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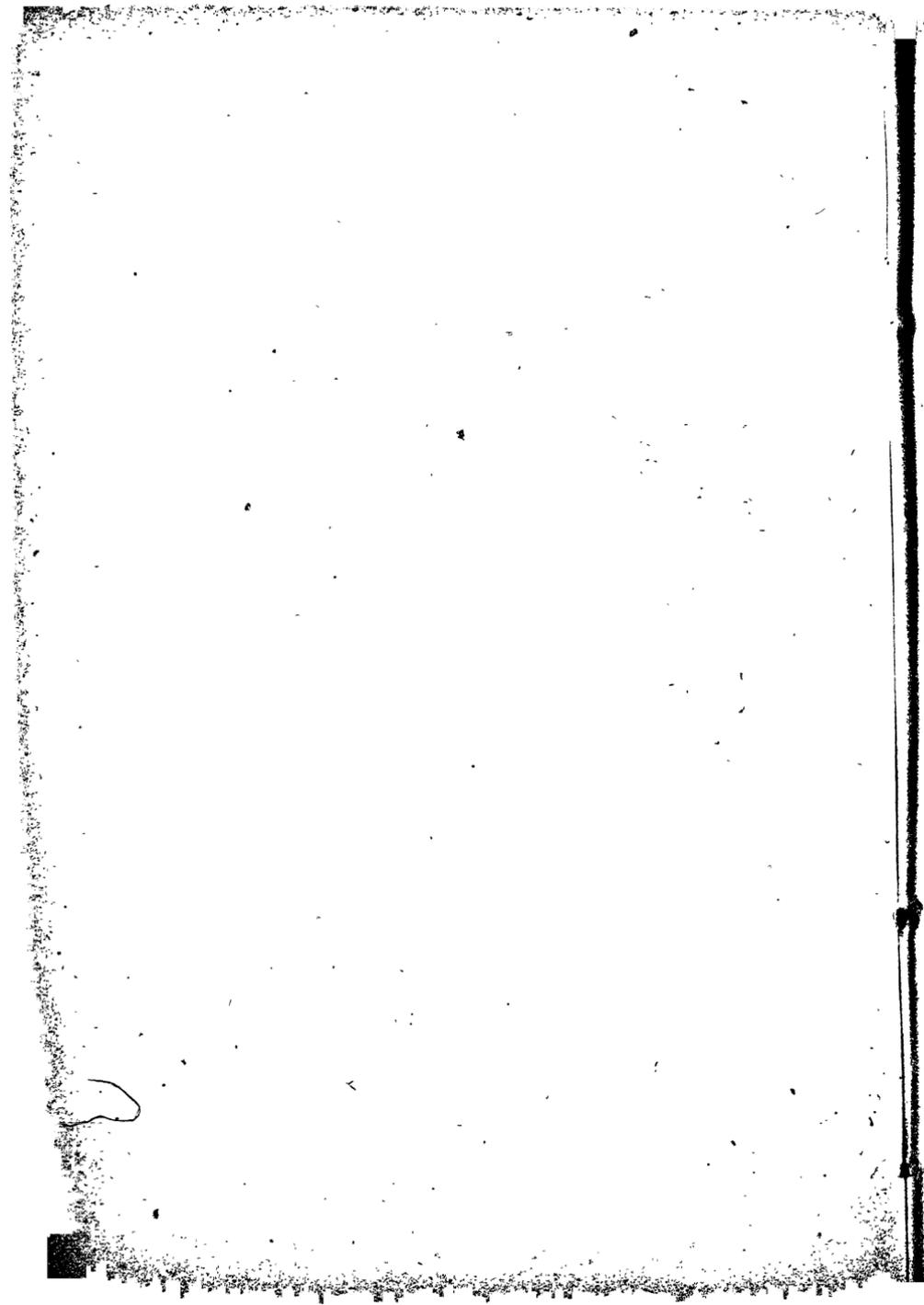
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DREAMLAND

AND

OTHER POEMS,

BY CHARLES MAIR.

MONTREAL:
DAWSON BROTHERS.

LONDON:
SAMPSON LOW, SON & MARSTON.

PS 8476

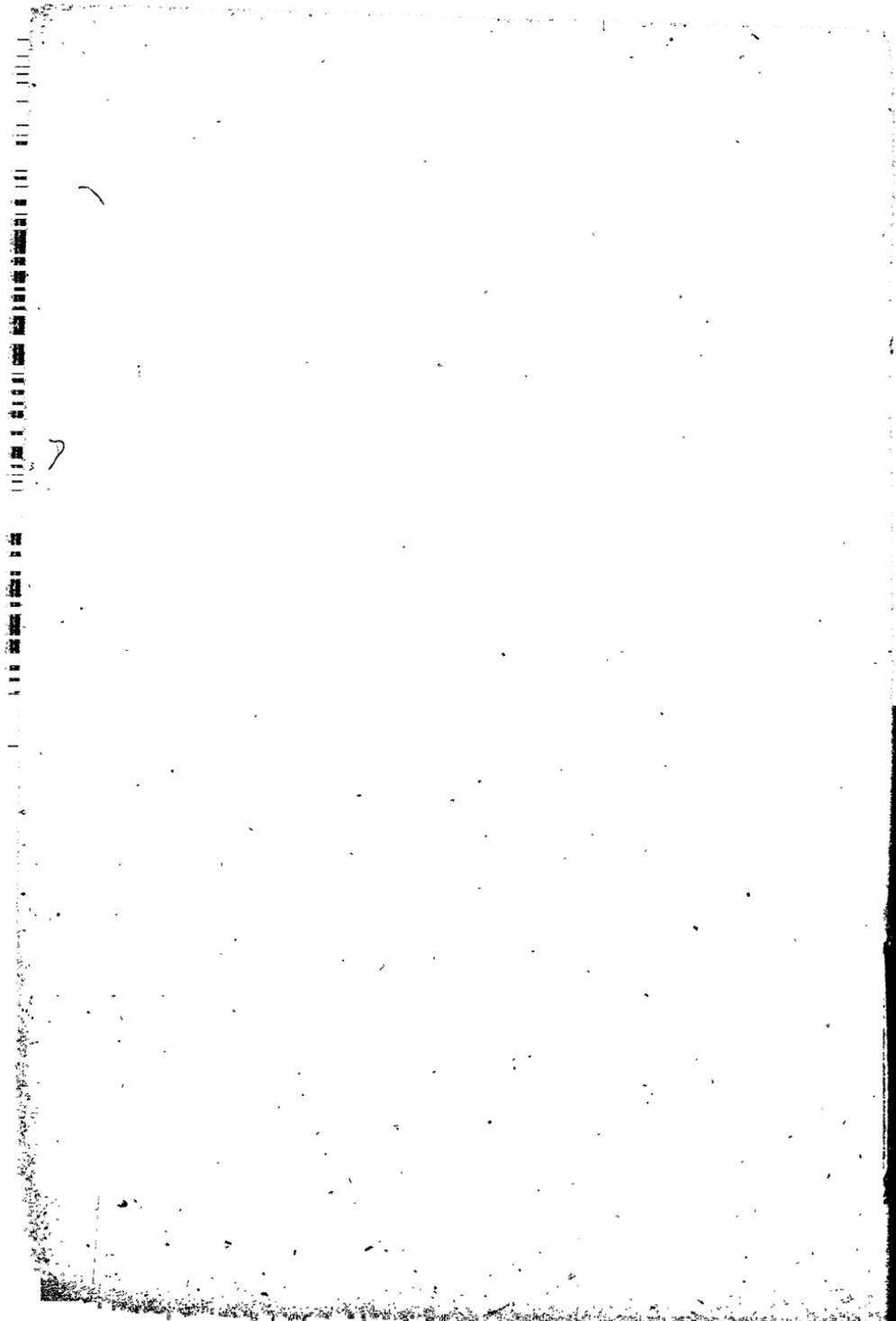
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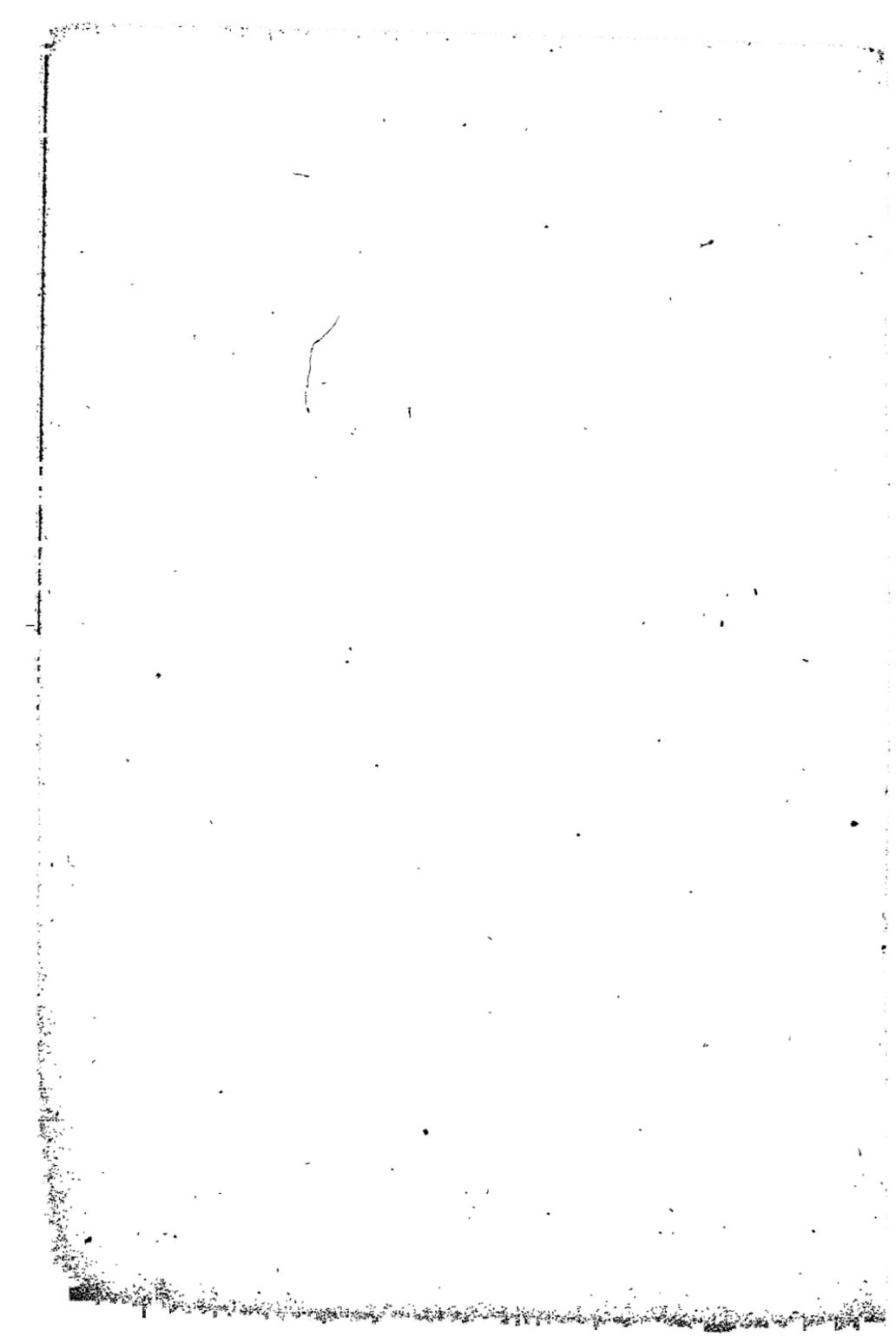
TO
MRS. WILLIAM MACDOUGALL,
OF OTTAWA, CANADA,
THIS VOLUME
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
AS AN EARNEST OF
THE SINCERE FRIENDSHIP AND ESTEEM OF
THE AUTHOR.



P R E F A C E .

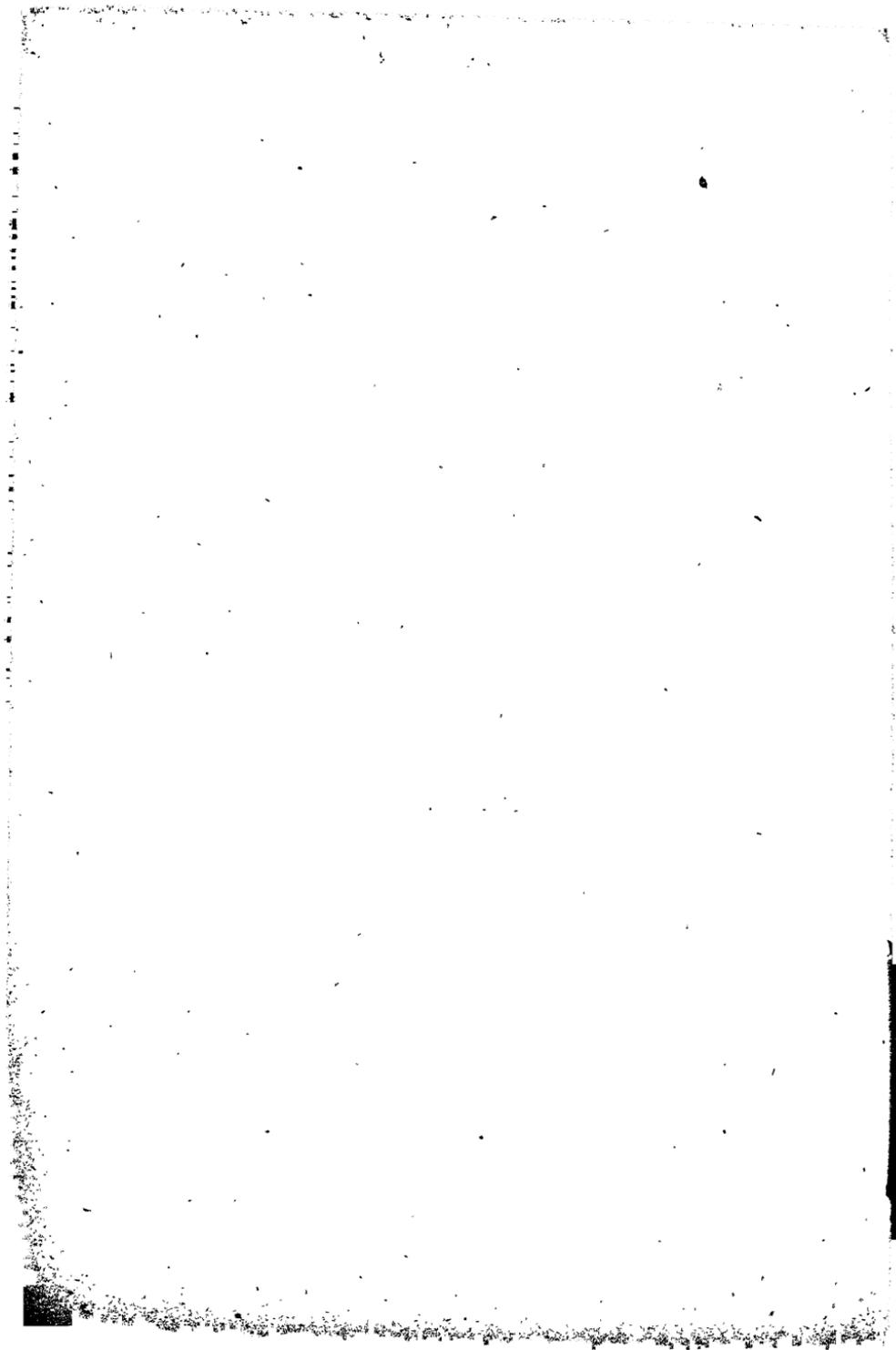
It is not without much hesitation and many misgivings that the author of the following poems allows them to pass the press. Perhaps no poet, and certainly no young poet, can estimate with precision the value of his work. Familiarity with his subjects, the reproduction of sympathies and emotions peculiar to himself, the very delight attending composition, all conspire to delude him, and to endear to him productions which may find but little place in the esteem of readers competent to judge. Hence it is that the author submits this, his first venture, to the ordeal of English criticism. He feels convinced that at the hands of those accustomed to assess the value of literary productions he will receive that candid criticism which will either be a guide to him in future or induce him to abandon the field of poetry altogether.

