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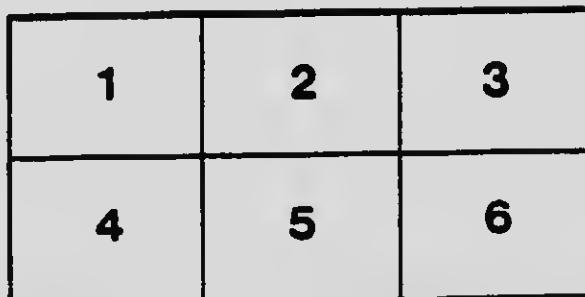
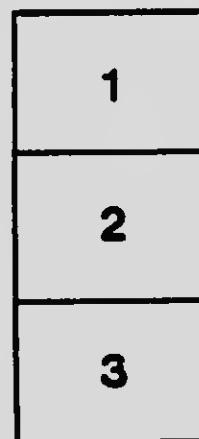
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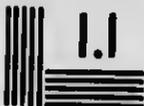
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THE
MARRIAGE OF MUSIC

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THE MARRIAGE OF MUSIC



The Marriage of Music

BEING A SECOND EDITION WITH
ADDITIONAL POEMS

BY

ANNIE C. DALTON

1915

LONDON

ERSKINE MACDONALD

P58507

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1915

* **

THE MARRIAGE OF MUSIC

IDLY piping down a lane,
Once I heard a dulcet strain
Floating o'er the thicket high,
Like some siren's lullaby.
Straightway fell my smitten reed—
Stricken mute by Pan, indeed—
Glancing round with startled eye,
Then did I a wicket spy.
A hidden wicket, well concealed,
'Twixt hanging bush and climbing braid,
But, swinging on its stake,
Just on the jar to me
It hung revealed,
And past its tiny port afar
Music on Music's shoulders clashed and pealed,
Until the very dewdrops shook congealed
In crystalline and shimmering melody.
Then came a symphony,
So sweet and low,
As though
The flower of harmony
Had just begun to blow,
And was unfolding all its petals one by one,
To lilt of lute or soft melodeon.
Rapt in sweet sounds, I, all unconscious wise,
Inanimate,
Beyond the gate
Passed into Paradise.

Alas! alas! Remembrances are few
To tell of all the blest delights I knew—
The golden light that sunk in one broad hue,
The emerald land, the mountains blue,
The rolling streams, the rolling cloud-wracks too,
And steeped them all in glory through and through.
Broad as the light, the glorious music surged,
The seas of light and seas of sound converged,
And filled the whole of that enchanted world
With eddying waves,
That leaped and danced, and madly curled,
From lowly earth to all celestial things,
From choring stars to dull, resounding caves,
So heaven rained light and music, and the earth
In answering birth
Brought forth its golden springs.

Then to that sphere of fluent light
A host of words in spotless beauty came,
Came showering free and bright,
Like golden leaves to spread a sybil's fame,
And as a groom to greet his bride,
A note of music to the side
Of every word in sweetest transport sprang
And all his love and joy ecstatic sang ;
While everywhere, O far and wide!
A universal marriage feast began,
And note and word in perfect wedded bliss
Sealed each their compact in one soul-absorbing
kiss—

Was ever sweeter vision borne to man?
Then, floating on the air,

I saw faint shadows hang,
The shades of poet-prophets hovering there
In intermingled envy and despair,
Yet mute approval, while the rapture rang
And sang its triumph everywhere.
Then said a voice, "O write!
Ay, for astonishment of men indite
Some fragment of this wonderful delight."
Alas, while yet it spoke,
The glorious vision broke,
And trailing after me a stream of light,
I touched a dark and silent earth—and woke

Tell me, Music, O shall I,
In some golden by and by,
Idly piping down the lane,
Find that wicket-gate again?

IN DREAMS

IN dreams thou lovest me—
The love thou givest all,
Alone, within the land of dreams,
Is mine beyond recall.

In dreams thou lovest me—
What though when I awake,
Thou spurnest me in high disdain,
This joy thou canst not take.

In dreams thou lovest me—
Thy lips are on my brow,
The gentle pressure of thy arm—
Methinks I feel it now.

In dreams thou lovest me—
And they have made me glad,
Thy sweet, slow smile is still with me,
To cheer me when I'm sad.

In dreams thou lovest me—
My head is on thy breast ;
I would that evermore in dreams
My tired soul could rest.

A HOT AFTERNOON

I is so still—the earth is like a room
Where children gather in their games, and
hush

Their joyous voices, lest their mirth should break
Into that upper silence where there lies
The tired mother in a dreamless sleep.

It is so still—*Is* God asleep?
For see, across His quiet heavens are drawn
His snowy blinds, and His pale mountains creep
Like weary spaniels at His shrouded feet.
The faded ocean sleeps, the forest dreams,
All desolation broods in blinding glare.
Time waits—no fitting life, no throbbing love.
Nothing but light—a madness breeding light—
That beats and battens everywhere and seems
The outcast brilliance from His shaded room.
It is the hour of spirit-weariness,
It is the hour of deepest loneliness—
Does God, then, tire—*Is* He asleep?

ACQUIESCENCE

WE acquiesce in all that is,
And wonder with a cold surprise,
That life should keep her promises
Or death decree things otherwise.

The miracles that yesterday
Hung far beyond our feeble reach,
Descend, as 'midst the boys at play
Falls down the over-ripened peach.

We acquiesce in all that is,
And question with a cold surprise,
When life unveils her mysteries,
" Shall Death unclosethe our dreaming eyes? "

We hear of divers deeds and doubt
The realty that happens thus,
Then turn we softly and about—
They could not happen unto us!

When they do happen, through a mist
We see but dimly what is there ;
The bolt hath fallen—the god hath kissed—
And we are almost unaware.

We acquiesce in all that is,
And wonder with a cold surprise,
" Can it be I who suffers this,
Or dream I in another's guise? "

IS LOVE A DREAM?

IS Love a dream? then let me dream,
And may I nevermore to life awake.
Love, clasp me close, let others truth esteem,
Thou art my all—I all for thee forsake.
Pain, grief, despair—are they not dream words,
too?
Shall truth but slay the lovely and the bright—
If hate and selfishness, alas, be true,
Is Love alone a vision of the night?

A WILD SEPTEMBER DAY

OH, the joy of life, when the horses white
Ride into the sheltered bay,
And the murky mischiefs of the mind
Far inland flee away.
On the wings of a free and blustering breeze,
That shakes all the showers from the glittering
trees
On a bright September day.
Oh, the joy of life when the surf rolls in,
And its frothing bubbles blow
On the shimmering sands where the seaweeds lie
And the seagulls come and go ;
When the autumn leaves on tiptoe fly
With the merry, merry wind,
With the straining grass and the straggling sedge
Left fettered far behind.
Oh, life is gay! Oh, life is bright!
And the pulses bound in a blest delight—
No care can cloy this fearful joy
This wild September day,
When the staggering steps beat a wayward path,
When the scattering garments stray,
When the shrieking wind in its playful wrath
Roars many a roundelay ;
When the live trees bow,
And the dead trees plough
Through the fields of hissing foam—
Each battered wreck
At the whirlwind's beck
Flung back to its ancient home.

