooth hypocrite,  
That unto one whom he hath grossly wronged  
Doth offer the cheap recompense of words.  
But words are all I have to give, since that  
Which I have taken from thee I cannot,  
Nor any man, restore; and yet to thee,  
Taught in a simpler, happier school than mine,

'These labourings of the heavy human tongue  
Are less than nothing. But what, sweet innocence,  
Doth mean these kind caressings of my hand  
With that soft tongue that scarce possesseth strength  
To stretch it from its bed? Thus do thy kind  
Attest affectionate good-fellowship.  
And verily there seems, in this soft touch,  
A lingering gentleness as though thou would'st  
Convey a kind assurance of good will  
And of thy good forgiveness absolute.  
Thus ever doth the kind and generous heart;  
Forgives whether pardon be asked or not,  
But if 'tis asked, with tears and words that show  
The culprit's suffering, it doth itself  
Begin to bleed, and its own hurt forgetting,  
Pours out its oil of pity and affection  
Upon the wounds of him who wounded it,  
Both healed and healing in the sweet discharge.  
So dies nobility; without a thought  
For malice or revenge, its latest breath  
Spent but to pardon, soothe, encourage, cheer.  
Lie here, thou heavenly spirit! This soft moss,  
Nature's best bed in this her roomy house,  
Shall be thy couch and bier; for no gross grave  
Shall cramp these free-born limbs. Here shalt thou  
rest,  
And gently dissolve into the elements;  
But not without mourners. For to this spot  
Shall come the creeping tortoise, the soft thrush  
And tender dove, the hare and squirrel shy,  
The poor toad and wandering whip-poor-will,  
Ev'n the dark bat and melancholy owl,—

Whatsoever harmless, gentle things  
That dwell about this wood shall here repair  
To mourn their common favourite comrade dead.  
And others, too, will come to weep for thee,—  
Those tender beings, who, in these ancient trees,  
Old story says makes each its separate home.  
Oh! I do hope that when they look on thee,  
And these just ended acts recall,—for they  
Have seen each act and heard each speech in this  
Sad tragedy,—they will remember how,  
With every act that came as near to speech  
As dumbness might, thou said'st 'I do forgive thee;  
And breasting thee in the courteous, noble race,  
Grant, too, to me their pardon for the offence  
Of having slain their playmate and best friend.  
Then would this solitude again assume  
The pleasant, deep and tranquil countenance  
Which I do love so well; and wear no more  
These present frowns of its stern, sad aspect,  
Which to unlucky me,—who wittingly  
Would ne'er have been, or be, their cruel cause,—  
Seem all directed, till it seems as if  
No bough doth bend but it doth point at me,  
And every wind doth whisper 'Murderer!'"



### 3. THE TRAVELLER'S RETURN.

O'er Hampshire's snow-heaped hills the sun  
Dropped westward in his circling race  
Unseen, for driving snow-clouds dun  
Hid, in a pierceless veil, his face.

A youth, amid the gloom and storm,  
Plodded his heavy, panting way  
To where, hospitable and warm,  
A house-light beamed its neighbor ray.

'Twas not his home,—long steps beyond  
Lay that,—but ah ! what youth but knows,  
Some time in life, a place more fond  
Than home !—to such this youth now goes.

There dwelt his joys' eternal spring,  
The very marrow of his mind,  
To him on earth the fairest thing,  
The woman of all woman-kind.

And there, his trade-forced journey o'er,  
He thought to lose the world awhile,—  
Nor see its sights nor hear its roar,—  
In her sweet voice and tender smile.

But ah, when frosts of absence blight,  
How many tender loves are slain !

Faithful that love whose fire and light  
Can feed on fancies from the brain.

But hers, though fed, in fever sunk,  
For poison with its food had mixed ;  
Her ears of rumor's cup had drunk,  
And fancy on suspicion fixed.

A word, as light as winds that move  
In June, dropped down on guardless mood,  
And lo ! the blossoms of her love  
Lay choked in jealousy's rank wood.

But little recked that wretched youth  
What fiends had made her heart their throne ;  
He dreamed he there reigned king in truth,  
As she reigned queen within his own.

Thus by surprise his wits were slain,  
When no kiss did her greeting grace ;  
But soon surprise gave place to pain,  
At view of her cold, smileless face.