PERTH, Ontario, August 1st, 1868.



C O N T E N T S .

Dreamland	1
The Pines	11
The Morning-Land	17
The North Wind's Tale	19
Night and Morn	37
Innocence	41
Our Beautiful Land by the Sea	48
The Little Wren	51
To a Morning Cloud	55
Lines to Mount St. Patrick	61
Address to a Maid	65
Winter	71
Summer	75
My Love—A Rhapsody	87
Alice	93
To my Photograph	96
Stanzas from the Heart	101
Prologue to Tecumseh	103
Werter	109
The Fire-Flies	111
Frowns and Smiles	117
August	119
To Memory	125
Wood-Notes	127
Lament of Andromache	133
In Memory of Thomas D'Arcy McGee	135
Midnight	145
Bardolph Redivivus	146
The Humming-Bird	147
To _____	148
To an Infant	149
Love's Empery	150
Time	151



DREAMLAND AND OTHER POEMS.

O Poesy ! for thee I hold my pen,
That am not yet a glorious denizen
Of thy wide heaven—should I rather kneel
Upon some mountain-top until I feel
A glowing splendour round about me hung,
And echo back the voice of thine own tongue?

KEATS.

ENTERED, according to Act of the Parliament of Canada, in the
year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, by
CHARLES MAIR, in the Office of the Minister of Agriculture.

OTTAWA:
PRINTED BY I. B. TAYLOR AT "THE OTTAWA CITIZEN"
STEAM PRINTING HOUSE.

1868.

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DREAMLAND.

WE are not wholly blest who use the earth,
Nor wholly wretched who inherit sleep.
Behold, it is a palace of delight
Built beyond fear of storms by day or night;
And whoso enters doth his station keep,
Unmindful of the stain upon his birth.

Sin hath no hold on it; yea, men may take
Their loves into their arms tenaciously;
For sleep is as a chamber high and fair,
Wherein warm love makes light of cold despair;
And wives may deem their faithless lords are nigh,
And maids may kiss false lovers for love's sake.

Thou canst not fetter it, for it is free ;
No tyrant yokes it to the labouring oar.
It is a solemn height, wind-visited,
And touched by sunlight when the sun is fled—
Where bondsmen lift their aching brows no more,
And men have peace, and slaves have liberty.

See now it hath a tender bloom, like light
Viewed at the autumn's latest outgoing.
It is the faithful summer of our sorrow,
A kindly year whose winter is the morrow.
See now 'tis like the firstlings of the spring,
Which win their fragrance in the snow's despite.

Faint, far-off sounds are blown unto our ears,
Faint, far-off savours steal unto our lips,
When orient dreams assemble manifold,
And sleep doth throne himself on royal gold.
Then night is noon-tide, morning the eclipse
Wherein no comfort is but in our tears.

Man may not say unto himself: "Time fills
Day's even measures with matched bitterness,"
Whilst he hath sleep—a jewel without peer,
Which hath the light as but its bezel here.
For there are days which curse, and nights which bless,
And unseen forces striving with our ills.

We are not equal with the unseen powers,
Who eat but bread, and suffer strange decay.
Yet there are pleasant environs which make,
Mid adverse things, a heaven for our sake.
Beyond the precincts of the open day
There is an easy entrance which is ours.

I entered in thereat, and I had peace ;
By ancient ways I went and I had rest ;
And space was far about me, murmurings,
And 'wildering speed of undulatory wings :
My limbs were lissom, and my soul possessed
Of thousand fantasies which would not cease.

Dreamland and Other Poems.

Beyond me were wide plains of amber light,
And sunless regions stained with solemn gold.
And there the myriad wild-fowl soared on high,
Scattered and strewn like dust against the sky.
And, in the east, a tender shadow rolled
Forth from the distant antres of the night.

Aërial mountains of their substance gave
To beamless forests where the breezes stirred
Faintly, and faintly shook the leaves. I saw
The rising mists behind the mountains draw
Like phantoms to the hovering clouds, and heard,
Far-off, the sullen thunder of the wave.

Not any space of all the world's desire
Was fairer to mine eyes, and, when my death
Seemed instant on my head, mine eyes grew dim,
And all my life fled out of every limb.
My fears I felt as one who holds his breath,
And fears betwixt the thunder and the fire.

For I was falling, falling from on high
With the deceitful earth, which sunk away.
Unmeasured depths were sounded as I fell,
And there was peace no more, nor could I tell,
For dizziness, the darkness from the day,
So numb of sense, so dead with fear was I.

O blessed was the hand that caught my hand,
Unseen, and swung me thrice throughout all space !
Blessed that sought me at the ocean's brink,
And gave me hope as food and love as drink,
And fanned with snowy flowers mine anguished face,
And soothed me with her kisses as she fanned.

Lo, she was holy and most strangely fair,
Sleek-throated like a dove, and solemn-eyed.
Her lips were, as an infant's, small and sweet,
And as an infant's were her naked feet ;
And scarf-like flowed and shimmered at each side
Her cloven tresses of untrammelled hair.

The melancholy waste of wave was dead,
And silence haunted the Marmorean hills ;
Nor any sound of any breeze or bird
Within the sunshine or the shade was heard
When as she said, "O love! 'tis life that kills,"
When as she sighed, and touched my lips, and said :

"Small light have they, O love! who love their lives,
Calling the dead the past, and fearing death.
For these our ways aforesaid have been trod
By patient suffering ones who now are God,
Being immortal, with abiding breath,
And joy that ravishes, and hope that strives.

"'Tis but a terror which entreats control,
A baseless fear which thwarts us of the dues
Of sacred death—things effable above,
And roomy thrones, and light of endless love.
Wherefore 'tis meet to seal our fate and use
The trodden path which disenthalls the soul.

“For I am weary of the day which dips,
And, faint with love, I hunger for thy sighs.
They who have tasted of my limbs, and felt
My veins and the keen life that in them dwelt
Like fire, and felt as fire my kindling eyes,
And caught my tears upon their trembling lips :

“These shall be hateful to me for thy sake,
If thou, O love! wilt drink of this with me,”
Whereat a tiny, vase-like amethyst
She pressed from lip to lip, and then I wist
Our steps were God-like and our souls were free,
For all our flesh fell from us flake by flake.

And all our bones we gathered in a pyre,
Like faggots, and the flesh thereon we laid :
And all the mystery of baleful years,
And all our mortal sleep, and sin, and tears
We heaped upon the pile which we had made,
And closed them in and burnt them with swift fire.

And in the smoke thereof we faded thence,
 Away into empyreal regions blest,
Beyond the extreme cloisters of the skies,
And, like a flame, the lightning of her eyes
 Burnt in my path, and endless was our rest.
Endless our love and love's omnipotence.

And in our strength and everlasting youth,
 Arising in clear dawn and light which saves,
We found a realm wherein earth's sorrowings
Were heard no more, where myriad blameless things
 Rose from their venal and lethean graves,
And found a resting-place, and called it Truth.

They rose from island and from continent,
 Pale-featured spirits in apparel bright ;
They rose from ancient rivers and the sea
In human shapes and garbs of chastity ;
 They came from sepulchres of death and night,
Faint with despair and long imprisonment.

And all these shapes found each its own desire,
 Whate'er its faith on earth, whate'er its creed.
The Christian saw at last the Son unsoiled ;
The Prophet's God upon his creatures smiled.
 The Indian found his Manitou indeed,
Lama his life, the Magian his fire.

For all these souls were innocent below,
 And loved God well who loved what he had made ;
And, loving all things, though they found not truth,
Were yet received of heav'n, and gat them youth,
 And pleasant sleep, and shelter in the shade,
And endless mitigation of their woe.

For God, who is our Master and our Lord,
 Took pity on their helpless ignorance,
And, from their wives, their children and their pelf,
And all their idols, took them to himself,
 And clad them round with glorious circumstance,
And all the joys high heaven doth afford.

O could I sleep for ever in a dream,
Or dream such dreams for ever while I slept!
Onwards they went, and sung their mystic psalms,
Screening their pallid faces with their palms,
Whither the Unimaginable kept
His kingly state as doth Him best beseem.

Onwards they went unto the Paraclete,
With far-heard sound of voice and instrument,
I could not follow them, I could not tread
Where passion burns not, and where lust is dead;
For love had caught me in his arms, and bent
My will to his, and bound my feeble feet.

Yes, love possessed me, and, with keen desire,
I took her eyes' wild light into my soul.
I clasped her spirit-form, and drunk her breath,
And then our lips, more near than life and death,
Clung each to each in silence, and control
Vanished as snow-flakes vanish in the fire.

That moment there was darkness, and the lists
Of heav'n gave place unto the gloom of day.
Whereat I woke to deadly fears and pain,
To misery of the thunder and the rain,
And crime, and subterfuge, and fierce affray
Of warring creeds and brawling mammonists.

THE PINES.

O heard ye the pines in their solitude sigh,
When the winds were awakened and night was nigh ?
When the elms breathed out a sorrowful tale,
Which was wafted away on the wings of the gale ;

When the aspen leaf whispered a legend dread,
And the willows waved darkly over the dead ;
And the poplar shone with a silvery gleam,
And trembled like one in a troublesome dream ;

And the cypresses murmured of grief and woe,
And the linden waved solemnly to and fro,
And the sumach seemed wrapt in a golden mist,
And the soft maple blushed where the frost had kissed ;

And the spectral birch stood alone in the gloom,
Like an unquiet spirit uprist from the tomb ;
And the cedar outstretched its lone arms to the earth,
To feed with sweet moisture the place of its birth ;

And the hemlock, uplifted above the crowd,
Drunk deeply of mist at the brink of a cloud ;
And the balsams, with curtains of shaggy green,
Like tents in the distance were dimly seen.

I heard the pines in their solitude sighing,
When the winds were awakened, and day was dying ;
And fiercer the storm grew, and darker its pall,
But the voice of the pines was louder than all :

THE VOICE OF THE PINES.

“ We fear not the thunder, we fear not the rain,
For our stems are stout and long;
Or the growling winds, though they blow amain,
For our roots are great and strong.
Our voice is eternal, our song sublime,
And its theme is the days of yore—
Back thousands of years of misty time,
When we first grew old and hoar !

“ Deep down in the crevice our roots were hid,
And our limbs were thick and green
Ere Cheops had builded his pyramid,
Or the Sphinx's form was seen.
Whole forests have risen within our ken,
Which withered upon the plain ;
And cities, and race after race of men
Have arisen and sunk again.

Dreamland and Other Poems.

“ We commune with the stars thro’ the paly night,
For we love to talk with them ;
The wind is our harp, and the marvellous light
Of the moon our diadem.
Like the murmur of ocean our branches stir
When the night air whispers low ;
Like the voices of ocean our voices are,
When the hurtling tempests blow.

“ We nod to the sun ere the glimmering morn
Prints her sandals on the mere ;
We part with the sun when the stars are borne
By the silv’ry waters clear.
And when lovers are breathing a thousand vows,
With their hearts and cheeks aglow,
‡ We chant a love strain ’mid our breezy boughs,
Of a thousand years ago !

“ We stand all aloof, for the giant’s strength
 Craveth naught from lesser powers ;
’Tis the shrub that loveth the fertile ground,
 But the sturdy rock is ours !
We tower aloft where the hunters lag
 By the weary mountain side,
By the jaggy cliff, by the grimy crag,
 And the chasms yawning wide.

“ When the great clouds march in a mountain heap,
 By the light of the dwindled sun,
We steady our heads ’gainst their misty sweep,
 And accost them one by one.
Then our limbs they jostle in thunder-mirth,
 And the storm-fires flash again ;
But baffled and weary they sink to earth,
 And the monarch-stems remain.

“The passage of years doth not move us much,
And Time himself grows old
Ere we bow to his flight, or feel his touch
In our ‘limbs of giant mould.’
And the dwarfs of the wood, by decay oppressed,
With our laughter grim we mock ;
For the burden of age doth lightly rest
On the ancient forest folk.

“Cold winter, who filches the flying leaf,
And steals the floweret’s sheen,
Can injure us not, or work us grief,
Or make our tops less green.
And spring, who awakens her sleeping train
By meadow, and hill, and lea,
Brings no new life to our old domain,
Unfading, stern and free.

“Sublime in our solitude, changeless, vast,
While men build, work, and save,
We mock—for their years glide away to the past,
And we grimly look on their grave.
Our voice is eternal, our song sublime,
For its theme is the days of yore—
Back thousands of years of misty time,
When we first grew old and hoar.”

THE MORNING-LAND.

The light rains grandly from the distant wood,
For in the wood the hermit sun is hid ;
So night draws back her curtains ebon-hued,
To close them round some eastern pyramid.

The listless dew lies shining on the grass,
And o'er the streams the light darts quick away,
And through the fields the morning sunbeams pass,
Shot from the opening portals of the day.

Still upward mounts the tireless eremite,
(While all the herald birds make loud acclaim)
Till o'er the woods he rounds upon our sight,
And, lo! the western world is all aflame.

From out the landscape lying 'neath the sun
The last sea-smelling, cloud-like mists arise ;
The smoky woods grow clear, and, one by one,
The meadow blossoms ope their winking eyes.

Now pleased fancy starts with eager mien—
A-tiptoe, looking o'er the silent fields,
Where all the land is fresh and calm and green,
And every flow'r its balmy incense yields.

And I, who am upon no business bent,
A simple stroller through these dewy ways,
Feel that all things are with my future blent,
Yet see them in the light of by-gone days.

THE NORTH WIND'S TALE.

I am the lord of frost and snow,
My home is on the northern deep,
Where lofty berg and sunless floe,
Their cold, eternal vigils keep.

I prowl about the dreary main,
I roam along the sleepless sea ;
The burden of my tale is pain,
And sighs and tears and agony.

For I am he who lays full low
The pleasant flow'r in loathsome death ;
I churn the rivers while I blow
Great gusts which sweep away men's breath.

What time I lurk in icy halls
They say 'tis summer, and the earth
Throbs, buds and glows—the fruitage falls ;
Each cottage rings with peasant-mirth.

But, often, ere the tender blade
Hath filled its spike with sappy corn,
I hurtle from my piny glade,
And shout till all the peasants mourn.

The winter cometh, chill and drear,
A slave—the offspring of my power ;
And soon the daisies find a bier,
A common grave each tender flow'r.

And cold and dull as an old man's blood
Earth's pulses beat ; within the air
No joyous sound, no warbled flood :
The leaves fall down in mute despair.

The mighty forests pant and heave,
Like drunken bacchanals they call ;
My hand goes forth and, lo ! they grieve ;
My fingers touch them and they fall.

I look upon the glimmering stream
Which woos the stars from heaven's breast,
And quickly vanishes the gleam :
Each ripple finds an icy rest.

The torrent-music and the hush,
The lonely whisper of the woods
Grow faint and die ; their spirits rush
To other haunts and solitudes.

The nut-brown cheek, and matron grace
Of autumned earth, the dewy eye
Which gazeth on her quiet face,
Alike must shrink, alike must fly.

And over hills and mountains drear
I sift and heap my whirling snow ;
I sweep away the leaflets sear,
And hide them in the vales below.

I load the green-armed balsams down,
And robe them in a kirtle white ;
I front the cedars with a frown,
And hide their darkness from the light.

About the plains I lash and roar,
And surge as doth the billowy ocean,
Casting my wreaths behind, before—
Cloud after cloud in hasty motion.

I heap my flakes upon each roof,
I huddle them about the eaves ;
The mantle hath no warp, no woof,
Which the chill-fingered winter weaves.

Men shrink aghast when I draw nigh,
And quake as seized with sudden dread ;
Then quickly to their coverings fly,
To mansion, cottage, or to shed.

The parents gather round the fire,
The youngsters perch upon each knee,
And all are still, while higher, higher
My tingling tongue shrieks mournfully.