Oh, the joy of life when the horses ride
In the foaming, tossing bay,
And the white-winged carriers gaily scud
O'er the blue hills far away ;
When the unseen legions race and scour
From the deepest den to the loftiest tower,
And a lifetime glows in a speedy hour,
This rare September day.

PAIN

THROUGH the fringed gates of sleep, the angel
Pain

Swept on his heavy wing,
He brooded over slumbering men,
Holding his cross of suffering ;
Then, harshly, to each one he said,
" Awake, here is thy daily cross—the dawn is
red—

And there is much to be rememberèd."

Thereon I saw each sleeper rose and sighed,
And some, with peevish gesture, cried,
" Another cross for us who are so sorely tried ! "
Then some cast down the only cross they held,
From all, save one, a bitter plaint upwelled—
Save one, whose heavy load was laid,
Cross upon cross, on shoulders bowed and weighed
Unto the very ground ;
Yet whose bright face
Shone with sweet hope and steadfast grace.

Him, Pain long scanned, impatient frowned,
Then softly, softly to himself he said,
" Brave soul, *thou* need'st, if any, to be comforted,
And yet I, pitying, can but choose
To cast another cross to bruise
Afresh, thy proud, undaunted head."

LIFE AND DEATH

I ASK of Life one simple boon ;
'Tis this, that she would spare
The dainty beauties of my dreams—
They grow so very fair.

I ask of Death no boon, nor crave
Redemption from his schemes ;
I know his dusky galleons guard
The homeland of my dreams.

TWILIGHT

BE still, dear heart, and rest ;
The shades of even fall ;
And from the temple of the west
I hear my Father call.

He calls—have you not heard?
He calls us to His knee ;
I would not miss one precious word
So comforting to me.

He speaks as to a child,
And I would gladly stay,
To listen to such accents mild—
And thou wouldst turn away.

O still, my heart, that sigh,
Let worlds and worldlings wait ;
The King of Heaven and Earth is nigh,
And resting at His gate.

LOVE COMES RIDING

A ROSY streak, and a morning gay,
The golden dawn of a golden day,
The breath of Spring, and the flowers of May,
For Love comes riding along the way.

The hum of bees in a breathless noon,
The lisp of ripples beyond the dune,
The scent of lily, the rose of June,
And Love sings low his tenderest tune.

The bees hive-sheltered at close of day,
The flowers asleep, and the ripples away,
A setting moon, no nightingale's lay,
But Love, still tarrying, forever will stay.

No silver streak in the morning grey,
The hopeless dawn of a hopeless day,
The frosts of Spring, and the mists of May,
For Love hath tarried and ridden away.

A stolen jewel Love's casket to fill,
A broken lily beside a rill,
A rose-strewn grave upon a hill,
For Love must follow his own sweet will.

THE POETS

ONE said to me, " The poets dwell
For aye in heavens blue "—
I answered, " Tongue can never tell
The storms they struggle through ;
They sing of grief they know too well,
Of joy they never knew.

Low as the phosphorescent glow
Down in the sunless deeps,
High as the mountain's virgin snow
The poets' pleasure sleeps ;
Close as a serpent's sinuous flow
The poets' sorrow creeps.

The sign of suffering's baleful star
To them is surely given,
The veil that shrouds Shekinah's awe
For them is truly riven ;
And welcome is the suffering for
The fleeting glimpse of heaven."

THE FLOWER

EARTH hid her joys ;
Justice was dead ;
Life's counterpoise
Did seem unhallowèd ;
For truth and light
Forsook the right ;
In pride and wrath
I paced the garden-path,
And near the mellow ground
A simple sermon found.
There bloomed a lovely flower,
Half broken 'neath a shower
Of crystal dew. Unshed,
The drops bowed down its head
And almost snapped its stem ;
Yet from each tearful gem
The labouring flower so bent
Withdrew its nutriment—
Through parching hours fed
Did blossom comforted.

A REBEL IN HEAVEN

THE silver trumpets pealed from heaven,
As through the starry cloud-space sped
The seraphim to whom was given
The passing of the dead.

And as the souls in hushed suspense
Rose softly to the judgment-place,
Each wore a veil of penitence
About its stricken face.

But one passed on so proudly stern,
The foremost shining angel fell
Out from the host, and bade her turn
Unto the shades of hell.

"Thou hast not won the pledge," he said,
"That brings thee to thy Father's throne;
This is the Pleading of the Dead
For penitents alone."

She turned upon him, full and fierce,
With splendid passion in her eyes.
"What penitence," she cried, "can pierce
The flesh man petrifies?"

Then open wide she threw her breast,
And showed her heart of polished stone,
And round it there was manifest
A serpent-woven zone.

"These playmates sucked my brain," she said,
"And trifled with their dainty food ;
Then, pampered epicures, they fed
And batted on my blood.

And sloughing here, they, too, congealed,
And rightly shared the common doom,
When Death-in-Life's coarse sexton sealed
My soul's granitic tomb.

Within this stone lie sepulchred
All-glorious Beauty, Love and Truth ;
They perished, uninterpreted
To my misboden youth."

She pressed her clenched, white-knuckled hand
Upon her riven bosom hard,
And from the listening seraph-band
One sigh went up to God.

Again she bared her breast, and cried,
"Let this stone symbol speak for those
Who lashed my spirit ere it died,
And scourged the heart they froze."

The Angel wept. "At whose commands,"
He cried, "was wrought this thing to thee?"
"Fair women, with soft, gentle hands,"
She said, "did this to me.

They bought me for a pittance small,
I coined for bread my very blood,
I gave my life, my soul, my all—
For barest livelihood.

I bartered for the right to live,
My heritage of joy divine,
And for that dear prerogative
A life in death was mine!

Or life—or death—it mattered not—
Each might have equal claims to me,
But life in death—O God! ye wot
'Tis bitterest agony!"

She spoke no more ; her fingers strayed
About the serpents on her heart ;
With one fierce glance to heaven she made
As if she would depart.

She cast her scathing eye along
The souls that stayed in dumb array,
And some there were within that throng
Who, shivering, shrank away.

With scornful laugh, she turned about,
As one who shuns a shameful sight ;
They went their way, and she passed out
Into the silent night.

The silver trumpets blared from heaven,
And through the starry cloud-space sped
The seraphim to whom was given
The passing of the dead.

THE MOORLANDS

YE glorious skies and sunsets,
Ye crystal creeks and bays,
Ye mountain crests, where daily
The snowy cloudling plays ;
How fair ye are, but vainly
Ye strive to stir my heart ;
To-day, in all your glory
I feel to have no part.
My mind, distraught, is wandering
O'er bleak, empurpled moors,
Where sleeting winds and tempests
Shake all the farm-house doors.
I see the peaty uplands,
With many a rugged scarp,
And many a low-browed cottage,
Where weaves the linsey's warp.
I see the tiny churches,
Set high upon the hill ;
The little modest Bethels,
The pews the farmers fill.
I see the lazy cattle
On lowland pastures roam ;
The ruddy, shingled gables,
That sheltered once my home.
Breathe low, O gentle west wind,
I have no thought for thee ;
For a breeze of purple moorlands
Is passing over me.