Long he implored and questioned deep,  
Then vowed his constancy in vain ;  
She answered, but put not to sleep  
With her replies his grief or pain.

For though her heart perceived him true,  
Prometheus pride held upper sway  
And would not let confession's dew  
Wash, with her stains, his pangs away.

Thus broken beneath an unjust wrong,  
Pale as a cloud at dawning grey,  
Too crushed for words, for tears too strong,  
He stepped to take his homeward way.

In vain her parents, 'gainst the storm,  
Besought him tarry till the day;—  
*She* gave but in half-hearted form,  
That half-consent which meaneth nay.

He went; and gentle sleep dropped down  
Upon that house and all within;—  
On all? Nay, sleep from one had flown,—  
That one lay weeping for her sin.

Ah, woman, woman! had those eyes  
But dropped their honey on his heart,  
Thine now would not give forth those cries,  
Nor in that restless anguish start.

Why shudder at the bitter blast?  
Sure not so cold to him the storm  
As thy cold words remembered last,—  
Comparison would make it warm.

Why damp with ceaseless tears thy bed?  
'Tis useless now to moan and chide;  
On colder couch than thine his head  
Hath found a rest to thine denied.

Why Heaven implore to haste the day?  
No day can ever break again

So brightly that its glories may  
Rid thy heart one hour of pain.

It came,—the day,—up smiled the sun  
And looked abroad; but swift he drew  
About him cloudy curtains dun,  
As to shut shameful sight from view.

The mountain-cradled winds awoke  
And fluttered forth; but with a cry  
Of fear their easy flight they broke,  
And shuddering, moaning, back did fly.

The clouds crept stealthy round heaven's rim,  
As they did fear to cross its vault  
And look below; in East, black, dim,  
A massy mourning pall they halt.

Ye fearful elements! well, well  
May horror halt your flying cars!  
On sadder sight dawn never fell,  
Than yonder lonely hillside bears.

See where he lies! cold, still and white  
As the snow that doth his body cover.  
But yesterday he stepped full light!  
This morn a corpse,—last eve a lover!

But yet, bright sun! ye gentle wind!  
Sweet moon, and lesser lamps of heaven!  
Have pity! oh, to her be kind,  
Whose life to endless grief is given!

Hide not your beams, nor silver light,  
Your harps be never harsh nor rough!  
Oh soothe, not sadden, her dark night;  
Remorse is punishment enough!

#### 4. THE SPRING.

Why, gentle spring, why hide away  
'Neath these dark rocks and boulders grey?  
Why secret veil thy lovely face  
In this unknown, untrodden place?  
It fits thee not, this home of thine,  
This sunless, sad, rock-walled ravine.  
Is it because thy modesty  
Fills thee with fears that thou would'st be  
Mocked for thy plain simplicity,  
If that thou came to dwell abroad,  
Matching thy charms against the hoard  
Of charming things that Nature spreads  
O'er breezy hills and sunny meads?  
Or dost thou think thy song would seem  
Too plain, too humble in its theme,  
To mingle with those joyous lays  
Glad birds and gladder breezes raise?  
If these, or like, the reasons be  
Why hermit-like thou hidest thee  
Here in this dungeon spot,—list then:  
Two green and flowery hills I ken,  
Bounding a meadow's southern side,  
Between whose grassy slopes doth hide  
A sun-kissed, hazel-shaded dell.  
There thou in a green cup may'st dwell,  
Moss-lined from bottom to the brim;

And round thy bubble-fringed rim  
The shy white violet shall bloom,  
Shedding for thee its rare perfume.  
And later, when the summer sun  
Shall higher in his course have run,  
The wild-rose will her petals pink  
Sweetly unfold above thy brink,  
While ferns their pointed fronds unroll,  
Stretching athwart to keep thee cool  
And sheltered from the heat; to you  
Such welcome will be rendered due  
As this. But for thyself, thine own  
Bright face and voice of sweetest tone,  
'Twill not be long when thou shalt see  
What homage will be paid to thee.  
Phœbus, each morn when he doth rise,  
With rosy kiss will ope thine eyes.  
Each night, when Phœbus far is sped,  
The stars shall watch above thy bed,  
And make thy face their mirror bright,  
To see if they their silver light  
Do proper shed abroad. With day  
The shepherd lads will foot their way  
Behind their flocks to those fresh meads  
Where flows the rill thy full cup feeds;  
Whose even waters ever keep  
The pastures green for kine and sheep,  
And in whose depths their tongues do find  
A nectar sweeter than the wind  
That from their gentle nostrils blows,  
Itself far sweeter than the rose.  
On pleasant summer holiday,