All night I hunt with snow and storm
The wretched mother, wandering, lost ;
And shake with sleet her tender form,
And bind her tears with links of frost.

And when the infant, mute-mouthed, slips,
 Dead, from the sighing mother's teat,
I freeze the milk which slowly drips
 Adown, and steal her bosom's heat.

And chiller, fiercer in my glee,
 I blow along the paths of night ;
Till o'er them sweeps the winter free,
 And buries them from mortal sight.

I track great armies on their path,
 And harass them with sleet and snow ;
They shrink, they cower before my wrath—
 In vain their pomp and martial glow.

Down, down they sink, those stern-faced men,
 Down, one by one, all silently,
In sleep which hath no dream of pain,
 So calm, so cunning death can be.

Then I arise in awful might,
 And howl their requiem aloud ;
And stealthily at dead of night
 Weave over them a snowy shroud.

And over them I shout and brawl,
 Day after day upon the plain ;
Till spring comes forth with breezy call,
 And straight unburies them again.

Long years ago a ship set out
 From a far city in the West :
With brawny hull and timbers stout
 She cleaved the sounding ocean's breast.

And on she sped : her hardy crew
 Feared neither tide nor wave nor wind.
Into the dim expanse they flew—
 The earth-world soon was left behind.

And naught but sea and sky was seen,
Naught but the sky and murm'ring sea ;
And midnight whispers rose between,
Voices and deep-born harmony.

And hope was there ; nor fear nor dread
Found resting place—swoll'n was each sail ;
And northward like a cloud they fled,
Urged by the wing-stroke of the gale.

Softly the shrouds, tuned to my voice,
Harped a faint music through the air—
Sweet tones which made each soul rejoice,
Mazing and threading here and there.

The jest passed round from mouth to mouth,
The echoing laugh rung clear and bold ;
And many a legend of the south,
And many a pleasant tale was told.

Some told of brave, advent'rous men
Forsaking home in dauntless bands,
That home they ne'er might see again,
To roam in quest of other lands.

And how, in wretched, leaky craft,
They battled with the wind and wave ;
How hunger pinched them till they laughed
Like maniacs in a living grave !

How thirst consumed them until death
Stared in each haggard cheek and eye :
They gasped for thirst, they gasped for breath,
When lo ! the land dawned suddenly.

~~And~~ such a land ! A land of gold,
And fruitage mellowing in the sun ;
Of myriad joys, of wealth untold,
And hope, and peace, and pleasure won.

Some told how settlements were made,
And cities rose in haughty pride,
Where gloomed erstwhile the forest glade,
Or by the lordly river's side.

And how wealth flowed, an endless stream,
And days and years went flocking past,
Like the procession in a dream,
Or heav'nly boons too sweet to last.

And others told of balmy isles,
Where lovers might their griefs assuage;
Of scenes where nature ever smiles—
Of youth, and innocence and age.

Of fame, and power, and empires great,
Of kings—how millions fear their wrath;
And of the poor, the rich estate
The poet, painter, sculptor hath.

Ah, well-a-day ! what themes were these,
Ere I arose in vengeful might !
What hopeful morns, what nights of ease,
What pleasant thoughts, what fancies bright !

But I had tracked them many a mile,
Remorseless as the yearning grave,
And all unseen had mocked each smile,
Each laugh one to the other gave.

And cunning as an asp I reared
The unseen danger of my mouth ;
And swept the spoon-drift as I veered,
And blew from east and west and south.

Till to the desolate ocean's brink
And dreary waste of wave they came,
Where frosty planets rise and sink
In sheeny fields of wandering flame.

Dreamland and Other Poems.

And now I scowled upon the sea,
And fetched great clouds to hide the sky,
And quench its twinkling, starry glee,
While tempest, storm and fears drew nigh.

And fiercely still I urged them on—
On to the land of frost and snow,
Where night and morn and eve are one,
The sunrise and the sunset glow.

The talking billows rose and gave
Strange stories 'twixt the lightning gleams;
And all dark thoughts that murd'ers have,
Dim visionings and lonely dreams,

And ev'ry wild and dreadful thing,
Fear and despair, remorse and pain,
That hour I o'er the deep did fling
In mist, in thunder and in rain.

The white foam winked upon the deep ;
The great masts bent before the gale ;
Each blast made th' strong ship surge and leap,
And bulged and strained each dripping sail.

Each strong blast made her creak and groan,
As 'twere a soul in misery ;
She swayed, she lurched with many a moan,—
No rest, no peacefulness had she.

And yet I spared her ; day and night
She fled before me. While my breath
Grew fiercely cold none marked her flight
Onward to the abode of death.

And colder, colder still I blew—
A horrible and intense cold ;
It numbed the fingers of the crew,
It froze the water in the hold.

They fed the fires, their fuel spent,
With short'ning wine, and oil, and grain,
And chafed in wild bewilderment
Their stony limbs, and wept with pain.

They fed the feeble fires till naught
Was left for fuel or for food ;
And still the icy drift I brought,
And chilled the torrent of their blood.

And blis'tring snow fell thick and fast,
On deck it lay in dreary hills ;
Thick ice clung round each rope and mast,
And hung in sheeny icicles.

And, sealed with frost as with a seal,
The big blocks stood in icy mails ;
The great sheets hung like bars of steel—
So stiff they could not reef the sails.

At length the ocean ceased to flow—
It froze and bound her ; far and near
Great crags of ice and peaks of snow
Lifted their foreheads chill and drear.

And through the shrouds I whistled keen,
And drave the luckless vessel fast,
'Twixt icebergs, and the awful sheen
Of crashing floes and hummucks vast.

Then, like a frightful dream which fills
The soul with loathing, in a trice
I wrought a horror in the hills
And whuling caverns' of ice.

And round the ship I shrieked and howled ;
What mortal crew could brave my glee ?
Their souls fled upward as I scowled,
And left the lifeless clay with me.

The attitude each body had
When life departed still it kept ;
Some clutched the ropes, despairing, mad—
Some knelt in pray'r, some crouched and wept.

One even smiled—a strange, sweet smile,
Tinged with regret and musing thought—
As nothing could his soul despoil
Of the deep joy with which 'twas fraught.

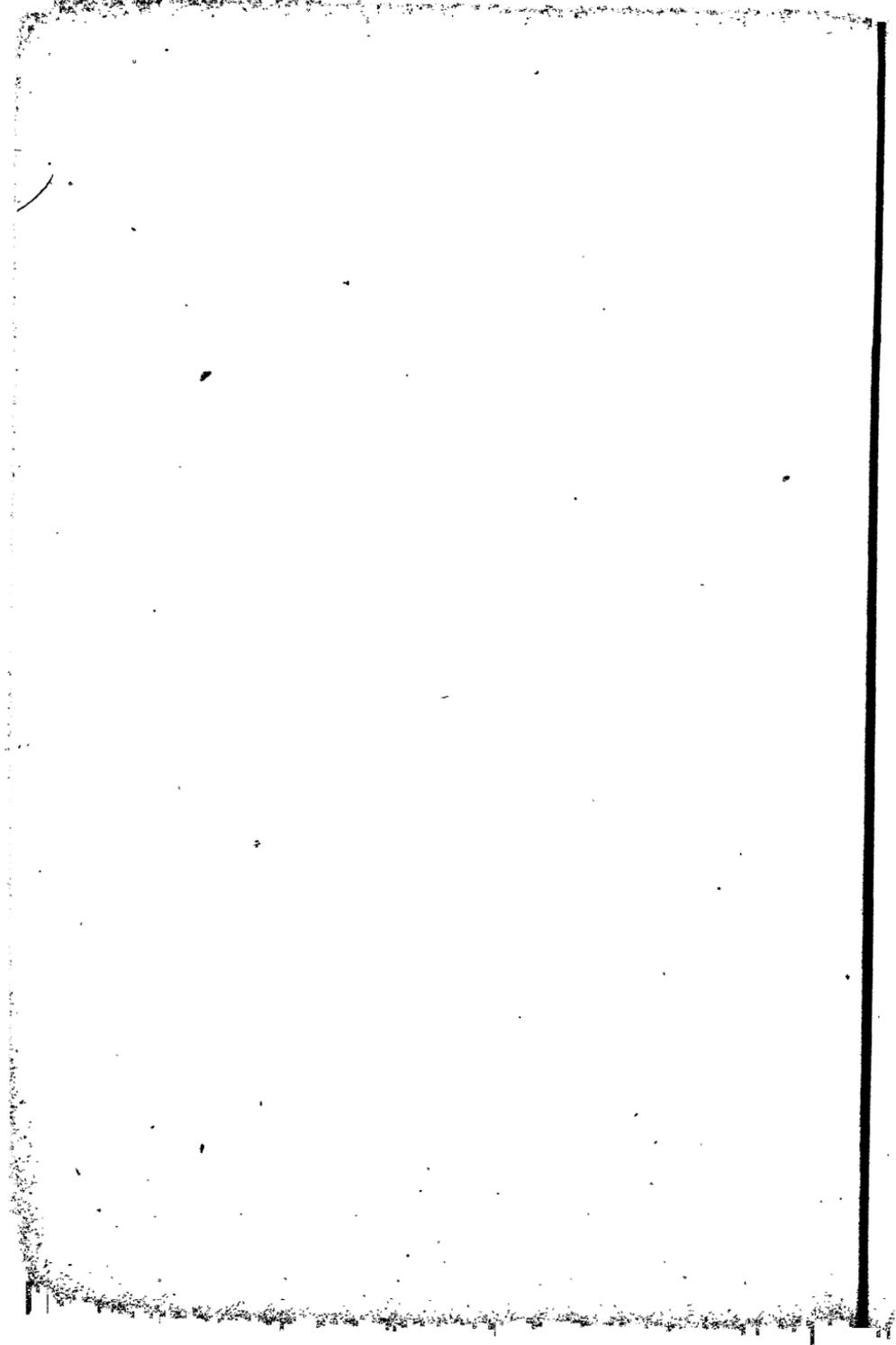
The look-out man upon the mast
Still seemed as he was wont to be,
On watch—but he was frozen fast :
He peered into eternity.

The captain sat before his log,
Holding his pen as if to trace
Some words, and at his feet a dog
Lay crouched, and looking in his face.

And near him his fond sister leant
Her weary head upon her hand ;
In her fair, lovely face were blent
Pity and hope and high command.

And all were dead, and stony cold,
As cold as ever the dead can be ;
And the frost of years, and the rime of old
Still cling to their flesh and garmentry.

For, though all dead, they still are there :
No more by toil and trouble worn,
Silent as shadows, free from care,
They wait the dreadful coming morn. .



NIGHT AND MORN.

THE sun is stepping upward in his might
To wake the West from sleep ;
And, while his shining hair and brows of light
Lift like a giant's o'er the Western deep,
He fills with shadow every Eastern eye
Which saw him sink in bright obscurity—
In cloudy canopy of gold-like cloud.

The Mufti saw him sink, and cried aloud
To Allah and his seer,
Then straightway every Arab knee was bowed.
The Moor in the wide sand-wave struck his spear,
Gazed a mute prayer to Mecca and the shrine
Where sleeps the dust of Mahomet divine,
And slipt into the darkness of a dream.

The patient Hindoo caught his latest gleam,
In penance for his caste,
Self-tortured by the ancient sacred stream.
The Parsee viewed the glory fading fast,
And wept his banishment from Khonzar's vale.
The Guebres sighed to see their god-head fail,
And felt the powers of darkness round them strong.

In distant China there was heard a song;
The mystery, and the doom
Of viewless ancestry employed it long
Where maids at shut of eve burnt sweet perfume.
The dreamer watched him fade into the West,
And sorrowed till his opiate wreathings blest
.Wrought sleep in mystic palaces divine.

The Abyssinian saw the light decline,
And felt his amulet.
All ebon limbs grew cold beneath the line,
Though not a Libyan leaf with dew was wet.
The driver on his noiseless camel-strove
To gain the desert fountain and the grove,
Ere howling monsters met him on the plain.

He sank from sight beyond the ancient main
Of Egypt, and the Nile.
The awful tombs of Djizeh gloomed again,
The Sphinx, unmoved, turned from his setting smile.
Then did the mourning women moot their sighs
In chambers of the East, and aching eyes
Bewept the dead who never could return.

Far Abyla and Calpe saw him burn
The ocean in his ire,
And, like a god indignant, from him spurn
The glorious sea-swell in a mist of fire.
Once more he looked, then plunged into the wave,
And left a myst'ry brooding on his grave,
And o'er the land a solemn darkness drew.

So Asia's flow'rs sloped to the West anew,
And closed their leaves in sleep.
So Afric's sons forgot their cursed hue,
So Europe's outposts lay in darkness deep.
Helvellyn saw the flaming light no more,
And sacred Snowdon hid his summits hoar
In domes of mist and vaults of sullen gloom.

And now he stands above the wat'ry doom,
And views our songless shores.
No sea-maid doth her glassy eyes illumine
With fatal light, nor any siren pours
Her treacherous melody at ocean's brink.
No elf doth seek the cloud, no fairies shrink
Into their primrose tents of shady gold.

But, in the ancient woods the Indian old,
Unequal to the chase,
Sighs as he thinks of all the paths untold,
No longer trodden by his fleeting race.
And, Westward, on far-stretching prairies damp,
The savage shout, and mighty bison tramp
Roll thunder with the lifting mists of morn.

INNOCENCE.

Oft I have met her
In openings of the woods and pleasant ways,
Where flow'rs beset her,
And hanging branches crowned her head with bays.

Oft have I seen her walk
Through flow'r-decked fields unto the oaken pass,
Where lay the slumb'ry flock,
Swoll'n with much eating of the tender grass.

Oft have I seen her stand
By wandering brooks o'er which the willows met ;
Or where the meadow-land
Balmed the soft air with dew-mist drapery wet.

Much patting of the wind
Had bloomed her cheek with colour of the rose ;
Rare beauty was entwined
With locks and looks in movement or repose.

Beneath her sloping neck
Her bosom-gourds plumped mellow-white as spray ;
Stainless, without a fleck,
The air which heaved them was less pure than they.

Strolling in evening's eye,
There came unto her airy laughter-chimes,
Nature's night-hymn and cry,
Leaf-stirring madrigals and river-rhymes.

The floriage of spring,
And summer's coronals were hers in trust,
Till came the winter-king
To droop their sweetness into native dust.

His sharp, embracing wind,
And wavering snow, or heaped in rimy hills,
She loved ; ay ! she could bind
On Fancy's brow his charmèd icicles.

The dingle and the glade,
The brown-ribbed mountains and tall, talking trees
Seemed fairer while she stayed,
And drank of their dim meanings and old ease.

Thoughts such as day unfolds
From starry quietude and noiseless sleep ;
Scenes which the fancy holds
In easy thralldom in her joyous keep ;

Visions of high delight,
And storied legends, cool as the dim eve,
Came thronging faintly-bright,
The habit of her inner life to weave.

Dreamland and Other Poems.

Nor was she dead to pain—
Another's was her own ; all griefs, all care
Which crush souls down amain,
She ever sought for, always wished to share.

And chiefly she did love
To soothe the widow's ruth, and orphans' tears ;
With counsel from above,
Alleviating woe, allaying fears.

All these, and more, were hers :
What man may speak not of, but think upon ;
What the pure soul avers
In secret solitude before God's throne.

There was a quiet grace
In all her actions, tok'ning gentleness,
Yet firm intent to trace
The paths of duty leading up to bliss.

He who created night,
Earth, and the biding stars, was all her guide ;
She worshipped in his sight,
She sighed, she wept, she flung away her pride.

She thought of One who bore
The awful burden of the world's despair—
What could she give him more
Than blameless thoughts, a simple life and fair ?

She was and is, for still
She lives and moves upon the grass-green earth,
And, as of old, doth fill
Her heart with peace, still mingling tears with mirth.

O ! could we find her out,
And learn of her this wild'ring maze to tread !
And, eased of every doubt,
Let deadly passions linger with the dead.

But truth is hard to find,
And simple souls are oft in error's thrall,
And faith too oft is blind :
We know a part and yet we know not all.