TRUE LOVE

TRUE Love is born of Pain,
And bringeth forth sweet Pain again.
Sweet Love! Sweet Pain!
O bitter Love! O bitter, bitter Pain!
Alas! 'twere all in vain
To part them—Time must prove
That Death may vanquish Love
And slay her with his dart,
Ere Pain and lovers part.

BALLADE OF THE LILLYE-WHITE FLOWRE

FAYRE ladye, in thy latticed bowre,
A kindnesse I crave ;
Nowe, prithee doe give to me some flowre
Toe strowe my mother's grave.

“ My mother dear lyes still and cold—
Fearsome and lone is she,
And I wold hide the dark damp mold
With blossoms fayre to see.

“ My mother doth sore moanin' make
Down on her sorrowfulle bed ;
Nowe for our blessed Ladye's sake
Grant she be comforted.

“ Till soft, greene grasse shall grow in Spring,
And daysies white shall peep,
And warme benethe her covering
My mother falls asleep.”

Then did the ladye forward lean
And, with fayre gentillesse,
Looke kindly on that mayde so mean
Benethe her lattices.

And sayde, “ This flowre thou shouldst have,
This lillye-white flowre shouldst take,
To laye upon thy mother's grave
For our deare Ladye's sake.

“ But, wel-a-way, the minstrels playe,
The roustering guests doe shoute ;
The lorde who celebrates this daye—
He gives a merry rout ;

“ And not one flowre bedecks my haire,
But one lyes at my breast ;
The maydens who wold the feast prepare
Have gathered in the reste.

“ But when I’ve tripped the merrye rounde
To merrye minstrelsie,
If haply this lillye may be founde,
I’ll throwe it, childe, to thee.

“ And I will strip the comelye halle—
Of posies thou shalt have
More than thou canst bethink withal
Toe strowe thy mother’s grave.”

“ Gramercy, ladye, fare ye welle!
Nowe by my mother’s side
I’ll sit and sing, and alle night telle
What mornynge shall betide.”

The ladye smiled, and in her haire
Did put her lillye-white flowre,
And little she recked the lillyes fayre
Wolde bloome for her no mowre.

* * * *

The moone shone bright, into the night
The lillye-white flowres fell—
The wearie ladye, richllye dight,
Yawned sleepily, “ ’Tis welle! ”

The ladye shutte the lattice tight
And doffed her fine arraye,
And, kneeling by her bed soe white,
To Mary she did praye.

For all good churchfolk she did praye,
Then to her bonnye bed ;
And as she laye, a moone-white raye
Played softly rounde her heade.

The moone shone bright, and through the nighte,
And through the lattice came
Some thing which trailed its garments white,
And bore a spere of flame.

It glode up to the quiet bedde,
And tossed its arms about—
One forme stole in with silent tread,
But two wan formes wente out!

* * * *

When with the dawne there came the mayde,
She heard that household greet,
And gathering up the flowrs, she layde
Them at the ladye's feet.

And cryde aloude, " O ladye, deare,
Wrapt in thy broidered palle!
My mother bids me strowe them here,
For thou dost need them all."

THE ETERNAL SACRIFICE

THE old world rang with its cries of wrong,
And the echoes came to me
In this glorious land of the free and strong,
And I said to myself, "O Lord, how long
Is this suffering yet to be?"

* * * *

In the lonely bay rowed the pilot's mar,
With his iron thews and his cheek of tan,
Oh, a brawny man was he!
And he shot along, as he only can
Whose life is free, and he began
To sing of liberty.
In a boat hard by stood a tiny row
Of babies, one, two, three,
With a younger still in the heaving bow,
And they all four watched their father go
On his daily errantry.
As I marked each towsled head of tow,
My heart did burn, and I longed to know
Its tiny history.
I asked aloud of the dashing foam,
"Their mother—where is she—
Why leaves she thus her babes to roam?"
And somewhere from heaven's cloudless dome,
A spirit answered me:—
"Their mother bides in her quiet home,
She is cradled deep in the good brown loam,
Beneath a maple tree.

Fair mother of these four white buds—
Oh, a lovely flower was she!
She blossomed here in the piny woods,
Where the wolf and the wild-cat rear their broods
In lone security.
A child herself—life scarce begun,
She died of misery—
Her years were but one score and one
When her laborious flight was done
Of toil and poverty.”

* * * *

And she of many is but one—
Oh, hardly is thy glory won,
Proud land of liberty!

BREAK, O HEART!

BREAK, O heart! on the silent ranges of the
Absolute!
Nought will avail—the bars of fate are strong.
Mourn, mourn no longer this life's mute and
shattered lute,
Heaven harvests all thy heritage of song.

Is it nothing to you, O men! O passers-by!
The stifled sigh
Of those whose grief is proudly mute?
Of those who hide i' the caves of dark despair,
Or, hanging on the trembling wings of hope,
Grasp faintest glimpses of the boundless fields
of scope,
Immeasurable beauties everywhere ;
Of those whose sickness is the sickness of the
soul,
Of those whose life is but a fragment of the
whole?

Break, O heart! on the rocky ranges of the
Absolute!
Freedom soars far beyond heaven's boundless blue.
Time, Immortality alone may bring thee balm—
Is it nothing to you, O men?
Is it nothing to you?

THE RETURN OF LOVE

NOW, thou art gone, and empty is thy throne,
And Wisdom cries, "Love comes no more."
But oh, my love, I wait thee here, alone,
For Wisdom lies . . . wide is the door.

Thy throne is set as sumptuous as of old . . .
And Wisdom sighs, "It is in vain."
But oh, my love, I smooth each purple fold,
Wisdom is wise . . . but love shall reign.

Love, thou art there . . . I feel thy fragrant
breath . . .
Ah, Wisdom's eyes would frown thee down,
But oh, my love, it is the frown of death . . .
Old Wisdom dies . . . here is thy crown!

MOTHERHOOD IN POVERTY

THEY told her, in her darkest hour, of bliss
That soon would crown the agony of pain,
And patiently she turned her face again,
And prayed to God in her wild loneliness.
Ages before her yawned a wide abyss,
Worlds rocked and rolled: it seemed that she had
lain
Forever in the clutch of demons, then—
They brought her firstborn for his mother's kiss.
Low hovered in: the silent, darkened room,
The pall of woman's world-wide, crushing woe,
And poverty's lone sufferer, trampled low,
Lay wan and trembling in the stifling gloom.
Then from her lips out burst a fearful cry:
"O God, our doom is endless, let me die."

THE VISION AND THE VOICE

WHILE Earth upon her trembling axis swings,
While wisdom hides the stars with rushing
wings,

Thou tellest of unutterable things,

O Vision! and

O Voice!