The roving lads to thee will stray,  
And prostrate round thy margin thrown,  
Bend to thy lips their rosy own,  
To draw the diamond sparkling drink,  
And round thy mossy cushioned brink  
Linger delightedly and long,  
To watch thy bubbling, hear thy song,  
Or, far down in the crystal deep,  
Study the patient snail's slow creep;  
The free and lawless boy to thee  
Shall thus resign his sovereignty.  
The rustic beauty, village bound  
O'er field, instead of going round  
By highway, will her path forsake,  
Some drops in her pink palm to take  
From thee, and 'twixt her dainty lips  
Draw in two dainty, dainty sips;  
And then (for beauty ne'er was known  
To shut her eyes when near her shone  
Aught that her beauty might reflect)  
She will employ thee to detect  
Some dimple new, or budding grace,  
Within the blossom of her face,  
And envious sigh to see in thee  
Complexion clearer than hath she.  
But thankful for thy bashful tongue,  
She will rise and trip along,  
And leave thee to the birds and bees,  
That on the bushes and the trees  
Sit silent perched; for they have come,  
From busy hive and bough-built home,  
To learn that glorious art of thee,



The art of tuneful harmony;  
And none so soft, or none so sad,  
None so loud, nor none so glad,  
But from thy wide-ranged song may learn  
Some blithesome trill, or tender turn,  
To add unto the little store  
Of sweetness that each knew before.  
The bee can teach his golden wing  
A drowsier, sleepier tune to sing,  
By listening near that mossy rock,  
Beneath which lazy flows thy brook;  
The sparrow, when the bubbles break,  
Can learn a shorter chirp to take;  
Of soft, low tones an endless store  
The choice-eared thrush may ponder o'er,  
Where from thy brimming bowl's low lip,  
With gentle fall thy waters slip;  
While for a merry song and gay,  
A mirth-awakening roundelay,  
Unto the rising sun to bring,  
A sole and new sung offering,  
The lark will close attention give  
Down where thy laughing brook doth live  
In a round of pleasure, dancing on  
Over its pebble bed sloping down.  
But when all these have taken flight,  
Scared by the dusky face of night;  
When shadows veil day's last red gleam,  
And starry silence reigns supreme;  
Winging her lonesome flight along,  
Will come the queen of feathered song,  
Poor Philomel. And she will brood,

In sad, most melancholy mood,  
Long on some branch of sleeping flowers,  
As if her wing had lost its powers  
And never more in air would spread ;  
And dropping her grief-laden head  
Upon her breast, her pensive sight,  
And ears that woe's sad notes delight,  
In trance of sweetest sadness bind  
To that dark spot in its mazy wind,  
Where, over some smooth, rounded stone,  
Thy silver rill drops with a moan  
And sigh of sorrow.

All these to-morrow  
May be thy happy joys, sweet spring,  
If thou to that bright dell wilt bring  
Thy lovely flood, leave this dark home  
Unto that sunny one to come,  
There 'mid these endless joys to dwell.  
O seal this fount, this wasted well !  
This bubbling cup let silence fill !  
And trace a straight and speedy track,  
By subterranean channels black,  
To where prepared for thee doth wait  
A life whose changeless, one estate  
Is joy and gladness !

Thus long ago a youth made plea  
Unto a sylvan spring ; but she,  
Regarding not his earnest tongue,  
Still bubbled up and flowed along,  
Filling her rocky house with song  
And music, smiles and mirth.

"She mocks!" he thought, and he grew wroth;  
"She mocks me!" and in sad offence,  
He bid a cold adieu and hence  
His wounded presence took.  
Long, restless, wandering years passed o'er him;  
Then, back returning, spread before him,  
His youth's remembered home doth range.  
But oh! 'twas sadly new and strange!  
Nothing was as it was before;  
'Twas not the aspect that it bore  
Of old, but only the old name,—  
In name, but not in fact, the same.  
Where were the paths he once had trod?  
Where were the sunny hills whose sod  
With nodding daisies thick was strown?  
Where were the groves he once had known?  
Alas! the ruthless, puffing plough  
Up-shared those daisied hillsides now;  
In the shuddering woods the shrieking saw  
Surfeits his fanged and cruel jaw;  
No flocks to those fields now were driven,  
No herds at eve lowed up to heaven;  
The birds to other groves were fled,  
The lark did make his dewy bed  
In other meadows far away;  
Nowhere, in all his vision's play,  
Gleamed one loved, memoried sight. Yet stay!  
Out 'twixt two gray and stony walls,  
A thin stream plashed with gentle falls.  
He saw; his heart 'gan quicker beat;  
And straight his lost and stranger feet,  
No longer helplessly astray,