THE BEAUTIFUL LAND BY THE SEA.

FAR away in the West there's a beautiful land,
And it lies by the shore of the sea,
And spirits have flown to that region unknown,
To welcome and wait you and me.

And all the way there we will travel with care,
Nor the frost nor the rain shall you see,
For the angels of sleep will come with us and keep
The fair weather for you and me.

And the region of dreams, which with wondrous forms teems,
Shall be travelled by you and me,
Ere we see the far light of the waves day and night
In that beautiful land by the sea.

But when we, unwearied, have reached it at last,

What shall we do there? Let me see:

We will build us a home of the starlight and foam

In our beautiful land by the sea.

We will build us a home of the starlight and foam,

And the waves' voice our music will be,

And the Zephyrs will play by our doors night and day

In our beautiful land by the sea.

And ev'ry sweet smell that in Summer doth dwell,

And ev'ry fair flow'r of the lea

Shall be wasted no more as in seasons of yore

In our beautiful land by the sea.

For the music which flows from the wide open rose

With the lily's voice blended will be,

And with us will come to inhabit our home

In our beautiful land by the sea.

And ev'ry fair thing, which the ocean can bring,
 Shall be wafted for you and me
By the waves and the winds, till a harbour it finds
 In our beautiful land by the sea.

And up from the shore shall the relics of yore
 Be carried for you and me :
Old songs of the dead whose wild echoes have fled
 From the dim world of memory ;

And the vases which keep the pale nectar of sleep,
 And the weird books of destiny,
And the vans which upraise the spirit to gaze
 O'er the blue hills of reverie ;

And the gems and the gold of the realms of old,
 And the rich embroidery,
And the sumptuous things of embalmed kings
 From the crypts of the isles of the sea.

And the ocean shall flow, and time come and go,
And ages on ages shall flee,
And bear to the glooms of their spiritless tombs
The dust of the slave and the free.

But the footsteps and breath of malevolent death
Shall be shorn, ere they reach you and me,
Of their ailments unclean and corruptions obscene,
In our beautiful land by the sea.

THE LITTLE WREN.

A LITTLE wren comes hopping slowly,
Picking, hopping by the gate ;
Picking, hopping, bending lowly :
“ Little wren, where is thy mate ?”

“ I neither know nor care,” said she—
And little wren here cocked her head—
“ For he has used me cruelly,
I wish, indeed, that he were dead !”

“ Ah, little wren, how can you say
You wish your little husband dead,
When he, perhaps, is far away,
For you and yours a-gath'ring bread ?”

“ Why no,” said she, “ ’tis not quite that :
This morning, ere we left the nest,
He billed and cooed and was quite pat,
Yet, afterwards, may I be blest,

“ If, when some cherries we had found,,
He did not snap up two to one,
And then went piping round and round,
And swore he did it all in fun !

“ And that’s not all ; for, yesterday,
When we flew down to have a drink—
Down yonder by the little bay—
What did he do to me ? Just think !

“ He pitched me from the margin slickly,
And, sure as I am not a marten,
If me he had not picked out quickly,
I should have been, sir, drowned, that’s certain.

“And that’s not all ; for, one night, he,
After that sort of time called ‘ old,’
Came home and railed and swore at me—
Ay, swore ! because the nest was cold.

“And that was true, for, purposely,
I made the nest unpleasant all ;
And that was right, for why dared he
To stay away from me at all ?

“And all day long with tricks like these
He vexes, angers me,” she said ;
“And so, because he loves to tease,
I wish indeed that he were dead !”

“Ah, little wren, can you so hate
Your little friend, you spiteful elf ?”
“Why there’s the rub,” said she, “my mate
I love as dearly as myself.

" Yet he so frets me with his ways,
And keeps me in such fear and dread,
That I have thought these last few days
'Twere better far if he were dead."

" You little wren, come, tell me truly :
Before the wretched cherry feud,
Had he not brought the rations duly
For you and for the callow brood ?"

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" Why, yes, that's true ; but, then, I say,
'Tis no more than he ought, I think ;
And, then, what earthly right had he
To duck me when I went to drink ?"

" Why, little wren, he did reclaim
You from the flood, as you have told " ;
" Yes ! yes ! But, yet, why did he blame
His wren because the nest was cold ?"

And so this silly wren went on,
And teased her silly little head,
Still crying out, with many a moan,
" I wish that he or I were dead !"

TO A MORNING CLOUD.

WHY stray'dst thou from the unseen realm of wonder,
To mock my soul, which fain would visit thee,
And roam unwearied, exploring eagerly
Thy furthest vale where sleeps the infant Thunder ?
Alas, so fair art thou I fain would be
As one who knew not, and who ne'er could know
Those yearnings deep which sicken in the heart ;
Those idle thoughts which have in fancy's flow
Their frenzied utterance and unvalued part.
Then the fair form of things would I pass by,
And view thee, glorious cloud, unheedingly.

What tortured rocks are those ? What mountains rolling ?
What healthy throng of men and maidens sing
By yonder lake, and all unseen ? What echoing
And shouts are those ? What unheard voices calling ?
And, far away, by frequent brook and spring,
And leafy woods, behind yon snowy hills,
What jocund shepherds welcome in the morn
With out-poured beakers ta'en from sparkling rills
Which sing forever through the tasselled corn ?
Ah me ! what happy, happy swains are there !
What happy maids ! what trysts ! what joyance fair !

Who built those palaces and lofty towers,
With crownèd battlements and standards drooping ?
And, see ! what knights pass through the arched ways stooping,
In haste to join fair ladies in their bowers,
Or bevy-laughers in yon gardens grouping ?
From what far city do those strange folk bring
Their gleaming sapphires and manorial gold ?
And whence the uncouth people following
Their fleecy flocks escaping from the fold—
Those mounting herds whose lives so long have been
In scented meadow-lands and pastures green ?

Methinks I hear the rolling murmur deep
Of cascades tumbling o'er the lofty heights,
Where often, often on the starlit nights,
The elves go dancing down each rocky steep,
And never stop until each one alights
On grassy plains low-stretching to the sea.
There late have come, from islands far away,
The long-lost Argonauts with shouts and glee.
Their moored craft I see within yon bay—
Large galleons; scathed by many a whistling breeze,
And barks, and amber-freighted argosies.

And yonder there is he perchance who tells
Of cloudlands lying westward from the sun,
Where forest-threading creeks and streamlets run,
By whose banks grow the fadeless asphodels,
Where every wind is faint with odours won
From summer boughs, and bees are feasting ever,
Nor dream at all of laying by their store
Against the hateful snow which cometh never—
No, not one hour, to whiten hill-sides o'er,
And droop, and quite abash the forest's pride,
And wretched make the vales and meadows wide.

Why comest thou to edge our mortal cares,
Dissembler of the tempest and the storm ?
The glory of thy perishable form
Is as a momentary dream, which bares
Mysterious feet in fields and forests warm.
We know thee, that for our ancestral sin
Thy beauty shall be wasted like our toil.
Ruin shall come upon thee, darkness win
Thy stainless peaks, and poison-fires uncoil
Like asps within thy vales, yet enforced here,
Our minds invite thy fleeting fancies dear !

O golden shape! Fair, full-blown flow'r of heaven !
Gift of the dawn and far-possessing sea !
Thou foster-child of sunshine and the free
Wild air of summer, wherefore art thou given
To mock us with delights which quickly flee
Th' inviting of our souls? Art thou, O God !
Offended that thy weary children groan,
And wither in their anguish at thy rod,
And think it but small ill to walk alone
On this thine earth, wishing their cares away,
Yet finding them grow deadlier day by day ?

O 'tis enough that the sharp solstice brings
Numb snow and frost to bite us to the heart ;
That devilish pain and sickness smite apart
Ease and keen pleasure in the face of things.
Those gifts from heaven could we take athwart
Our little eager paths, and bear the cross
Meekly ; yet they are nought to these : hope dies
And leaves us desolate, and love is loss,
And hatred burns our bones, and mercy flies
Our sundering souls, and progress funeral
Towards the love that reigns and rules o'er all.

Our pain hath no dismissal, and our joys
But speed us to our ashes. In life's charm
There lifts a cold, intolerable arm
Which smites the very infant at its ploys.
Our comfort wastes, and fair forms come to harm—
Naught lasts but sorrow, all things else decay,
And time is full of losing and forgetting,
Our pleasure is as iron and rusts away,
Our days are grief, and scarcely worth their setting.
Wherein there is repose and slumber deep,
And therefore are we thankful for our sleep.

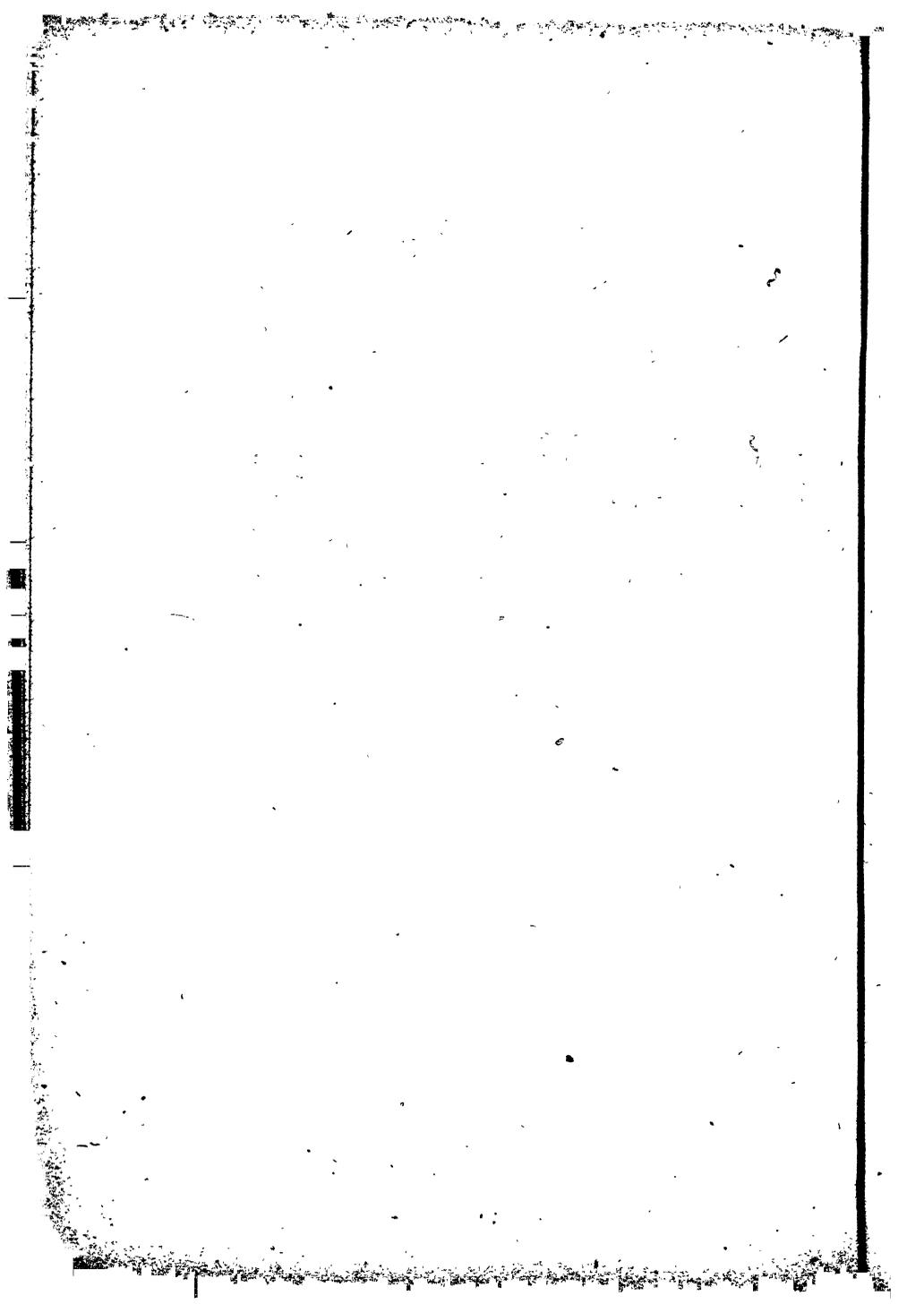
We all are thankful for a little sleep,
For therein there is peace and easy death,
And solace for our sad, impatient breath.
Perchance therein we lose ourselves, and keep
Part of an ageless silence ; yet one saith
We are but born to linger and to fear,
To feel harsh fleeting time and aimless woe.
Th' inscrutable decree which brought us here
Makes myriads wretched and shall keep them so
Till death uplifts the bars for those who wait
And yearn along the soundless gulphs of fate.

Still let us wait beneath the glorious sun,
And, be his light or strengthened or subdued,
Let light come to our eyes, for it is good
To see the small flow'rs open one by one,
And see the wild wings fleeting through the wood.
They grow and perish uncomplainingly,
And blameless live and end their blameless years.
And mayhap we are blind, and cannot see
The rainbow shining in a mist of tears ;
And mayhap we are dull, and cannot feel
The touch which strengthens and the lips which heal.

To a Morning Cloud.

61

What sudden haste ! Why art so quickly going,
Thou fair beatitude ? Ah, canst not stay
To drowse our aching sense one summer day,
And feed the light within so faintly glowing ?
Alas, it heedeth not, and, far away,
The breezy standards wave o'er happier fields.
But are we fixed ? O soul, is there no dawn,
No rising of some brighter sun which yields
A welcome recompense for pain ? Drift on,
Thou mimic world ! Thou art not all alone—
We, too, are drifting to the dim unknown.



LINES TO MOUNT ST. PATRICK.

OFt have I wandered by the pebbly shore,
And in the woods have had mine own delight,
And quiet pleasure.

Far-seen expanses, both by day and night,
Have warmed my sight,
And caused my longing spirit soar
From common sounds up to a lofty measure.

Yet never did I greet the clear sublime,
Until with patient steps I clomb thy steep,
And looked beyond
A thousand forests yielding music deep ;
And saw the thunder leap
In mist from cataracts, nor heard their rhyme
Tired in dim distance though mine ear was fond.

Out o'er the pleasant villages I looked,
While morning swept the haze from meadows wide.
And, far away,
In op'ning woods I saw where Bonnechère brooked
To swell great Uttwa's tide,
And where large streams grew small, and little rills
Were dimmed from sight afar by distance grey,
Wedged in the heavens stood the dark blue hills.

What antique forms I wot lay undescried
Beyond those hills in lonely valleys deep
Sweet Fancy drew—
Of captive maidens weeping side by side,
Or fairy hermitages lost in sleep.
For there the distance blent with dim romance,
And clasped my thought away in regions old.
I saw the shadows creep
From ancient days, while dream-like forms anew
Bestrode the earth, and, in a waking trance,
Lived o'er again the wondrous age of gold.

O happy, happy mount, which doth extend
A wild outlying space for roving thought ;
Spurning the plain
Where sorrowing eyes and rankling cares abide ;
Where hapless men in weary tangle caught,
Narrow life's circumstance to purpose base :
Thee would I ever seek to ease my pain !
Nor long, while up thy silent slopes I wend,
Or loll in idlesse on thy swarthy side,
For Heav'n to take me from the summer days,
Away from thee to view Creation wide.

ADDRESS TO A MAID.

If those twin gardens of delight,
Thine eyes, were ever in my sight,
I would no pinks or roses seek,
Save those which bloom upon thy cheek.
I would no pleasant perfume breathe
Save that which parts thy snowy teeth,

Or in sweet warblings e'er rejoice.
Save when I listened to thy voice.
Than in the citadel of love
I would no other dwelling have.
For neighbours, then, the jewelled pair,
Who part each night thy long, loose hair,
Or other twain who sit upon
Thy swelling breast as on a throne,
Or those two, wand'ers since their birth,
Who set small seals about the earth.
I would no other seasons find
Than the reversals of thy mind.
Thus, thy delight and joy would be
Enough of summer warmth for me ;
And thy displeasure next would hold
A season short of wintry cold.
No other food would I beseech
Than such as thy smooth chin could reach,
Or what I otherwise might sip
About its suburbs, on a lip,
Or cheek, or, higher, where the snow
In stainless white the brow doth show.