Like loops of angels stretching over space,
Thy beauties hang, a shimmering bridge of grace,
Thy echoes guide where Love unveils His face,

O Vision! and

O Voice!

Alone, we grope about this whirling dome,
Yet through its clouds and gulfs of blinding foam,
Thou wilt at last, we doubt not, call us home,

O Vision! and

O Voice!

ON READING E. A. POE'S SONNET TO
SCIENCE

NAY, tender poet, keep thy golden dreams,
Thy beauteous visions dear to all the earth,
Thy timid wood-nymphs, naiad-dotted streams,
Thy magic groves that give the god-like birth.
Keep all thy jewels, all the irised pearls
Swift-dropping from the sunset's saffron cloud
For thee, whilst countless mermaids' amber curls
Weave for the drowsy sea a molten shroud.

Science may rob thee not—her ruthless hand
Thy treasure, all thy summer-dream restores ;
Armed, all earth's wisdom at her high command,
She may not force thy heaven's enchanted doors,
Baffled, she can but own thy shadowy land
Sweet symbol of divine Elysian shores.

THE HAVEN OF THE HEART

GIVE me one heart—
One heart to love me dearly:
Give me two lips—
Two lips to kiss sincerely:
No more I ask,
For greater boon
By man was never craven,
One fond, true heart
To be his only haven,
And two fresh lips
By love's sweet kisses laven.
So shall my barque
Dance on life's troubled ocean,
And fear no dark
Tempest or rude commotion;
But face the blast,
Then anchor fast
With chords that part
No more, until in heaven
True heart to heart
Finds its eternal haven.

FRIENDSHIP

THY friendship, like a lovely dream
That lit the sombre hours of night,
Hath come and gone, and yet I deem
Its transience more than lasting light.

The fleeting durance of the rose
Hath ever more of joy than pain ;
When Memory's caskets soft unclose,
Love's withered roses live again.

Thy friendship, like some rosy dream
That glowed through all the hours of night,
Hath come and gone, and still I seem
To dream forever in its light.

O friendship sweeter than the rose!
O friendship deadlier than disdain!
O friendship bitterest of foes!
I think of thee—and dream again.

THE ECHO ELF

I SEE a strange and wondrous child,
A laughing, dancing elf indeed,
Go pilfering 'mong the echoes wild,
To string them on his hollow reed.
He pipes no ditty of his own,
But from the hills afar is blown
Full many a haunting echo wild
About the bright and happy child.

The overtones from hidden bells
Are rising, chiming, silver sweet,
To rain upon the purple fells
And kiss his naked, twinkling feet.
He has no ditty of his own,
But dying echoes, overblown,
New-strung upon his oaten reed,
Grow round and glance and dance indeed.

I see a green, malignant light
Which hovers, painting land and sea
With omen, sad and recondite,
And sorely, sorely 'wildering me.
And still the silver bell-notes meet
About the careless twinkling feet,
And still the haunting hill-notes wild
Are glancing round the laughing child.

HYLDA

HYLDA! Hylda! Hylda!

Oh, how she doth bewilder
Me with the turquoise in her dreamy eyes,
Then, in the noontide of my sweet surprise,
A dancing diamond in the circlet of the blue,
With fiery glances dares my heart to woo.

O cruel, cruel Hylda!

What imp of mischief filled her,
While she stood waiting at the gates of life,
And angel-questants searched in holy strife
For that soul-loveliness whose pure and peerless
grace

Should match so fair a form, so sweet a face?

O fair, O fairest Hylda!

Had that sweet soul enthralled her,
She had been stayed, the saintliest saint above,
And I had never known the pangs of love ;
A crown for her, sweet peace for me, yet who
would dare

To wish so rare a gem were set elsewhere?

LOVE

'TIS Love, Love, Love,
Throbbing through the universe,
Lifting lightly,
Oh, so lightly,
Man's curse.

See, he comes with azure wing.
And each heart remembering
Hours of unconfined bliss,
Waits a-tiptoe for his kiss.

Brush by softly, gentle Love,
Sacred are the thoughts which move
At thy fragrant breath.

Hasten not, Love, with thy wooing!
At thy going, cometh death.

SWEET AS THE THEME

SWEET as the theme of Adam's bridal song
 In Eden's blissful grove,
The treasured joy whose vocal mem'ries throng
 Past hours of cloudless love!
But ah, the magic of unspoken words,
 Dim music of the soul,
Whose muffled waves, like distant cries of birds,
 Reverberating roll,
Far where our hidden memories sleep
 With long years intertwined,
And life's sunk hope and stranded wreckage keep
 The caverns of the mind.

SONNET

WE nothing know but that we are, and long
To be—what we are not. We strive and
yearn

For the unknown celestial lights that burn
For purer souls whose wings are swift and strong.
Thoughts, hopes, and fears distract us, but the
tongue

Is mute ; we cannot speak, we cannot learn ;
Sad, unexpressed, unsatisfied, we turn
To life again with bitter sense of wrong.

When, lo! comes trilling through the magic sky,
Full tale of our ideals, wants and woes.
Wondering, we hear a silver voice disclose
The treasured joy, the hidden grief, the sigh
Suppressed, and see our very souls laid bare
By some strange minstrel's soft, melodious air.

CHANGE

IT is in vain they pass along the street—
Their spirits touch not, though their hands
may meet,
Though in all love and kindness they greet,
It is in vain.

They strive to sit and spin with broken thread,
But memory loves not languages long dead ;
And silence falls about each drooping head—
It is in vain.

In vain among the withered years they grope,
The rustling bares no buried leaves of hope,
The stars have cast their fateful horoscope—
It is in vain.

For one, the sun sets on a sullen shore,
For one, the dawn peeps from a curtained door,
A world divides them, and they meet no more—
It is in vain.

MELANCHOLY

THESSE are thy fancies, gentle Melancholy ;
The past's sweet cult revered and kept most
holy ;
Sad, pensive thoughts on love's and life's
deception ;
Songs, still unsung, and sweet beyond conception ;
Pale, shivering ghosts of baffled, fond desires ;
The silver ashes of extinguished fires ;
Frail, withered leaves, once crimson-hearted
blooming,
Gaunt, naked trees 'gainst stormy starlight
looming ;
White sails that skim Utopian oceans wholly ;
These are thy fancies, gentle Melancholy !

THE SHADOWS

THE three lone graves shone green,
The sky shone blue
Beyond the yew ;
A shadow fell between . . .
Sight grew in me . . .
'Twas Misery.

A second Shadow came . . .
Open with spade
The graves she laid.
She came . . . Hate was her name . . .
To wrest anew
Her direful due.

She propped with frigid glee,
'Gainst three headstones,
Three skeletons.
She cursed those three . . . Ah me!
Each thing of bone
Made piteous moan . . .

Seven times she cursed those three . . .
The sky still blue
Above the yew.

SING LULLABY, O HEART!

SING lullaby, O heart, to all thy fears,
The birds and beasts are sleeping,
And thou alone with grief and tears
Art ceaseless vigil keeping.