Did thither bend their hasty way.  
And there, oh glad and welcome sight !  
Gurgling and bubbling, clear and bright,  
Gushed up that ancient, steadfast spring.  
" Spirit of constancy ! Thou thing  
Of patient steadfastness !" he cried,  
" Through all these years that I have tried  
To find in pleasure's poison cup  
Some happiness, or followed up  
Deluding Fortune's faithless wheel,  
The woe-begetting gold to feel,  
Hast thou thus happily dwelt here,  
Nor known a woe, nor felt a fear,  
Nor drawn a sigh, nor dropped a tear ?  
Ah, would in foolish youth I had  
Thee my good preceptor made !  
Then peace and joy might now be mine,  
Even as now they still are thine."

5. ODE.

Heavenly alchemist ! that when calm night  
Hath driven the fiery Phœbus from the sky,  
Riseth in East to follow on his flight,  
Holding thy steady, burnished shield on high,  
Whereon to gather all his burning beams,  
Transfusing them of all their fire and heat,  
Upon the parchéd earth to pour them back  
In cool and silver showers, thus, in what seems  
A soft reproof, making his dark retreat  
Full of a grace his presence near did lack,—

Why hast thou hid from earth so long away ?  
Though absence oft' will burnish rusty love,  
'Twas needless to make thine so long a stay,  
Grieving me with pretence my love to prove.  
I do not love the gaudy, flippant day,  
Bearing upon her gay and careless wings  
The sights and sounds of folly, strife and sin,  
The which she doth in ceaseless stream outpay,  
Turning to nought the earth's most lovely things,  
Music to moans, peace to a fretful din.

But when, low in the rosy western sky,  
The tender planet, sinking, still doth stay,  
With the soft light benign of her mild eye  
To heal earth's wounds and wash its tears away,  
And make it fit to greet the gentle night;

Then, divine enchantress ! from some hill,  
Whose dewy slope doth eastward open lie,  
'Tis sweet to watch, in heaven's dusky height,  
Each hollow cloud with silver radiance fill,  
Giving bright promise of thy drawing nigh.

But when, before thy sovereign shining form,  
These splendid ushers melt unseen away,  
Then doth it seem as if earth's face did swarm  
With million of kind elves, who, in thy ray,  
Could only find a lantern soft enough  
To light them at their delicate sweet task,  
As with swift sorcery of magic art  
They round to smoothness Nature's rugged rough,  
Or on her ugly forms bind beauty's mask,  
And e'en to beauty's self new grace impart.

Yon cliff that gloomy frowned an hour ago,  
Is turned a silvery fair battlement,  
Topped with its sentry cedars' shining row,  
And all its cataract banner bright unbent;  
Where then the lake lay black, forbidding, dark,  
Ten thousand diamond ripples light the vale;  
While from the forest's depths comes forth no more  
That soft but soul-disturbing moan,—but hark!  
Sweet, low, delicious whispers fill the gale,  
As if each Dryad laughed that sighed before.

But thou, kind spirit, another land dost light,  
Than this gross earth more delicate and fine;  
For when the eye the brain's clear pilot bright,  
Doth lead aloft where thou in heaven dost shine,

Thou fill'st the wide, unmeasured mind's domain  
With fancies fair and meditations high;  
Then Envy, Care, and all the demon horde  
That harrow up the soul of man to pain,  
Fly from the field and sheathe their weapons by,  
And frail Content doth wander safe abroad.