Address to a Maid.

6

No other sickness should I feel
Than what thy queenly touch could heal,
Or any weariness or pain
That thou couldst not remove again.
Thus all delights would meet in thee,
And I should live, and live to be,
(Whilst dwelling in thy many graces)
A scorner of those paltry places
Which cumber pleasant spots of earth,
And wis not of the wondrous birth
Of love, or of the keen degrees
Of love's wan languor and disease.

Why laugh, my love, all love to scorn,
And, like a stalk of fruitless corn,
Nor yield nor fill one golden ear
With promise for the Future's wear?
Why hide those eyes? Enough that night
Finds each, like some starved eremite,
Shut in with coffin-lids of snow,
Which chill the fateful forms below.
Why hide them? They their lustre win
From fairer fields and floods within,

And whatsoever thence is ta'en
Those eyes, my love, must give again.

Why turn, O love, why turn away,
Like sunshine from an April day ?
The past is dreary, dumb and cold,
And love and youth are growing old.
The past doth wear no weather-locks,
Bestirs no fields, and feeds no flocks.
The past is like a hidden grot,
For years unseen, and so forgot
Till stumbled on—and then are found
Some relics. When no longer sound,
Or form of thine is heard or seen,
Thou art the past, and then I ween
Thou art forgotten, too, and, lo !
Art buried, though thou think'st not so.

Why look so haughty and so proud,
As Time himself to thee had bowed,
And cringed and craved with humble air
Permission to preserve thee fair ?

Time cares no whit for thy delight
In beauty, or in beauty's might.
Thou canst not coax him with thine eyes,
Or bluff him with asperities !
Thou canst not hold him in thy fee,
A vassal to thy sovereignty ;
For Time his obligation pays
With silv'ry nights and golden days,
Till all are quit at last, and paid
In full by mattock, trench and spade.

This Time shall come with finger cold
And wrinkle up thy smooth-set mould ;
Shall come like hoar-frost in the night,
Shall come like darkness in the light,
And blind thy sombre eyes with tears,
And darken thought with sullen fears,
And, taking thee within his arms,
Shall husk thy body of its charms,
And, for a garment, clothe thee in
A frosty snood and wrinkled skin,
And for the music of thy voice
Shall give thee groans, and for thy choice

A stick, or crutch, to pick thy way
Adown some autumn's golden day.

Then, being mortal, be not proud,
And—love confessed, and love allowed—
I'll shield thee with my soul and give
Thee kiss for kiss, and, as I live,
Use the deep wonder of thine eyes
As daily food. And thy sweet sighs
Shall melt into the warmth of mine,
And my pale breath shall meet with thine,
And my lips cling to thee, and sleep
Shall part us not. Not any deep
Or the wan, waney light of dreams,
Or utter space, or height, or gleams
Of wasteful lightning, or the blare
Of storms, or any misty shore
Of sightless sea, or wealth, or fame,
Or any voice that calls thy name,
Or pestilence, or pois'nous breath
Of calumny—not even death,
Or the cold, far-averted eyes
And angry mouths of deities,

Or the cold unseen feet which press
Earth's sullen graves shall dispossess,
In hell beneath or heaven above,
My soul of thee, O love !

W I N T E R .

WHEN gadding snow makes hill-sides white,
And icicles form more and more ;
When niggard Frost stands all the night,
And taps at snoring Gaffer's door ;
When watch-dogs bay the vagrant wind,
And shiv'ring kine herd close in shed ;
When kitchens chill, and maids unkind,
Send rustic suitors home to bed—
Then do I say the winter cold,
It seems to me, is much too bold.

When winking sparks run up the stalk,
And faggots blaze within the grate,
And, by the ingle-cheek, I talk
With shadows from the realm of fate ;
When authors old, yet ever young,
Look down upon me from the walls,
And songs by spirit-lips are sung
To pleasant tunes and madrigals,—
Then do I say the winter cold
Brings back to me the joys of old.

When morn is bleak, and sunshine cool,
And trav'lers' beards with rime are grey ;
When frost-nipt urchins weep in school,
And sleighs creak o'er the drifted way ;
When smoke goes quick from chimney-top,
And mist flies through the open hatch ;
When snow-flecks to the window hop,
And childrens' tongues cling to the latch,—
Then do I sigh for summer wind,
And wish the winter less unkind.

When merry bells a-jingling go,
And prancing horses beat the ground ;
When youthful hearts are all aglow,
And youthful gladness rings around ;
When gallants praise, and maidens blush
To hear their charms so loudly told,
Whilst echoing vale and echoing bush
Hallow their laughter, fold on fold,—
Then do I think the winter meet,
For gallants free and maidens sweet.

When great pines crack with mighty sound,
And ice doth rift with doleful moan ;
When luckless wanderers are found
Quite stiff in wooded valleys lone ;
When ragged mothers have no sheet
To shield their babes from winter's flaw ;
When milk is frozen in the teat,
And beggars shiver in their straw,—
Then do I hate the winter's cheer,
And weep for springtime of the year.

When ancient hosts their guests do meet,
And fetch old jerums from the bin ;
When viols loud and dancers' feet
In lofty halls make ^{the} mickle din ;
When jokes pass round, and nappy ale
Sends pleasure mounting to the brain ;
When hours are filched from night so pale,
And youngsters sigh and maids are fain,—
Then do I hail the wintry breeze—
Which brings such ripened joys as these.

But, when the winter chills my friend,
And steals the heart-fire from his breast ;
Or woos the ruffian wind to send
One pang to rob him of his rest—
All gainless grows the Christmas cheer,
And gloomy seems the new year's light,
For joy but lives when friends are near,
And dies when they do quit the sight.—
Then, winter, do I cry, " thy greed
Is great, ay, thou art cold indeed !"

S U M M E R .

HIE me now, and give me rest
In great fields by Summer drest ;
Where the moist pea-bloom is seen
Smiling on the tender bean ;
Where the corn unfolds its silk,
And unhoards earth's balmy milk ;
Or where stand the oaten leaves,
Dreaming of the autumn sheaves ;
Or where lovingly entwine
The vetchling and the sweet woodbine.
Or let me entranced go
Where the heavy hautboys grow,
And receive the first impress
Of the summer's fruitfulness.

Urged by silver-footed June,
Summer dons her flowery shoon,

And, where Spring was wont to be,
On the green, herd-haunted lea,
Sports in youthful gaiety.

Now she lays her cheek full low,
Bosoming all flow'rs which grow,
Till the blinkards ope their eyes,
And from prison-dreams arise,
Wond'ring at the fond caress
Which sets free their loveliness.

Now she roams the valleys through,
Licking up the clammy dew
Which bows down the tender grass,
Sick-sore with the wealth it has.
This she takes where roses pine,
And drops it softly from her eyne,
Till they quick forget again
Irksome days and faintish pain.

Now the lazy, lagging hours
Drowse within her sun-built bowers,
And her leafy henchmen keep
Linked arms in popped sleep.

Silently in musky dell
All dew-dropping zephyrs dwell,
While the smooth, eloinèd sky
Feeds her flocks of clouds which lie
Basking 'neath with sunny smiles
Ere they hasten to their toils,
And from ocean bring again
Thunder-gloom and panting rain.

O Day! give me all thy beams,
All thy warm, embodied dreams,
Such as pant in meadow still,
By streamlet brink, or upland hill.
O Fields! give me all your flow'rs
Which beguile the wanton Hours,
All sweet dews which night distils,
All your shallow, whisp'ring rills,
All your deeply perfumed breath,
Ev'ry note each small bird hath,
Ev'ry breeze by woods delayed,
Each cool place those woods have made—

So may I thy riches prove
Till Sleep bring me dreams of love,

Dreams of by-gone chivalry,
Wassailing and revelry,
And lordly seasons long since spent
In bout, and joust, and tournament.
And, mid visioned feats of arms,
Fierce attacks and rude alarms,
Let my dreams run back to thee,
Chastely fair Eurydice!
To the lover and the lute,
Which made the mighty torrents mute,
And rumbling hell itself grow meek,
While iron tears from Pluto's cheek
Rolled down. Then let processions pass—
Bacchanals, each with his lass,
Waving mighty clusters round,
Tipsily, until the ground
Purples with the clammy juice,
Spoilt for quaffing, spoilt for use.
And let nymph-attended Pan
Come in habit of a man,
Singing songs of reeds and rushes,
Elder brakes and hazel bushes.

See him swing and jig about,
Whilst the merry, rabble rout
Chases round with joinèd hands,
Twitching sily, when he stands,
At his back; his garments tearing,
All his swart, brute-buttocks baring.
And let Comus and his crew
Shout until the welkin blue
Claps its hands in quick refrain,
And echoes o'er and o'er again.
Flushed and jolly is his face,
With something of Olymp'an grace
Still ling'ring on his beamy brow :
Now lolls he on the ground, and now
His youthful revellers recline,
Draining beakers full of wine,
Or, upstarting from the green,
With a wild, unsteady mien,
Tread a measure on the sod,
In honor of the mirthful god.

Then let my spirits sink or swim,
And now grew bright, or now grow dim ;

For Hermes waves his mystic wand,
And all is hushed—the rivers stand ;
The rain sleeps midway from the earth,
And lab'ring mothers long for birth ;
The birds hang motionless in air,
And, Silence, aching everywhere,
A dumb and heavy darkness brings
Upon all manner of sweet things.
Lo ! creepeth in my hearing then
The windy tread of lifeless men—
Grim skeletons in rattling hosts,
Wan spectres, and unhouseled ghosts !
They draw anear, they lean upon me,
They lay their clammy fingers on me !
Hell-doomed, of floating gloom I drink,
And none to save, I sink ! I sink !
Dear Mother ! hear a mortal's call,
And help me, save me ere I fall.

Awake ! Awake ! The woods are bright
With mirror-leaves and slumb'ry light.
The streams are singing madrigals,
And bird to bird in gladness calls.

Buzzing whispers float about,
And, from afar, the ploughman's shout
And dinner-hollas are upborne
From trumpet-wood and valley-horn.

Ye who faint with city moil,
Come and stay with me awhile.
We will find a mossy bed,
With awning branches overhead,
And juicy coolness of large leaves,
Much longed for by the swelt'ring beeves,
And, enravished, we will go
Where the honeysuckles grow—
We will pluck them. Come with me,
To the vales and forest free,
Where the runnels, as of yore,
Keep for us a varied store
Of gleams and glooms and pebbled edges,
Mallows, pipy reeds and sedges.
We will haunt the meadows all,
And barren leas where berries fall
From spiny twigs in juicy sweetness,
And mark betimes the nimble fleetness

Of startled wild-deer breaking cover,
Or lazy flight of fat-winged plover,
And, our pleasures to enhance
With a new delight, perchance
Waylay some Driad as she broods
In silence mid leaves-dropping woods.

Now the big, full-breasted sun
All his downward course hath run,
And silent vesper shineth through
Her heavenly shroud of purple hue.
The hour has come for greetings sweet,
The quiet hour for blessings meet,
And sober souls may now repast
On what the day had overcast ;
For Summer quiteth not the sight,
But dwelleth, mingleth with the night,
And crowns her hulky crags and trees
With light from starry palaces.
Now weird Imagination finds
A cave where lodge night-whisp'ring winds,
Sees Hecate gleaning baleful dew
By lonely tarn or rustling yew,

Or hears the night-hag muttering
O'er bubbling brook or haunted spring,
Aghast she flies the hated scene,
With wild affright and startled mien,
Then stops, and broods, and starts again
At thievish shadows on the plain

But purer fancies will be ours !
We will haunt the moon-lit bow'rs,
Where matchless odours faint in flight
From primrose fountains of the night.
And, amid our varied joys,
We will muse on Summer's ploys :—
How no partial gifts are hers,
But now the palms and now the firs
Are dozed with kisses balmy-sweet
From lips which breathe a pulsing heat.
How she is the blessed wafter
Of forest tunes and streamy laughter,
When Spring hath lifted in a trice
The Winter's heavy lid of ice,
And travels east, and travels west,
Till the nations all are blest.

Then will we mingle sad with sweet,
And think how wonderfully fleet
Are brightest things, how quick o'ercast
With the shadow, with the past ;
And how to blackened embers turn
The hearts of those poor ones that mourn
Excess of joy ; ay, how they waste
Their fateful lives who ever haste
From shine to shine, till in the shade
Of darkling years, where truth has made
A bitter tomb for king and clown,
They lay their loathed pleasures down.
Then will we think upon, and bless
The wise whose heart ne'er beats amiss ;
Whose charity is large, whose hand
Is full of counsels featly planned
To trick despair of ev'ry spoil,
And quicken hope, and brighten toil ;
Who knows the pleasures without pain,
Fast-followers in Virtue's train,
And, 'neath their softly-dropping balm,
Lightly layeth palm to palm,
Till his hands are incense-full.

Sleep, now, and dream of fruitage cool
Mellowing on the heavy boughs.
Sleep and dream of upturned brows
Ever gazing where afar
The heav'ns' own tender blossoms are
Ev'ry moment fainter growing.
Sleep and dream of dear ones glowing
With delight, and lovely all,
While the rosy music-fall
Leaps 'twixt their snowy-tinted teeth.
Sleep and dream of ev'ry heath
Where blooms resort for peacefulness,
And unseen fingers love to dress
Fair, healthy bow'rs and leafy ways
Through the long Summer's shining days.

7

MY LOVE—A RHAPSODY.

WHO hath not seen my love? Her violet eyes
Like morning blooms awake, and, all aglow,
The heav'nly fruitage yet untasted lies
On the full lip which swells and smiles below.
The movements of her noiseless feet keep time
To tremulous music of a world-old song
Which all the Hours do breathe into her ear;
And many, many languish in their prime,
For hopeless love of her who hath been long
My chiefest joy through the full-seasoned year.

Be not too boist'rous, or to free to take
Those curls into thy lap, O Summer wind !
But, ever gently, let the faint breeze make
Cool places for her midst the leaves, or find
Some dome-like cloud to hide her from the sun.
And, Winter Solstice, when you draw anear,
Breathe not too rudely on her tender form—
Ah, make not chill my love ! for she hath won
My very soul from me, and I do fear
The rash snow-wreathing, and the heedless storm !

Who hath not seen my love ? Ye twining flow'rs,
I know she hath been with you, for you droop,
And pine for her fond presence, and the hours
Seem dull and dark when she no more doth stoop
To kiss away the dew-drops from each lip ;
And, O sad streamlets, tell me why ye mourn !
Mayhap it is for lack of those twin feet
Which she all carelessly is wont to dip,
And lave within your flood at eve's return,
When love's hours run to moments swift and sweet.

Mayhap ye grieve for her divided care—

(O fondest care which e'er did grace the earth !)

Yet still ye seem not unto her less fair,

Though love hath come to quiet down her mirth.

And, though sweet fancy flees your wanderings,

And lurks in love's own world within, and fears

And hopes new-born within her bosom swell,

Yet ev'ry lucent, dew-clad morning brings

Its cool delight, and, list'ning, still she hears

The vestal Nature hymning in her cell.

Here let me linger by my love's own stream,

And gaze into the water where it frets

In endless monotone, till, in a dream,

It slips away with me, and quite forgets

Its ancient haunts amid the peaceful woods.

Then, in another land, my love with me

Will sit and sing old summer-songs of youth

By its green banks, and take the amber floods

Of sunset, or the silence of the sea

To witness our firm oaths and plighted truth.

Yea, though she loved me not, still would I bring

A vision of her beauty to the mead,

Midst hummings soft, and music on the wing,

And daisies huddling with the tangled weed.

Still would I place pale blossoms in her hair,

And, in her lap, moist lillies, white and wan,

And meadow-sweet which rarest scent distils.

And all the wilds would know that she was there,

For I would call her name till Echo ran

From vale to vale, far-questioning the hills.

I ask not how this pleasing fondness came

Into my heart, and yet, for many a time,

I have been mirthful at love's very name,

Who now, alas! am vanquished ere my prime.