Sing lullaby, O heart, sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby, O heart, to grief and pain ;
Love's slumbering angels waken,
And in thy dreams shall live again—
Old joys be overtaken.

Sing lullaby, O heart, sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby, O heart, and lay care down ;
Of old sweet Beauty bore thee ;
Her joyous saints, with palm and crown,
Throw down their harps before thee.

Sing lullaby, O heart, sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby, O heart, grief's silence win ;
Love, Joy and Beauty woo thee,
Their triple spousals do begin,
All plight their troth unto thee.

Sing lullaby, O heart, sing lullaby!
O heart, heart, heart, sing lullaby,
Sing lullaby!

TO A ROBIN

HOW cam'st thou here, sweet Robin?
What demon of unrest
Hath lured so far from England's shores
Thy swelling crimson breast?
What fairy dreams and airy schemes
Came to thy humble nest,
To send thee from thy gabled eave
A-wandering in the West?

Had I thy wings, sweet Robin,
This moment I would fly
From golden sunsets' Western glow
Unto a colder sky,
Where chiming bells their mellow notes
Ring out from belfries high,
And floating o'er a hoary world
Through leafless valleys sigh.

But hearts are warm, sweet Robin,
Within the dear old land,
They with true, honest impulse give
True grip of honest hand.
Across the sea's dividing gulf
Love waves his magic wand,
And hearts at home reach hearts that beat
Upon this distant strand.

Why linger here, sweet Robin?
Oh, soon it will be Spring,

When all the hedgerows will be gay
With bluebells blossoming.
Then primrose, daisy, violet sweet
Lurk where the lark doth spring
From lowly nest to sunlit skies,
With dewdrops on his wing.

Alas, alas, poor Robin!
Perchance thy restless eye
Hath never seen those meadows green
Where drowsy cattle lie
Through summer days, when purling streams
To whispering winds reply,
And countless birds and murmuring bees
Join in the lullaby.

Then fly away, sweet Robin,
Thy wings and crimson breast
In thought had borne me o'er the seas
To seek a moment's rest—
To dream again within my home,
Alas, a fruitless quest:
'Twere vain to dream—my heart returns—
My home is in the West.

EMOTIONS

THEY flutter from the sky ;
And sing as oft of old ;
Lest they again should fly,
I clip their wings of gold.

I put a coat of silk
Upon each slender frame
(With gown as white as milk),
And give to each a name.

No more unclothed, but gay
In silks and samite fine,
They walk the streets all day
But seem no longer mine.

I will no more deride,
When wand'ring seraphs sing
Their natural grace and pride
Of innocence and wing.

Ah, little fugitive!
May I not capture thee?
Or must I bid thee live,
A nameless memory?

PRESENTIMENT

WIND-WITCHES wailing upon the lone sea,
- Churning the fury that yet is to be,
Calling the spirit which slumbers in me.

Hark to the thunder-artillery roll—
Resonance rumbling from pole unto pole,
Rending this fathomless silence of soul.

Flashes the lightning—where, none may foreknow,
Lifting the sunken hill-crests in its glow,
Cleaving the heart's hidden chasms of woe.

Wild is the spirit which stalks on the sea,
Wild the foreboding of *that* yet to be,
And wilder the terror which crouches in me.

ENNUI

WHO has not felt, some still, hot afternoon,
A wild and maddening impulse to explore
Some new sensation, anything, to leave
The glare, the fierce monotony behind?
The languid air folds like a silken gauze
Around the fluttering senses, and holds down
Their feeble struggles into transient death ;
The limbs are lapped, inert, in heavier folds
And slacken, listless, till a swift disgust
Wakes all the swooning faculties, and stirs
The stagnant blood to life. Then comes that wild
Rebellion against all that is ; the cry
Of prisoned life for liberty ; the rage
For swift, untrammelled motion. Oh, to race,
Or, like the ostrich, chase the tireless wind
On boundless plains ; or, dizzy joy! to scale
Laboriously some precipice's brow!
The fever passes, and a numbness falls,
Like shadows from a cloud that crushes out
The diamond sparkle from some shallow stream,
So flies the dream, the race remains unrun ;
The mountain still unscaled ; once more we sink
Into that narrow groove where we are trained
Gently to run in harness, or in chains.

MOODS

AH, those reflective moods when soul and mind
Turn round to gaze with wonder at them-
selves,
And through the glamour of long years arise
Rebuking eyes of mute appeal,
Sad wistfulness, surprise—
How sweet they are, how swiftly swept aside!
Time's folded curtains fall from Memory's hand,
Tears fill the eyes, a numbness clasps the throat;
We feel as souls thrust forth from Paradise;
And yet we know,
It is but peopled with the ghosts
Of our dead selves.

*A LUNATIC'S WILL DONE INTO VERSE

I, CHARLES LOUNBERY,
Of disposing memory,
Being of sound mind,
Have myself designed
This, my latest Will and Testament.

Item.

God owns the world—
We are heirs of God—
Herewith I bequeath
My portion . . . I have trod
Full softly through this so-called vale of tears
And found it good.
Now of sound mind, and being full of years,
My Will I would
Devise, and leave
Not gold, nor yet the right to live—
I hold these not—
But, all good, endearing names
That childhood-grace and beauty claims,
All little, quaint, pet-names of love
I give to all good parents for
The children who their darlings are,
And for the benefit thereof,
Sweet praise, encouragement, in trust,
And I charge them to be generous, just.
Again, I leave to children (but
Only whilst they, children still,
Dance and dance with heedless foot)
The harebell on the windy hill,

* A paraphrase of a genuine Will.

Item.

The heather on the sweeping moor,
The daisy at the cottage door,
The willows, and the little brooks
With shining sands and mossy nooks,
The primrose on the steep green bank
(Oh, warn them of the nettle rank,
The thistle and the treacherous thorn)
And all the dew-gems of the morn—
Lowly things that please the poor.
Unlimited, the right to play
Throughout each golden summer day,
To glean the dropping ears of corn,
To blow upon the young moon's horn,
And in the long and sweet twilight
To crowd the crackling fire bright ;
To listen to the tales of old
Of sleeping ladies, princes bold ;
Dragons fierce, and treasure trove,
Guerdon of the truest love ;
And the right sweetly to sleep
Whilst the angels vigil keep,
Lanterns from the milky way
Guiding them lest they should stray,
And the moonbeams weaving white
Counterpanes of soft delight.
But I do charge you that the boon
Of starlight and the silver moon
Must no lover's rights impugn.

Item.

Now of sound mind, I here devise
All useful fields for exercise,

All pleasant waters good to swim
To every boy ; also, to him
The bracing hills, the fishing streams,
The meadow where the hawk-moth dreams ;
The secret woods and all their joys
Of squirrels, birds, and living toys,
Of echo, shadow, and strange noise ;
Adventures, and all distant places too,
All weird, wild quests, O boy, I give to you.
At night
The fireside shall have a place
For you, and you shall trace
All pictures that in burning wood delight ;
Nor let, nor hindrance,
Nor care-encumbrance,
Shall you annoy,
O happy, happy boy!

Item.