## 6. TO WAGNER.

Not the soft tones to lull a wine-drows'd ear,  
Or honey drop on tongue of sweet-fed brain;  
Not the thin strains that school girls like to hear,  
Dreaming the while in fancied love's mock pain:  
Nor tripping notes to physic sadness' tear,  
Nor throbbing ones to make it flow again.  
Not these the trivial limits of thy skill,  
Homer of Music! But when thou dost fill  
The wind-devouring pipe, or touch the string,  
Then the poor homesick soul wakes with a thrill  
Of rapture, soaring on thy music's wing  
From earth, its land of exile dark and chill,  
To dwell a space in its own realms, and bring  
Thence joys to make earth's life a happier thing.



7. AFTER A JUNE NIGHT'S STORM.

O what a day of lovely light  
Dawns forth from out the stormy night!  
Kind Nature, with her water bowl,  
Hath washed from the earth each stain and soil,  
And it shines in splendor bright.

From the wood, the myriad-twinkling gleam  
Shows where the sun's first radiant beam  
Is caught by each polished, refreshed leaf,  
As, kissed by the breeze a moment brief,  
It twists on its slender stem.

The cataract from the cliff doth pour  
Its foaming waters with a roar  
That seems imprisoned fast to hold  
The thunder's echoes that pealed and rolled  
At midnight the heavens o'er;

Whilst all the lightnings that lit the night,  
Seem to have sunk in those waters bright;  
Where, each to its seven-fold elements torn,  
With a hundred hues they now adorn  
The flood in its tumbling flight.

The meadow brook tranquil and bright doth flow  
Where daisies their smiles to buttercups throw,  
And each congratulations give,

O'er the joy on such a day to live,  
On such a day to grow;

Where kine, that cowered in fear 'neath the oak  
When the thunder's crash at midnight broke,  
Knee-deep in clover contented low,  
Sweet'ning the breeze with each breath they blow,  
And for the milk-maid look;

Where the lark soars singing from its bed;  
Where floating butterflies drift o'erhead,  
And birds from all the bushes sing;  
Where overjoyed seems each live thing,  
In the glories round it spread.

Fair June! the days are only thine  
When Nature thus breathes out her soul divine;  
When e'en the saddest mood of man  
May be changed to joy unmixed with pain,  
By a draught of her gladdening wine.

8. SONG FOR IDLERS.

A nap in the woods on a soft June day,  
What lazy joys excel?  
How delightfully Nature steals away  
The senses by her spell!

How soft a couch the mosses make!  
No canopy so light  
As ferns that gently wave and shake  
Their fronds of emerald bright!

And then, for a draught of drowsiness,  
Can subtlest drug compare  
With the sight of clouds that lazy press  
Through the sapphire of the air?

These soft white hands doth Nature lay  
Over her patient's eyes,  
And, lo! sink griefs, cares, pains away,  
And peace, sweet peace, doth rise.

How softly now on the senses fall  
What once were harshest tones;  
The crow's rude cry seems a cuckoo's call,  
The magpie a honey-bee drones;

And soothing is the jay's hoarse screech,  
As song of nightingale;

The squirrels' chattering in the beech,  
As crickets at twilight pale.

From every voice sweet music flows,  
And from the music peace;  
Till, the mind o'erburdened with repose,  
All acts of being cease.

When Nature such arts as these employs  
On one in an idle mood,  
How may one e'er resist the joys  
Of a nap in a green June wood!

9. SONG OF THE SAILOR'S WIFE.

Far out, blue Ocean! o'er thy wave,  
A growing sail I see.  
O joy! it brings my true-love home,  
My true-love home to me.

No more, when winter's midnight storms  
Rush furious o'er thy deep,  
Shall I, in trembling tears and prayers,  
My sleepless vigil keep.

No more, when summer's sunny winds  
Stoop down to kiss thy face,  
In disappointed hope shall I  
This beacon cliff-top pace.

My fears this day are laid in grave,  
My joy, like breaking morn,  
Doth ever brighter grow as still  
Yon sail is nearer borne.

Kind Ocean, speed yon ship along  
With all your winds and tide;  
Till one that now doth tread her deck,  
Shall tread earth by my side.

10. THE LAST DREAM.

In a dismal room in a city garret high,  
Where a lamp, low burning, casts a feeble ray,  
Death-sick of fever a suffering child doth lie,  
And a woman, watching, weeps the night away.

Sadly she weeps, low bending o'er the form  
Whose little lamp of life must soon grow dark—  
That life her love had watched through sun and  
storm,  
Her sorrow now beholds whose dimming spark.

By day, by night, for many a weary week,  
Had she thus fostered that beloved life ;  
But now, to-night, her heart doth well nigh break  
To see that that dear life, now left, is brief.