I ask not. 'Tis enough for me to feel

The quick pulse throbbing and the hastened breath,

When all the soul-fed brightness of her eyes

Doth gleam upon me: then my senses steal

Away from me, as from some saint who saith

Deep pray'rs, or maketh holy sacrifice.

My Love—a Rhapsody.

91

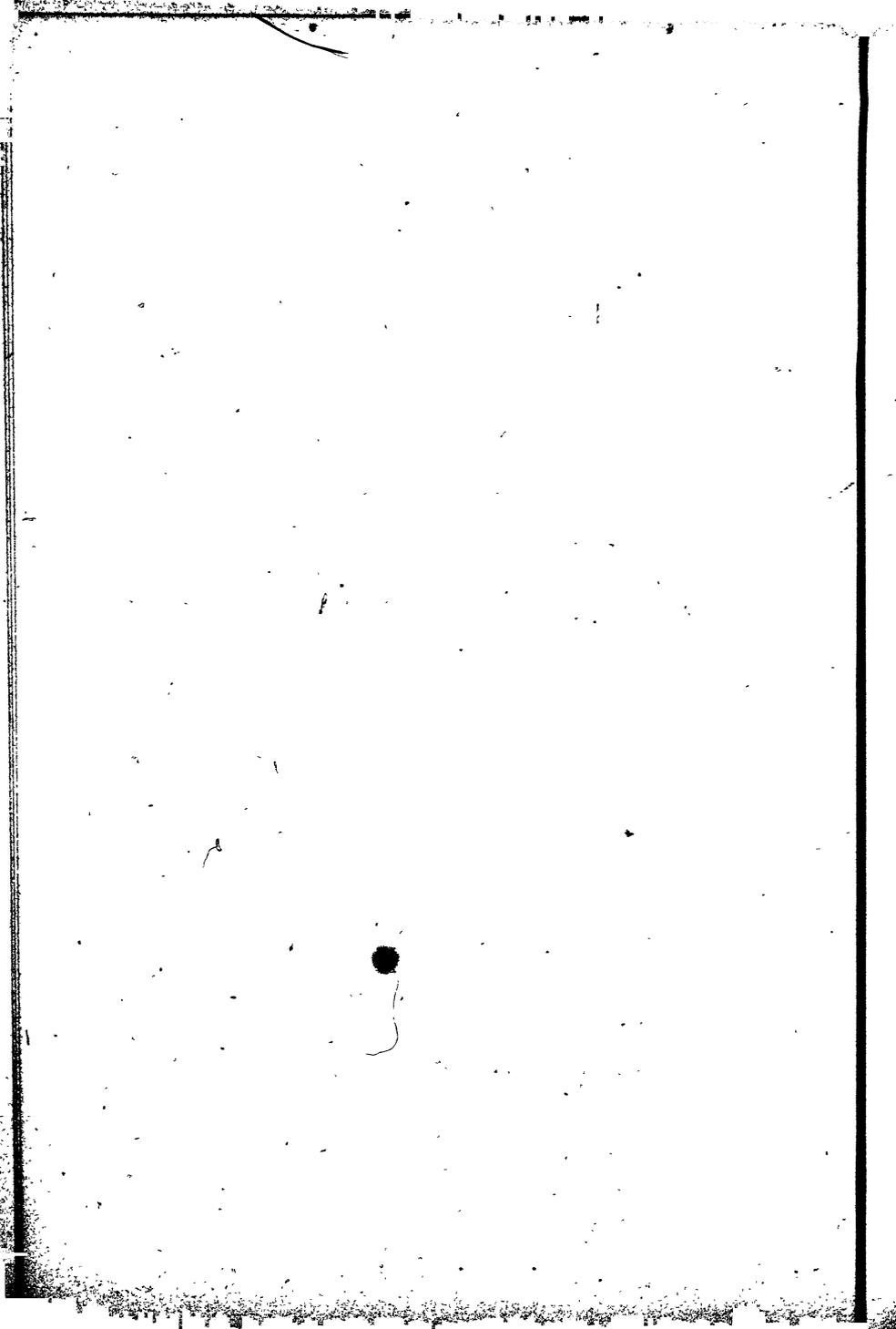
O that the twinkling eve were come again,
To feed with dew the soft melodious leaves,
And wake the nodding primrose which hath lain
For hours and hours unseen, like one who weaves
Forever his day-dreams and sits apart.

So to my love's own bower might I repair,
Where she, in slumber and sweet fancies wreathing,
Doth steal all beauty from the night—and there
Be mute, and still the beatings of my heart,
And kneel and listen to her quiet breathing.

Ay, I will listen while the wan stars wheel
Along the dusk, and watch each cloudy lid
Of thine, my love, until thou dost reveal
Those clearer planets which beneath lie hid.

Then wilt thou place thy paly cheek to mine,
And feel the sadness of love's ecstasy,
And I will kiss away thy painful tears.

Ah, closer, closer, may our thoughts entwine
This night, sweet love, this night while you and I
Make patient promise for the future years.



A L I C E.

"OH, where is the Spring, mother dear,

And when will it come back again?

For this sad snow fills me with fear,

And I long for the soft-falling rain.

And I long for the glad, green leaves,

And the sweet little birds on the wing,

And the swallows which chirp round the eaves—

Oh, Mother, let's go seek the Spring."

And then the fond mother did chide,
 Leaning over her sick one's brow,
Nor her sad, swift tears could she hide,
 Nor her sighs could she stifle I trow.
For the drooping child still cried, "Come!
 To the sweet spring mead let us pass,
For I long for the wild bee's hum,
 And the grasshopper's chirp in the grass."

"No! The rough winds are blowing, my child,
 And the sad snow falls far and wide,
And the bleak woods are leafless and wild,
 And sigh on the gloomy hill-side.
And all the eave-cabins are still,
 And the linnets in other lands sing,
And the thrush and the lone whippoorwill—
 Let us wait yet awhile for the Spring.

“ Oh no, let us seek it, I pray,
While yet I have strength, mother dear,
To roam o'er the hills far away,
And find the sweet bud of the year.
For I dream of the rivulet's brink,
And I sigh at the sad thoughts they bring,
When of all the sweet blossoms I think
Which gleam far away in the Spring.”

But the death-flakes began to fall,
And the soft cheeks grew white as snow,
And the eye-lids closed down like a pall
On the little round orbs below.
’Twas winter within and without,
For the fond little spirit took wing,
Nor could the bereaved mother doubt
That her soul was away to the spring!

TO MY PHOTOGRAPH.

GHOST of Myself! Go seek my fair,
And tell her of the days we've seen,
In pleasant palaces of air
Where we have been.

And tell my love how you and I
Have seen strange suns on dream-lakes glow,
And seen the night-mare-moon on high,
Ay, long ago.

How, often from the world unseen
We've slipt into the realm of things,
Where chance hath led through fields of green
Our wanderings.



How, often in the warm old woods,
Drowsed with the forest-fumes we've lain;
Or studied all their changing moods
In shine or rain.

Or traced the small streams to their source
High up amidst the meadow lands,
And parted branches in our course
With patient hands.

And studied out the storied hill,
The lake, the legendary vale,
Or read, midst leaves and shadows still,
Some breezy tale.

And drank where the wild Indians drank,
And walked together where they walked;
Ay, met their shades by many a bank,
And with them talked.

Or on the mountain summit stood,
High-gazing o'er the forests wide,
And stayed against the solitude
With silent pride.

Or caught the muse where myriads kept
Their hideous strife and needless wars,
Or where the silent city slept
Beneath the stars.

Or waked, amidst the hum of men,
From dreams of temples by the sea,
Of stoled priests, and old world ken,
And harmony.

Yes! waked to find some men unkind,
And others vain, and others false—
Cold, sordid reptiles who would bind
One's very pulse.

To my Photograph.

99

And women, too, with paltry shapes
Teazed out of nature's flowing forms—
The early devotees to tapes
And coffin-worms.

With here and there a pleasant soul
To cheer our travel to the grave,
And calm us ere we reach the goal
Where willows wave:

And art thou then my very sprite,
And not some crafty, cunning elf,
Deceiving me—my own glad light?
My second self?

Come, then, and toast with me my love
In one ripe draught—'tis meet, I think
That thou and I our joy should prove—
What! canst not drink?

Drear, voiceless shape, thou know'st not, then,
The cheerful usage of the vine ;
Its keen delights, beyond your ken,
Alone are mine.

Alack, poor shade ! I pity thee,
And, if the mode I could but know,
I quickly here would set you free
From your Limbo.

Yet this revenge there is in store,
This vantage hast thou over me,
That, though it seems not, I am more
A ghost than thee.

For, though thou canst not weep, or groan,
Or take life's pleasant things on trust,
Thou shalt, perchance, be looked upon
When I am dust.

STANZAS FROM THE HEART.

THE morning dew, and eke the gentle rain
Are grateful to the earth ;
They usher in the birth
Of flow'rs and fruitfulness. The scorched plain
Drinks deep the draught and all things bloom again.

The sweet winds fan the leaves until they lisp
Soft music in our ears,
And drop the pearly tears
Aurora wept on them ere morning broke,
And am'rous Day from fev'rish dreams awoke.

They kiss the water till the wavelet swells,
And lifts its glassy face
To an unseen embrace.
Then sigh away where some fond maiden trips
And steal the nectar from her coral lips.

Like wanton thieves they wander mongst the flow'rs,
Kissing the violet
With od'rous moisture wet,
And waft those sweets where suff'ers moan with pain,
Making them long for primrose meads again.

All these do move me much, fair girl, but thou
Dost wield a mightier power,
For one dim fleeting hour
Of bliss with thee creates what ne'er can cloy—
A world, an exaltation and a joy.

Give me those kisses—they are mine! In truth,
Desire and love of thee
Are as a boundless sea
Which ebbeth, floweth, swelleth in my heart,
Bearing deep thoughts from which I may not part.

Garland thy milky arms around my neck,
And let thine orbèd eyes
Their orient merchandize
Discover in the wasting of the light
Like stars which shed their glory in the night.

Or let me sleep, as doth a wearied child,
 Clasped to thy beating breast,
 In dreamy mansion blest,
And wake to find thine ageless smiles indeed
The fragrant-dew on which young love doth feed.

PROLOGUE TO TECUMSEH.

CALL in the last few leaves, yes, call them in,
For ev'ry bird hath ceased its shrilly din,
And all the butterflies are deadly sick.
Beneath the fallow walks the dew-worms sleek
Lie many-coiled, and all the toiling bees
Grow tired of bootless journeys to the leas.
Sheep that do wend far distances afoot,
Nipping crisp herbage close unto the root,
Now leave much fleecy wealth in thorny passes,
Seeking in vain the tangled summer grasses.

And he who loves wood-violets now must part
Wan leaves thick strewn in coverts close and start
More than one centipede or crooked worm
Before he hath delight. The pleasant form
Of many a tiny flow'r in blue and white
And crimson-spotted meets no more the sight.
Belike those flow'rs of which none knows the name,
Yet, if you ask, some youth with eye aflame,
And reddened cheek will tell you that they come
With screaming blue-jays and the early hum
Of yellow bees, and through whole months bestreak
Damp places where the mad-weed and false leek
Allure the rav'nous kine which largely feed,
Then quick return with nostrils all abled'
And milk that curdles sudden in the pail.
He now that listens hears the tamping flail
Quick-plied, or, if the yellow fields have been
Profuse of pipy straw, now may be seen
Their rustling gold heaped high above the eaves,
And horses panting while the brainèd sheaves
With stour and din drift from the barn-ways wide.
The balsam thickets by the meadow side

Are green and still. Should one here fall asleep
In pastoral dreaminess, small flies will keep
A little mid-day uproar overhead.
Nor will one wake until the sun hath sped
And lowings loud one's drowsy sense affright.
The glossy milk plant's scarfs of snowy white
Have blown away into the neighb'ring fields,
And little pleasure now the meadow yields
Save 'tis the permeant joy of odours strange
From reed and flag outborne, and the wide range
Of sallow rushes and the sunburnt fern.
Ah! now the loneliest very loneliest tarn,
With prickly ash engirt, seems lonelier far
Than when with flushing eve the summer star
Tapered her beams aslant the smooth-topt wood.
And lonelier now seems each wan solitude,
With little lake low-couched among the hills,
And noisy murmurings of hidden rills
Swoll'n with the steady fall of autumn rain.
Once more the oak is humbled, and again,
With ragged stems and spray quite tempest-shorn,
The aged elms and hoary birches mourn.

He that doth listen now will something hear—
'Tis Winter's hounds a-baying up the year.
Therefore the timid hare with all his kin
Grows winter-white, and squirrels have gathered in
Their forest spoils. Therefore the wild fowl takes
Its seaward flight and leaves its peaceful lakes
Lost in the mighty bosom of the wood.
The faintest winds which blow there are imbued
With old traditions, but the brave of yore,
Who gave them meaning, tread the paths no more.

Their mem'ries haunt adown the wid'ning years,
Still teasing us from quiet into tears;
And restless longings, amid all our ploys
And fev'rish ventures, with unwonted noise
Of leaves and stony brooks are ever coming
Troubling our minds as doth a wild bee's humming
The dungeoned captive. Straightway then we seek
O'erbranchèd forest-ways and haunt each creek
Till teeming Fancy, profuse of her powers,
Peoples the woods. Once more th' heroic hours
Flare up within the overcultured brain.
We see the camp-fires gleaming, and again

Gives solemn utt'rance, and the steady oak
Prosperes against full many a laboured stroke
Of rough and bullying wind. Yet 'tis not these ;
For now they shout, and all the forest trees
Shake to their roots ; and now they shout, and all
The last encrimsoned autumn leaves down fall.
I hear them shout 'tis great Tecumseh hastes
O'er creek and moor, and wild outlying wastes.
They shout again, and then, with lofty stride,
Tecumseh comes to weld the nations wide.

W E R T E R .

FAREWELL! the night hath closed at last
O'er my day dream of happiness.
Hope, joy and peace—all these are past,
The loving look, the kind caress.

The dear delight which warmed my heart—
The body and the mystery
Of love, divinest, purest part
Of the soul's wealth—has fled from me.

Throb, tender heart! It throbs in vain—
In vain ye tender passions burn—
The generous bliss, the pleasing pain—
Ah, these can never more return.

Back, back, ye thronging thoughts, no more
Me mock with your delusive light!
The fancies which your glad beams bore
Have faded in eternal night.

Frown solemnly, ye dizzy clouds,
And cast dull shadows o'er the earth—
Drink up the moon! my griefs, as shrouds,
Have muffled up the heart's quick mirth.

Wave high, ye overhanging woods,
And whisper sadly of the tomb.
Lonely I trace your solitudes,
And haunt your melancholy gloom.

The hour of darkness, storm and fears
Broods o'er the dim, benighted plain.
There let me go, and mingle tears
With passionate weeping of the rain.

THE FIRE-FLIES.

LIKE an ill-favoured thief, the mork hath crept
Into the air, and greedily devoured
Eve's last, wan smiles. One shaggy cloud which wept
Great puddling drops upon the ground, and show'ed
Its tepid moisture, till the mists arose,
Earthborn, and, like a cloud, all reeking went
From out the meadows, where the saffron grows,
Up to the summer height—one shaggy cloud,
Which the tressed Morning from the east had sent,
Against her coming, to o'erspread and shroud
Earth's fruited bosom from the blis'ring sun,
Still hangs above the drowsy hills, quite spent
And wretched-looking; while the black fiend, Night,
In vales and hollow places 'reft of light,
Broods o'er the spoils he from the day hath won.

How dreamy-dark it is !

Men yawn for weariness, and hoard their gains,
While careful housewives drown the kitchen fires,
Then slip to bed to snore away their pains,
And bury for a time all low desires.
The plodding oxen, dragging creaky wains
O'er bosky roads, their ancient horns entwine,
Lick their huge joles, and think of bedded stalls,
And munching of sweet corn. The lick'rous swine
Huddled in routed turf, neglect the calls
And pinches of their young, and hide their dugs,
Swoll'n with a lazy milk, whilst timid sheep,
Far from their winter-folds of knotty fir,
Dream of lean wolves and bleatings in their sleep.