To lovers all I would devise
The rapture of the dreaming skies,
The red rose 'neath the sheltering wall,
The hawthorn snows that softly fall ;
Sweet strains of gentle music, and
All beauteous things their love demand ;
The tender touch,
The thrill, and such
Delights the world scorns overmuch ;
In short, all budding joys that lie upcurled
Within their own imaginary world.

Item.

To young men, jointly, I bequeath
The glory of the victor's wreath,

The sports of rivalry, and true
Disdain of weakness, and a due
Confidence in their own strength,
Friendships of a life-long length ;
Companionship and merry songs,
Brave choruses, all that belongs
To lusty voices ; and a life
Of healthy joy and strenuous strife.

Item.

To those who can no longer wage
Life's war, nor give a lover's gage ;
Who tread no more the happy heath
With careless footstep, I bequeath
All fond memory of the past ;
The strength of the enthusiast,
And sober pleasures that do last
And bring the olden days again
With freshened joy and chastened pain ;
And, what many hold more dear,
Precious volumes of Shakespeare,
Burns, and haply it be told
There are others, I withhold
None of them if they but raise
The glamour of the bygone days.

Item.

Lastly, to each lovèd one,
With folded hands and labour done,
With snowy wreath
And faded eyes,
I do bequeath,
I do devise,
Their children's love and gratitude to keep
Till He shall give His own belovèd sleep.

WONDER

THERE was a time when life bespoke
My witness to her stead ;
But now I know not which to invoke,
The living or the dead.

There was a time when on the shore
The ocean wove her spell ;
But now I tremble more before
The wonder of a shell.

One pathway to a temple led,
At times, the way I trod ;
Now, whatsoever path I tread
Leads on and up to God.

RESOLUTION

I WILL be strong! then let the billows roll
Far o'er my head—they cannot hurt my soul:
Deeper the swell, the higher soars the crest—
I reach my haven on its bounding breast.

I will be strong! but Thou, O Lord, canst say
Where weakness lies, in night or summer day:
Wilt Thou but hold me—let me not retreat,
Then am I strongest in my soul's defeat.

I will be good! not, Lord, through mine own grace,
But through the virtue of Thine anguished face:
Make me now pure in every strong intent—
So shall my journey be one long ascent.

I will be loved! if Thou, the Fount of Love,
Wilt show Thy gentle Presence from above,
That, like a mirror, I may shadow Thee,
And all men love Thy loveliest form in me.

SONNET

THE gentle rain, with shower of crystal drops
Brings soothing balm and quickens life again,
The tender blades of grass intensely strain
Up to the nebulous sky ; the sprawling hops
Shoot up their tendrils ; thirstily tree-tops
Do suck, rejoice, and bud and blow. The plain,
The hill and valley teem with joy—its soft refrain :
Babbling of rills that thread the dreamy copse.

Ah, love, dear love, e'en as the gentle showers,
Thy memory falls across the weary years,
Quickening my soul with fresh unbittered tears,
And drawing thought up to thy heavenly bowers ;
So shall my soul, when thy sweet cloud appears,
Make happier growth than e'en in sunnier hours.

A SICK MAN'S DAY

THE weird medallions on the carven bed
Frowned like the gargoyles of a buttress'd
church,
And long he watched the walls' gay festoons lurch
And dance a mazy whirl above his head.

The landscape like a painted picture shone,
Lined, as an atlas in the window frame,
In form, in character, for aye the same,
But many moods writ each its tale thereon.

A double streak shot by, half light, half shade,
The flash of swallow's flight that swiftly took
A sick man's thought, a sick man's longing look,
Far from the bed where his straight limbs were
laid.

At times he sank into a fitful sleep,
All honeycombed with dark and fevered dreams,
To waken, uttering faint, half-stifled sounds,
And bathed in sweat, thro' gulfs of thought to
creep.

Dim echoes travelled from the outside world,
Anon, a fierce discordant bolt of sound
That made his startled, tortured pulses bound,
Till every limb with silent anguish curled.

Cool drinks, delicious fruits, the d'oylied tray,
The doctor's call, with increased pain attached,
Friends' visits — hours from ravening Lethe
snatched—
These were th' events that made the sick man's
day.

And when the shades of ripening even fell,
Bright faces gathered round the household board ;
Above, with every costly comfort stored,
Oh, God, how dreary then that cloistered cell!

IN PRAISE OF MARIE-CLAIRE

DEAR shepherdess, divinely fair!
We, too, would fold thy sheep,
And, mindful of the quivering corn,
Thy wayward lambs would keep.
The convent-bells, the ambient air,
Should lull our souls to sleep,
And, beauty-burdened, we forlorn
Would bend with thee and weep.
We, too, would know the talking trees,
And through the broom would go;
Would nest with thee, the fairest dove
Un-nested here below.
Would love thee when thy reveries
Of rapture turn to woe,
Would hold thee when thy summer's love
Is fainting in the snow.
Thou art a keeper of the soul,
And not of sheep alone—
Oh, many wandering lambs shall long
To make thy love their own.
Thy voice is like the sweet citole,
Of all our souls beknown,
When, singing Love's great marriage-song,
We sweep around His throne.
Thy face has risen like a star
That, exquisitely fair,
Comes solacing above the pine
The twilight of despair.
Thy soul is free as angels' are,
As free as light, as air;
God bless thee, wanderer divine,
And keep thee everywhere!

THE PRISONER

HAVE I heard of the Hound of Heaven?
Here! in this soundless cell
How should I hear of it?
You! Have you heard of the Hound of Hell?
Its lair no dead men saw,
And its name no quick men tell,
But the undamned call it law—
We damned ones call it Hell.
Have you fled through the starless night?
Have you tramped through the sunless dawn?
Have you fed, to the devil's despite,
From the scraps on a backyard lawn?
Have you stood in the bold disguise
Of a desperate man's dismay,
'Neath the glare of the creature's eyes?
Have you cringed at its baffled bay?
Have you slunk from its gleaming jaws,
With it straining at the full
Of its leash of thin-spun laws,
In the strength of a maddened bull?
Have you crept through the years alone,
And crawled from a kennel-cell,
For your soul and your mind to be thrown
With your flesh to the Hound of Hell?
*For the freshness of the Spring,
Its hot and fetid breath!*
*For the song the dear birds sing,
The silences of death!*

Have I heard of the Hound of Heaven?
Not I . . . Here! . . let me tell
Of the new commandment given,
For I have learned it well.
“Thou shalt not beg nor steal”—
That’s old—this new one scan:
“Thou shalt not eat—to heel
Of the Hound of Hell, O man!”

THE GLANCE

BBROWN as the leaves when autumn weaves
Dim nooks for roofless bowers,
The bride's dear maid, demure and staid,
Who strews her path with flowers.

Brown are her eyes, and passing wise
Beneath her bonnet brim,
The glance which shuns the bridegroom's eyes
Yet shoots across to him.

Ah, why so pale, thou bridegroom hale?
Thou art so tall and strong—
No lord might shame this bride to claim,
Yet thou art over-long.