For 'tis not only fever on that brow,  
Nor fever's fires that fill those soft sunk eyes ;  
Nay, the blush that spreads, the fire that glows there  
now,  
Doth from a different, deeper source arise.

'Tis death's first, gently-faint, approaching touch—  
For death hath sweet as well as awful guise :  
Often it cometh with a softness such  
As scarce to show when forth the freed soul flies ;

But rare, as now with this young innocent,  
It comes with brightness, not with shadows dark,  
A bloom like health's to once pale cheeks is lent,  
From sunken eyes seems beaming life's bright  
spark.

But why look those bright orbs so fixedly,  
As if brick walls no longer bound their sight?  
Why clasp those little hands so rigidly?  
Those parched lips why break in smiles so bright?

'Tis the immortal soul, already fluttering free—  
Still bound to earth, yet beating heaven's air—  
That gifts that sight most wondrous things to see,  
Those listening ears far whisperings to hear.

Bright must those visions be, and sweet those sounds,  
For wakened memories o'er those features fleet;  
And list! that voice rises o'er pain's strait bounds,  
A fervid, wild, breaks yet ecstatic sweet:

“Hark, mother! I hear the rushing brook;  
'Tis the same sweet sound of long ago;  
I hear it singing beneath the rock,  
And laughing where the shallows flow.”

“'Tis only the falling rain on the roof, my child,  
Hush! softer speak, thy fancy runneth wild.” •

“Nay, mother, no fancy deceiveth me,  
For I see the water shining now;  
And look! on the bank is the tulip tree,  
With the swing still hanging from the bough!”





- “ But, mother! Oh, they leave the pool!  
Why, why do they haste so soon away ?  
Why wait they not 'neath the alders cool ?  
Oh, why will they not our coming stay ?
- “ See how they beckon us draw near,  
Yet still do ever further flee—  
Alas! how swift they disappear!  
How dim, how faint their shadows be!
- “ And now the brook seems running dry,  
I cannot hear it laugh or sing,  
Its bank-side ferns and blossoms die;  
I cannot see the tulip-swing.
- “ The very rocks do melt away;  
The trees seem withering where they stand;  
The sun grows dark! Kind mother pray  
Come closer, closer hold mine hand.
- “ But hark! what wondrous sound I hear ?  
A music rapturous, divine,  
Like voices softly singing near,  
A thousand voices sweet as thine!
- “ Tell me, whence comes this melody,  
That stills, that drives away my pain ?  
Ah! happy, happy would I be,  
If ever thus I might remain!”
- “ 'Tis only the bells that chime the hour of morn  
When labor's weary children wake from sleep—

But oh! how gladly would my toil be borne,  
If I that smile on thy dear face could keep!"

"And what is this light that fills mine eyes,  
So soft, so radiant, so fair;  
That seems from no place to arise,  
Yet falleth softly everywhere?"

"'Tis only the light in the East, my child, of the morn-  
ing,  
The light we both have seen so oft before—  
Alas, alas, another day's bright dawning,  
I fear together we shall see no more!"

"Hush, mother! The voices are dying now,  
And a sweet, sweet peace doth o'er me creep,  
And I feel a soft breath on my brow;  
Hush, for I fain would fall asleep."

Alas! no need those trembling lips to hush,  
No need to beg that sobbing voice be still;  
The grief that, falling, all but life doth crush,  
On both had set its silent, silent seal.

Full well she knew he felt the eternal morn;  
That from his sleep he would no waking know;  
The last loved heart that loved her now was gone;  
That she from thence alone through life must go.

Oh saddest thought! No more that attic room,  
Which scarce the sun for one brief hour could fill,  
For her with those bright flowers of joy would bloom,  
Which spring from a child's caress and loving  
smile.

Her future now but hopeless toil could show,  
No life to cherish but her bleeding own.  
Ah, is there a state more sad, more full of woe,  
Than this: to labor for one's life alone?

Thrice blest the hearts, when pierced by sorrow's  
sting,  
Which, in their anguish, may find sweet relief  
By opening pity's gates on lives that cling  
Fainting to them, crushed 'neath the common grief.

But when grief's poison entereth the heart  
Whose safety-valves of love may never ope,  
There's naught but death can e'er relief impart,—  
What misery when death becomes a hope!

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