Yet there are those that oft the silence mock,
For life wings through the darkness everywhere,
And night's dull, ugly brood is all astir.
The flapping bat and hungry-snapping hawk
Now glut themselves with innocent, droning flies,
Whisked from the dingy commonwealth of air.
The loathsome toad, which foul infection breeds
And lep'rous sores, hops o'er the dusty walk,

And, in the hollows where the river lies,
The hoarse frogs sprawl' among the bedded reeds,
And croak harsh ditties to their uncouth mates.
The moon-eyed owl unto the forest prates,
And greedy cranes and herons wade about.
Draggling the weedy stream in search of food—
While far around the darkling woods agree
To hide their dancing leaves and gloomy be.

This is the very hour when witches ride
Through barren air unto the elfish rout,
Where trickish spells and sorcery are brewed ;
When jack-o'-lanterns o'er the quagmire glide,
Seen by the tipsy hind, who straightway thinks
Of alehouse uproar, and in fancy drinks
Great, cheering goblets of the beaded stout :
And then he follows until quite worn out
With perilous trudging o'er the hummocks damp,
When, all at once, they flicker off, and leave
The lazy lubber in the foggy swamp,
Knee-deep in oozing sludge. This is the hour
When fire-flies flit about each lofty crag,

And down the valleys sail on lucid wing,
Luring their spouses to the love-decked bower.

I see them glimmer where the waters lag
By winding bays, and to the willows sing ;
And, far away, where stands the forest dim,
Huge-built of old, their tremulous lights are seen.
High overhead they gleam like trailing stars,
Then sink adown, until their emerald sheen
Dies in the darkness like an evening hymn—
Anon to float again in glorious bars
Of streaming rapture, such as man may hear
When the soul casts its slough of mortal fear.
And now they make rich spangles in the grass,
Gilding the night-dew on the tender blade ;
Then hover o'er the meadow-pools to gaze
At their bright forms shrined in the dreamy glass
Which earth, and air, and bounteous rain have made.
One moment, and the thicket is ablaze
With twinkling lamps which swing from bough to bough :
Another, and like sylphids they descend
To cheer the brook-side where the bell-flow'rs grow.

Near and more near they softly come, until
Their little life is busy at my feet ;
They glow around me, and my fancies blend
Capriciously with their delight, and fill
My wakeful bosom with unwonted heat.
One lights upon my hand, and there I clutch
With an alarming finger its quick wing :
Erstwhile so free, it pants the tender thing !
And dreads its captor and his handsel touch.

Where is thy home ? On what strange food dost feed,
Thou fairy haunter of the moonless night ?
From what far nectar'd fount, or flow'ry mead
Glean'st thou, by witching spells, thy sluicy light ?

Thou mock'st at darkness, and thy footsteps are
Where gloom hangs thickest on the swart, damp earth ;
And, like a thought, thou comest from afar
In fitful glee—say hadst thou e'er a birth ?

Mayhap thou hast a heart which trembles now
For thy dear young, beneath this shining dome ;
And fond affections which, I know not how,
Find in thy tiny frame a gentle home.

And mayhap, too, thy little lips could tell
Of am'rous meetings, and of ample bliss,
In green pavilions where thy loved ones dwell—
Go seek them now and give them thy fond kiss.

It flits, and disappears, perchance has found
A grave, and I have marred an innocent life ;
Perchance 'tis with its mates, for, all around,
The air in fitful radiance is rife.
They gleam and shimmer in a guileless strife,
A heav'n of stars, sprung from the earth's warm breast,
Clad with inservient fire, and sprightly all,
Touched by no sorrow, by no cares oppressed !
The moving hours speed on apace, and fall
Like faded garlands in the lap of time ;
Yet still the fire-flies sparkle ev'rywhere,
And seem like wandering Peris as they climb
Up through the gloomy vault of misty air.

At length the sky is flecked with dingy streaks,
And Morn comes striding o'er the eastern hills,
Muffled in angry trappings which foretell
A coming storm ; and now each fire-fly seeks

Its distant home, to drink from leafy rills,
And feed on mulse and sweetest hydromel.
Hark to the chirrup and the tinkling bell!
Rude chanticleer now winds his drowsy horn
To the bleached darkness of the drizzly morn.

FROWNS AND SMILES.

I THOUGHT the world was cold and dull,
That clouds on clouds were darkly piled,
All bleak and sombre, anguish-full—
I fancied this till Cathos smiled.

I thought the world was warm and bright,
That mirth and laughter floated round
The heart's bright chambers day and night—
I fancied this till Cathos frowned.

She frowns, she smiles, by turns my heart
Is sad, is glad—its ev'ry tone
Of gay or grave she doth impart
By that strange magic all her own.

But let me only laugh or weep,
I would not have another gain
Those frowns, those smiles which she doth keep
To woo my tears, to ease my pain.

AUGUST.

DULL August! Maiden of the sultry days,
And Summer's latest born! When all the woods
Grow dim with smoke, and smirch their lively green
With haze of long-continued drought begot;
When every field grows yellow, and a plague
Of thirst dries up its herbage to the root,
So that the cattle grow quite ribby-lean
On woody stalks whose juices all are spent;
When every fronded fern in mid-wood hid
Grows sick and yellow with the jaundice heat,
Whilst those on hill-sides glare with patchy red;
When streamlets die upon the lichened rocks,
And leave the bleaching pebbles shining bare,
And every mussel shell agape and parched,
And small snail-craft quite emptied of their crews;
When not one angel-cloud is to be seen
To image coolness and the coming rain,
But all the air with stour and dust is filled,

Through which the sun stares with a pallid face
On which one long may look, and turn, and read
Some prophecy of old with eyes undimmed ;
When every morn is fiery as the noon,
And every eve is fiery as the morn,
And every night a prison hot and dark,
Where one doth sleep and dream of pleasant snow,
And winter's icicles and blessed cold,
But, soon awakes, with limbs uneasy cramped,
And garments drenched, and stifled, panting breath ;
When life itself grows weary of its use,
And mind is tarnished with the hue of things,
And thoughts are sickened with o'erdarkened food ;
When man uneasy strolls, a listless mome
In museless misery, a wretch indeed—
Say, fiery maiden, with the scorching eyes,
What hast thou left to chain us to the earth ?

Ah, there are busy forms which, all unsought,
Find yet a relish in thy scanty store.
And, for that blooms are scarce, therefore the bee
Wades knee-deep in the purple thistle tops,

And shares their sweetness with the hungry wasp.
Therefore the butterfly comes sailing down,
And, heedless, lighting on a hummer's back,
Soon tacks aloft in sudden strange alarm,
Whilst bee and wasp quick scurry out of sight,
And leave their treasures to the plodding ant.
The beetle in the tree-top sits and sings
His brassy tune with increase to the end,
And one may peep and peer amongst the leaves,
Yet see him not though still he sits aloft,
And winds his reedy horn into the noon.
Now many a sob is heard in thickets dim,
Where little birds sit, pensive, on the spray,
And muse mayhap on the delights of Spring ;
And many a chitmunk whistles out its fear,
And jerks and darts along the panneled rails,
Then stops, and watches with unwinking eyes
Where you do stand, as motionless as death ;
But should you wag a finger through the air,
Or move a-tiptoe o'er the crispy sod,
'Twill snudge away beneath the balsam brush,
Quick lost and safe among the reddened spray.

Now one may sit within a little vale,
Close to the umbrage of some wood whose gums
Give heavy odours to the heavy air,
And watch the dusty crackers snap their wings,
Whilst gangs of blue-flies fetch a buzzing tease
Of mad, uneasy whirlings overhead.

Now one may mark the spider trim his web
From bough to bough, and sorrow at the fate
Of many a sapless fly quite picked and bare,
Still hanging lifeless in the silken mesh,
Or muse upon the maze of insect brede
Which finds a home and feeds upon the leaves
Till naught but fibre-skeletons are hung
From branch to branch up to the highest twig.

And many a curious pleasance may be seen
And strange disport. Of such the wondrous glee
The joinèd gnats have in their headlong flight ;
The wild'ring quest of horse-flies humming past
In twos and threes, and the small cloud of wings
Which mix and throng together in the sun.

A num'rous kin dart shining o'er some pool
Spared from the general wreck of water store,

And from the lofty woods crow-blackbird trains
Chuck o'er the barren leas with long-drawn flight.
Far o'er the hills the grouse's feath'ry drum
Beats quick and loud within a beechen copse,
And, sometimes, when the heavy woods are still,
A single tap upon a hemlock spire
Dwells with the lonely glades in echoes deep.

Then with the eve come sounds of varied note.
The boys troop clam'ring to the woods, and curs
Yelp sharply where the groundhog's lair is found.
The horn has called the reapers from the fields,
And, now, from cots half-hid by fruited trees,
The homely strains of fiddle or of fife,
Which distance sweetens with a needed art,
Come dropping on the ear. And sometimes, too,
If sparks are deemed sincere, and rustic love
Run smooth, the merry milkmaids sing
A fallow's length with pails at elbow slung,
Or, while they thrust the draw-well dangler down,
'Gainst which the swains oppose their yielding strength,
Laugh loud and long, or scold with mimicked heat.

These find a pleasure in the waste of days,
And strive against the mis'ry of the time
With am'rous snares and artifice of love.
Not less those faithful ones who look upon
This weather-sorrow with sufficing joy—
The old, who still would linger with their seed,
And snatch a little comfort from the earth.
Still would they gaze upon the simmering sun,
And take the warmth into their aged bones,
Nor cavil with the hindrances which stay.
The lethal hour when death shall come and bend
Their reverend heads into the restful grave.

Hail August! Maiden of the sultry days,
To thee I bring the measured meed of praise.
For, though thou hast besmirched the day and night,
And hid a wealth of glory from our sight,
Thou still dost build in musing, pensive mood,
Thy blissful idyls in the underwood.
Thou still dost yield new beauties, fair and young,
With many a form of grace as yet unsung,
Which ripens o'er thy pathway and repays
The toil and languor of the sultry days.

TO MEMORY.

THE unknown future years appal us
With dreadful threat'nings of decay;
The Present's need and toils enthral us,
And hold us as their slaves to-day.
Ah, Mem'ry! bear me to thy mountain-height,
For thunder rends the summer clouds to-night,
And with to-morrow comes the sultry light,
And all the earth's stern traffic vast.

We dare not ask when life will leave us—
Instinctively we hold our breath.
Though passing hours like tyrants grieve us,
Still would we shun the pains of death.
But rising from the grave of bygone years,
A spirit comes to pacify our fears;
'Tis Memory, and in her light man hears
Naught but the music of the Past.

O spirit, gentle and most holy !
What thanks or blessings can repay
Forgetfulness of fruitless folly
Or wiping of our tears away ?
Thou art the judge, 'tis said, whom God hath given
To try our souls from dusty temples driven ;
O may'st thou smile as tenderly in heaven,
And shrive as gently at the last !

WOOD-NOTES.

THE moss is green upon the tree,
The leaves are green upon the spray,
And I will rest beneath the shade,
And watch their ceaseless revelry.
Know ye the wild anemone?
'Tis blooming here alone for me,—
The lilies and the blue-bells too,
And violets gemmed with drops of dew.

The leaves half hide and yet reveal
The far-off dimples of the sky,
As a maiden's veil which should conceal
Yet makes more languishing her eye;
And 'twixt the branches overhead
A brightness with their shade is shed—
A trembling, dancing, furtive light,
Appearing oft-in dreams by night.

And here are green, inviting bowers,
Such as of old the Dryads haunted,
And perfumes shed by unseen flow'rs,
And strains by mystic voices chanted.
But silent all, no human tread,
Save mine, is heard the glades among :
For me the fragrance all is shed,
For me the mystic lay is sung.

Here is a streamlet by whose side
The Naiads wandered long ago,
Ere old mythology had died,
And mankind's heart was turned to stone.
The Indian sought it year by year,
And listened to its rippling glee ;
But he is gone, and I am here,
And all its rippling is for me.

The woodland grass is tall and rank,
And hath a soothing, mead'wy smell
The antlered ranger loveth well,—
In truth 'tis no unwholesome thing ;

And here are leaflets grim and lank,
Besmeared with mildew cold and dank,

 The relics of a by-gone spring.
The rocks are all with moss o'ergrown,
 And ivy creepeth up and down ;
The owl, in distant woods alone,
 Sleeps soundly in his feathers brown ;
But all the birds are carolling
As Morning's stars were wont to sing.

As the low murmur of a brook,
 (Go listen for the music's sake)
So is the murmur of the trees
 But now a louder voice they take,
Look how they bend before the breeze !
 The distant forest reels at length,
In vain the oak, the elm's strength,
 Their waving tops now cleave the air.
O'er mountain brow, through hidden dell,
Where twilight gloom delights to dwell,
Hark ! how their mighty voices swell
 Like giants shouting in despair,

At length the breeze has reached the plain,
And silent are the woods again,
And, at my feet, the crazy light,
Which danced so wildly in my sight,
Lies in that still, calm dreaminess
Which man may feel but ne'er express.

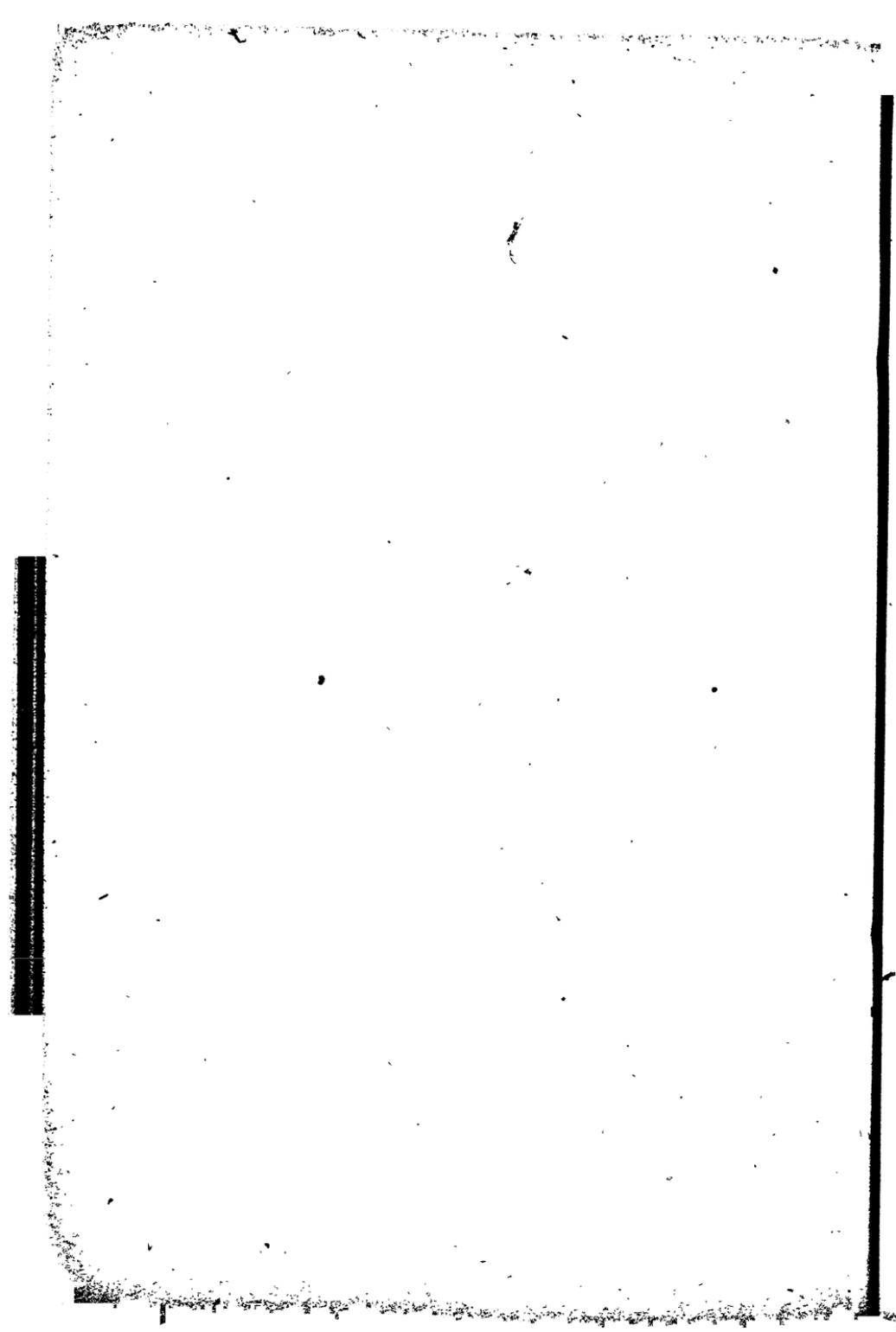
Again there comes a roaring wind,
And with it drifts a murky cloud
As black and angry as the look
To Satan by the world assigned.
The pealing thunder rattles loud—
God! how yon sturdy hemlocks shook!
Down come the rain-drops in a crowd,
And whiten o'er the little brook.
Hark, how they dance amongst the leaves
And patter thence unto the earth,
While fiercer still the tempest heaves
The forest in its riant mirth!