The organ peals, the bridegroom kneels,
The good folk peep and stare,
The wond'ring bride kneels at his side,
He prays so long a prayer.

Ah, Donny Dhu! *one* only knew
When you looked gravely down
Into those gentle eyes of blue,
How much you loved the brown.

Ah, Donny Dhu! *one* only knew
Why you so long must pray,
But *one* could tell the wedding knell
Which tolls for love to-day.

AN IDYLL OF THE SPRING

AN angel from a cloud looked down,
And weary, oh, was she ;
“ I wish,” she sighed, “ yon shepherd clown
Would come and marry me.
I love the primrose at his feet,
The bluebell in his hand,
And all the little lambs which bleat
About the dewy land.

The trees are pushing forth their leaves—
These rosy clouds at play
Cry kinship with the bank which heaves
Below in green and grey.
A sparrow chirps—a glint of blue
Gleams from yon mouldering wall,
And in the ivy-berried yew
Some hurrying ousels call.

The swallows sipping on the wing
Come trooping o'er the mere ;
The earth grows insolent with Spring
As I grow lonely here.
Mad March has blown wild April's tune,
And April sings of May,
Till May shall chant the joy of June
In merriest roundelay.

* * * *

Oh, hear the lark! The stars have gone,
The sun hangs o'er his gates,
His shining arrows buckled on,
He hears the song and waits.

* * * *

Oh, thrilling, thrilling through the sky
That golden voice—Again!—
My heart must answer or I die
Of loneliness and pain."

* * * *

The angel wept. A saddened bird
Sank silent to his nest ;
A boy looked up, and shyly stirred
Some pulse within his breast.

* * * *

" Oh, canst thou love, boy? Canst thou sing?
For love and sing I must."
" Ay, that can I! Lo! 'tis the Spring!
Come! share my couch and crust."
The yokel piped his little best,
And piped the angel down ;
That angel bright—who could have guessed
Would wed so dull a clown?

TO EDITH

THINE eyes are liquid pools of night,
Wherein all stars, half hidden
Beneath soft tremors of delight,
Do sally forth unbidden ;
And when the night is stormy, still
The fateful auguries work their will—
I can be foolish, mad, or wise,
Rapt in delirium of thine eyes.

It matters not what omens are
Drowned in their dreamful deep ;
I am a wind, I am a star,
And in their fringes sleep.
Flash out thy love, flash out thy hate,
The curling lashes fix my fate ;
I will be foolish, mad, or wise,
To dream in shadow of thine eyes.

A VOICE FROM THE POLE

OH, far beyond the frozen seas,
A goddess throned 'mid soundless air,
Defiant, grips her mysteries,
Though science sacrifices there.

To creed-emblazoned obsequies
No sacrificing priests repair,
Her victims crawl upon her knees
And die in loneliest despair.

Hark! blown across the polar seas,
Unfettered from the frozen air,
Through temperate skies, through tropic trees
A thrilling call!—no fruitless prayer.

“Brute-Goddess of the silences!
There is no silence in your lair;
Upon your lap, your awful knees,
No quiet victim of despair.

What sacrifice shall you appease?
What act of ruth shall man not dare?
Your sacred pole he holds and frees
Rebellious banners to the air.

Upon your lap his bones may freeze,
His gallant heart lie cold and bare,
But, stronger than your cruelties,
His mighty spirit burgeons there.”

AUTUMN

OH, hush! The earth is calling to the leaves,
"Children, come home!"

And down they flutter, ruby-coloured sheaves.
From branching spire and lofty dome—

"Children, come home!"

The mother cries,

"The frost is here and summer dies,
Children, come home!"

The leaves are calling to the lingering flowers,

"Sisters, come home!"

The sun is counting out his golden hours

And sullen is the gloam.

Come home! Come home!

Our mother pleads ;

She calls the flowers, the buds, the seeds."

The mother calls us too—we will not hear—

Hark! soft and clear,

Our Father's voice is calling, "Children dear,

The night is coming—I am near!

Like leaves and flowers ye shall not fall and die,

For I am watching—in the sky

Are many mansions set for those who roam—

Children, come home!"

A PROPHECY

GRIEVE not for the fading away of old wonders,
There is joy in the birth of the new ;
Have patience! the child which now stumbles and
blunders,
Will climb higher, much higher than you.

The wings of your soul brush the mountain's high
summit,
Though your feet never touch its steep stair,
But the youth at your side with his toy and his
plummet,
On foot as on wing shall go there.

The fort in the clouds stands in grandeur and
vastness,
Sole sentry, sole guardian, a wraith ;
But the power of knowledge shall people the
fastness
Now held by the power of faith.

CHRISTMAS

ALL things are passing—nay, dear hearts, 'tis
we,

Inconstant travellers, pass from sea to sea,
From land to land ; in nowise we abide
The crystal waters of to-morrow's tide,
Pilgrims of hope and passion, we explore
Never the selfsame sea, the selfsame shore—
Know love one day and know it thus no more!

Only when memory's backward billows roll,
And flood with ebbing tides the dreaming soul,
Old treasures come with the resurgent wave,
The gifts we long ago to others gave.
Pearls newly washed in native brine, we know
Their olden glory and their olden glow—
Pearls from the Christmas tides of long ago!

All things are passing—yes, a deeper joy
Takes us more swiftly to our bourne ; the buoy,
The shallow water, banks, the lighthouse gleam,
Are fast receding ; the eternal dream
Draws us right onward till, no more forlorn,
Tossed, tired and tempted, perfect love is born—
Love in our hearts, and lo! The Christmas Morn!

A WILD BEE

I AM a bee . . . a lover of the sun . . .
A wilding bee, and ever on the wing.
I build my mossy dome upon the dun
Warm earth in fresh young spring ;
And though I fly above the garden fence,
And suck the garden's sweetest sense,
No gardener shall my free soul shrive,
I will not creep into his hive
While clover white and clover red
Dainty bee-pastures round me spread ;
While foliage of the tulip-tree
Holds unctuous honey-dew for me,
And amber honey drowns regrets
In purple hearts of violets.

The cherry blossoms fall,
Life is ephemeral,
Yet life is not all pain,
The blossoms come again,
And through the golden hours
From bright, unravished flowers
I have with joy beguiled
Bee-bread and honey wild.

THE CAPTIVE EAGLE

THOUGH dim his eyes, though vain his flight,
Who would not choose to be
This listless eagle, dreaming of the sun,
Rather than this free fowl,
This half-tamed owl,
Which in the drowsy night
Hoots easily
The while the moon-bedazzled vermin run?

But ah, captivity
Hath slender charms, no solace sweet,
And slowly swing the hours 'tween prison bars ;
And liberty,
With sliding wings and feet,
Knoweth but time by threading of the stars.
And oh! that noble hour,
On purple-tinted tower,
When he first sun-proof vision won!
When he first inly heard
(A power-intoxicated bird)
Th' exultant thunders of the sun.