Like wearied soldiers after fight,
At length the clouds have ceased to frown;
The rain comes slower, slower down,
And to the west a streak of light,

By wid'ning eastward glads the sight.
The foam has vanished from the rill,
The woods are marvellously bright,
The thirsty earth hath drunk its fill,
But all the trees are raining still !

Awake ye woods, unwonted strains !
They wake indeed afar and near.
The wild blood dances through my veins,
And glorious breathings meet mine ear.
The sounds, the voices and the throng
Of joyful birds, the whisper low
Of tree and stream entrance me long,
And thrill my being as they flow.

True are the friends that nature gives,
Their voices ever are the same ;
The rock, the tree, the streamlet lives—
Each speaks to him who knows its name.
But Nature's heart is cold indeed
To sullen souls that cannot see
Some comfort in her face, and read
The warning and the mystery



THE LAMENT OF ANDROMACHE

(From the Iliad.)

AND thou hast died, O husband young in years,
And thou hast left me widowed and in tears.
The son to whom thy hapless wife gave birth
Shall ne'er touch manhood's prime upon the earth ;
For ere that hour this city shall be thrust
From its proud summit prone unto the dust.
Ay ! thou art dead, Protector of its wives,
And all its prattling throng of infant lives ;
And these shall soon be held in sad array
In hollow barks, and with me borne away.
But thou, my son, wilt either with me go,
Where thou shalt labour for the heartless foe
At basest tasks, or some enraged Greek
Will grasp thy wrists, and with fierce hurlings wreak
A sad destruction from a turret's height ;
To him, thy father, Hector, hath in fight

A brother slain, a parent, or a son ;
For many Greeks have faced him, and, undone,
Have bitten the enormous earth.

'Twas he

Who sought the conflict with the fiercest glee ;
Wherefore the people mourn him through the streets.
Hector ! Ah me, what sorrowful death-beats
Sound at thy parents' hearts of joy bereft ;—
While still to me the bitterest griefs are left.
For thou didst not, when dying, stretch thy palms
Forth from the couch to me, nor any calms
Fell from thine ashen lips in prudent speech.
Nor through my future journeyings shall reach
One word to be remembered far away
While fall my silent tears by night and day.

IN MEMORY OF THOMAS D'ARCY MCGEE.

Jam fuerit neque post unquam revocare licebit.—LUCRETIUS.

OUR eyes are full of tears,
Of sounds of grief our ears,
And anger thrills our veins and clenched hands ;
And vaguely we await,
As from the lips of fate,
The murmur of the wrath of many lands,
The travel of a fire which brings
The horror of an empire on its wings.

For he who knew to touch
Our ears with language such
As charmed the infant earth when time was young ;
Which brought us from the night
Of darkness to the light
Wherein a nation into being sprung,
Lies colder than our thoughtful fears,
Born of the madness of these guilty years.

Cold is the agent brow,
And cold the lips ere now,
- Which parted, and strange rapture and delight
Came to men's hearts and minds
Like journeyings of the winds,
Or stars which shine, or flowers which blow by night,
And Fancy, like a dream, drew by
The curtains of a cloudless destiny.

Yea, we like children stood
When in his lofty mood
He spoke of manly deeds which we might claim,
And made responses fit
While heavenly genius lit
His melancholy eyes with lambent flame,
And saw the distant aureoles,
And felt the Future thunder in our souls.

Of more he dreamed than this—

What was not nor yet is,

But in the far-off Æon is to be—

Of tyrant Wrong dismayed,

And Crime in ruins laid—

Cast under foot, nor found on earth or sea,

Of every realm, when hate shall cease,

Made glorious with a heritage of peace.

For he had caught a gleam

Beyond the sacred stream

Which steals betwixt the twin Phædriades,

Or that far mountain scene

Where flows the Hippocrene

Which struck the winged steed between his knees,

Beyond the gloom and awful smoke

Of Pythos' cave or Hella's whispering oak.

A later glory caught
From holier founts, and fraught
 With simpler love of life and sacrifice
Of wayward, wild desire,
Which eats the flesh like fire,
 And binds our souls with iron beneath the skies ;
And thence he rose on flashing wings
Beyond the seeming fate and changeless things.

And in his songs was light,
And in his words was might,
 To lift our hopes unto the wished-for end,
When jealousies of creed
Shall, like a loathsome weed,
 Be cast away, and man with man be friend,
Nor any think the souls unpriced
That linger sadly at the feet of Christ.

And in his visions true

There came high forms anew—

Dim outlines of a nation yet to stand,

Knit to the Empire's fate,

In power and virtue great,

The lords and reapers of a virgin land—

A mighty realm where Liberty

Shall roof the northern climes from sea to sea.

And when 'gainst the emprise

Arose those enemies

Whose house is hell with chambers full of death,

Who knit their hands and weep,

And curse us in their sleep,

And drink the wine of madness with their breath,

He wrung the secret from their minds,

And cast their schemes unto the shuddering winds.

For as a spirit stood
Before the seer good,
 Bright-eyed, with amber ribs and limbs of fire,
And caught him to the skies,
Whence, with reluctant eyes,
 He viewed the wicked's sin and mad desire,
And saw beneath the waning day
His haunts and chambers of dark imagery.

So, not by feeble chance
Of time or circumstance,
 He scanned their features and their turpitude,
But his unclouded sight
Burned through the blackest night,
 And in our midst unscreened the felon brood,
And warned them from our blameless doors
Back to their hateful fields and alien shores.

In Memory of Thomas D'Arcy McGee. 141

For this they slew him ! Now

We lift his abused brow

And in our anguish vainly cry to Thee

Who art our God ! How long

Shall hellish crime be strong

And slavish spirits tamper with the free ?

Alas, that all our days are bleak

With hate which chills, and crime which pales the cheek.

Yea, these our days are cold

With driftings manifold

Of keener sorrows deep'ning with the past ;

And time, slow-swift in flight,

Still brings its ancient blight,

And shadows from increasing clouds are cast ;

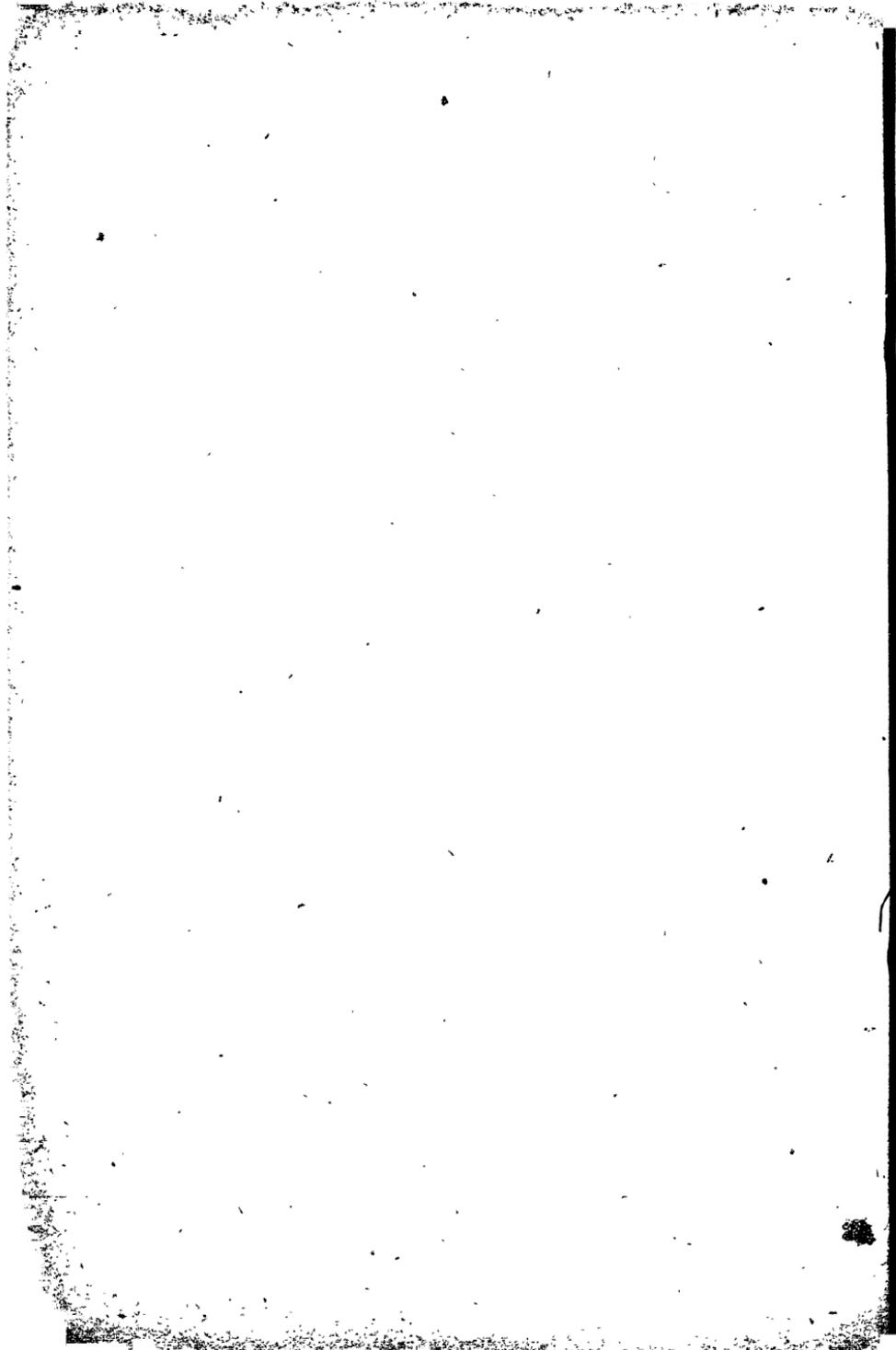
And hearts still ache, and heavy hands

Grow weary with their toil in many lands.

For far and near seem blent
With hollow merriment,
 The groanings of the travail of the earth ;
And grey-haired grace is old,
And coward hearts grow bold,
 And shameless cheeks are creased with soulless mirth ;
And, everywhere, who looks espies
A world's swift tears, or cold, hard-hearted eyes.

Yet as blooms melt in fruits,
Or dead flow'rs live in roots,
 So time may bring the fabled after-age
When Knowledge shall be found,
Emboldened and unbound,
 And Heav'n shall grow more kind as men grow sage,
And earth, no longer tempest-tost,
Shall snatch again the grace she once hath lost.

SONNETS.



M I D N I G H T.

THE silent shadows lay about the land,
In aching solitude, as if they dreamed ;
And a low wind was ever close at hand,
And, though no rain-drops fell, yet alway seemed
The rustle of the leaves like falling rain.
I could not tell what life-long ease or pain
Found hoarse expression by the river's brink,
Where moving things mysterious vigils kept.
These had their joys, perchance, whilst I did link
Sad thoughts of bygone pleasure till I wept.
Then entered I my house, and sat and heard
The lonely cricket chirp until I feared
Some ghost had hid me in a wilderness.
And long I gazed on one who slept. " I guess
'Twas frightful," for away I trembling stole,
As if some murder-stain lay on my soul.

BARDOLPH REDIVIVUS.

(TO A FRIEND.)

WHEN Plato in his cradle slept, the bees
Swarmed at his lips, for so the legend goes ;
But, fickle creatures, coy and hard to please,
They sure mistook, and settled on your nose !
Mayhap it is your wife who loves to tease,
And on your patient knob incessant blows
Doth strike for her own sweet amusement's sake.
Perchance it cometh of the drams you take,
This subtle, fiery redness—who can tell ?
Ay, who can tell, great nasal organ bright !
What vintages and distillations dwell
Pent in those caverns awful in our sight ?
Dark with the morn, but, in the darkness, light,
A purple cloud by day, a flame by night !

TO A HUMMING-BIRD.

It comes ! This strange bird from a distant clime

Has fled with arr'wy speed on flutt'ring wing,

From the sweet south, all sick of revelling,

It wanders hitherward to rest a time,

And taste the hardy flora of the west.

And now, O joy ! the urchins hear the mirth

Of its light wings, and crouch unto the earth

In watchful eagerness, contented, blest.

Bird of eternal summers ! thou dost wake,

Whene'er thou comest and where'er thou art,

A new-born gladness in my swelling heart.

Go, gentle flutterer, my blessing take !

Less like a bird thou hast appeared to me

Than some sweet fancy in old poësy.

TO _____

THOU lov'st me not, and seldom have we met,
Nor ever have thy dreams mine image borne.
Some other hand thy loving tasks shall set,
Some other lip shall bless thee night and morn.
Yet have I dreamt such happy fate was won—
To be with thee forever, still to hear,
Adown the pathway of each fading year,
Thy gentle voice like music lead me on.
Ah, generous dream of unsubstantial joy,
Go with me where my star shall rise or set!
For, though thou imagest but to destroy,
And ever mock'st me with delusive art,
I would no charm to teach me to forget
The still and silent worship of the heart.

TO AN INFANT.

SMILE on ! thou tiny mystery, nor ope
Those tear-fed eyes now curtained down by sleep.
Wake not nor start, thou mother's tender hope!
A mother's fond eye doth a vigil keep.
Now bends she o'er thee, and recalls the kiss
And throes which gave thee being on a time,
And made thee doubly dear. Be hers the bliss
Of building summer castles for thy prime.
'Tis left for me to sigh, yea I could weep
To think how Care and Grief may come and flood
Thy cheeks with tears—rough-visaged pards which creep
Into men's hearts and steal their vigorous blood.
Then wilt thou pray release from mortal pain,
And wish thou wert a sleeping child again.

LOVE'S EMPERY.

O LOVE! if those clear faithful eyes of thine
Were ever turned away there then should be
No heav'nly looks to take the gloom from mine,
Nor any hills, nor any dales for me,
Nor any honeyed cups of eglantine,
Nor morning spilth of dew on land or sea.
No sun should rise, and leave his eastern tent
To wake the music of the rambling wave,
Nor any freshness of the West be sent
To sweep away night's savours of the grave.
But, when I gaze into those fadeless eyes,
Methinks I am in some mysterious land,
Where far-off seas take colour from the skies,
And voiceless on a mountain-top I stand.

T I M E .

WHEN but a child thou cam'st in friendly guise,
O Time ! and I was happy in thy flight ;
For faithful sleep was tender to mine eyes,
And morning filled them with increasing light.
At length came knowledge, and the slow surprise
Of common death, and sin's inhuman blight.
And now I take thee, Time, for what thou art—
Death's porter. The immeasurable sea,
And the green continents it smites apart
Are borne to their sublime decay by thee.
Stern servitor ! though stronger than the earth,
And mightier than the deep, I yet shall know,
In jails eternal, or in haunts of mirth,
Thy bitter end, and mark thine overthrow.

T H E E N D .