GOD'S HARMONY

GOD bound around the world a zone
Of lovely music, and a moan
Of tender dirge set on the seas ;
To his dear earth all ecstasies
He gave of grief and rapture known,
And round her frozen brow was thrown
His aching, aching silences.

His restless spirits come and go
About this vale of bliss and woe,
And on the waters flash and gleam
The petrels of a troubled dream ;
Unresting but untroubled they,
Their shadows dappling land and spray ;
'Tis only on the mountain crest
They linger long to sing and rest.

And oh, those lovely fields of snow,
Where none but angels come and go!
Pale gold, they lie beneath the dawn,
Which steals around the wind-indrawn,
And heavy clouds,
That hang like shrouds
Above those golden fields.
Oh, lonely, golden fields!
Ye gleam, enchanted slopes,
'Tween gloom of cloud and gloom of pine
Like human hopes,
Half earthly, half divine.

AN APRIL MORNING

SPRING showers of mating buds,
Beneath an April sky!
And you come cantering through the woods
Alone . . .

I ask you why,
And this your gay reply:
"Oh . . . Peggy and I
Go dreaming through the woods."
Dear . . . if you only knew
How often I, with Peggy and you,
Go dreaming through the woods.

PRUE

LOVE yawned and said, "Write me a song."
"No pens, no ink," quoth Prue, "I've seen
for long."

Love took a dagger bright,
And plunged it in her bosom white,
And cried, as gushed the warm blood, red and
strong,

"There is thy pen, thy ink—now write!"

FROM MY WINDOW

THROUGH slender stems of swaying daffodils
A glimpse of yellow beach and boulders
green.

And snowy sails that flutter white between
A rippling sea and dreamy quiet hills.
A fairer scene no eye could long to see!
The sunshine sheds its glory over all,
And on the sands the children's merry call
Rings through the air in joyous melody.

A BOOK OF LIFE

A BOOK thrown carelessly upon the fire,
Curling apart with brown and shrivelled
leaves,
Burnt through and through by passionate desire,
On every breath it shudderingly heaves.
A heedless hand stirs up the dying embers.
One startled flame
Of love and shame . . .
Even crumbling dust remembers.

THE HUMMING BIRD

OH, clear-winged humming-bird, thy joyous
quest
Turns into spirit thy material wings!
Thou, sunbeam energy! Love unexpressed!
That, voiceless, sings.
Oh, that my soul thus consciously could be
A breathless ecstasy of joy like thee!

SUNSET

A PURPLE glory flushes on the hills ;
The sea takes on a deeper, softer blue ;
The autumn sunset in gay transport fills
Each bush and brake in flaming, crimson hue.
Their white wings rosy in reflected light,
The seagulls perch upon the drift that floats
Where, later, dusky pinions of night
Will fold around the gaudy Indian boats.

DAFFODILS

O DAFFODILS! ye blow
The bugle-call of Spring,
Green lance in rest,
Ye stand abreast!
In glorious marshaling!
While golden trumpets blow
And dainty pennons fly,
Ye flaunt above your ancient foe,
And bid old Winter die.

DEATH

DEATH came to me, and said,

“ A compact new

I make with you.

You shall in nowise dread

Me, as all others do,

But live instead

Your life anew.”

Then slowly into view

Rose ghosts of years long dead:

I shuddered, shook my head,

To Death right quickly said,

“ I go with you.”

THE SILHOUETTE OF A SOUL

SO gentle and ethereal—she seems

A soft grey shadow on a sunny blind,

For all about her radiancy gleams,

And she, the prototype of grace defined,

Swaying thereon with every wandering wind.

Incessant movement born of light and air—

Moving before us, of us, yet between

Our common life and that great Life out there,

Where sun and cloud and colour are, and where

A sovereign lady walks, or I misween.

THE DEGENERATE

I WILL not pass my body on to break
The hearts of unborn children ; for their
sake

Lonely on earth it lives, lonely shall die,
And, lonelier still in this lone world, will I
Suffer and cry,
" God of the soul!
Accept the sacrifice and take
Me, bodyless, but whole."

MY HAND IN THINE

MY hand in thine—the tender silence stealing
From each full heart the sweet unspoken
thought ;

Deeper and truer passion-notes revealing
Than harmonies of language ever taught.

My life in thine—eternal bonds unbroken
Knit soul to soul as, dearest, thine to mine ;
Love gives no pledge, no troth, no outward token,
Yet Love and I, Love's slave, are wholly thine.

LOVE IS ETERNAL

LOVE is eternal

Love is immortal!
Separation and death shall have no power
To stay one moment of that rare, transcendent
hour

When men and angels raise one mighty shout,
And terror's dusky legions, rabble-rout,
Fold o'er the gold horizon in one sable wing ;
And love, all-glorious,
Is, all-triumphant, king.

LONELINESS

IN unutterable loneliness I sit
And quaff the bitter dregs of my own spirit ;
And none may drink with me, nor share my vigil,
But, when my drinking's done, I look into the eyes
Of pangless death—he who forever waits on pain,
And from his hand I take the deadly potion
That numbs the agony of grim, returning life,
And sends me calm and sobered back to men.

GOD IS

ONCE on a time, I heard men say,
" God IS! . . . I made a God of clay
After their pattern, and they broke
My God to pieces ere He spoke ;
Yet none shall cry me, " Ichabod!
The veil is rent, thou hast no God! "
Myself hath heard, myself hath seen
His glory . . . let none come between!

HOPE

BRIGHT, buoyant Hope is ever on the wing :
She lives, though seeming lost in pathless
gloom,
She tears the hopeless from the teeth of doom,
Within the frozen heart plants flowers of Spring,
And fills the halls of death with caroling.
So doth she bid our silver days resume
The cast-off joys of youth's gold pleasuring.

CORYDON

11

CORYDON'S PRELUDE

I.

OF old, when Master Campion sung,
And good Queen Bess did reign ;
The minstrel's harp was finer strung
To an immortal strain.

Now all who love sweet Poesy cry,
" The art of song is lost,"
And they who would with old bards vie,
Adventure to their cost.

The minstrel in his lightsome mood
His sprightliest ditties made,
When piping shepherds pranced and wooed
Fair Cynthia in the glade.

It seemeth that of old the songs
With rapture were entwined,
That lovers had no lasting wrongs,
And maids were ever kind.

If my love's name was Thoralis,
And mine was Corydon,
Would she be kind, nor take amiss
The love I live upon ?

Led I some gentle sheep with me,
And she a snow-white lamb,
Would she be swifter then to see
How loving-sick I am ?

Then will I to the market hie,
The fond fool for to play,
A good fat sheep and pipes to buy,
Then to my love—away!

And that sweet sheep shall nimbly spring
Adown a cowslip glade,
And I will pipe and gaily sing
Unto mine own dear maid.

Yet I some minstrel lay must make
With music set therein ;
Now for dear Thoralis's sake
Let Corydon begin.

II.

Cupid once was in a shower—
He a jaunt had been
Far away from his own bower,
So I took him in ;
Kissed his face and dried his wings,
Then he sat and told me things ;
And he showed me how to toy
With his tiny bow—
'Tis not meet so young a boy
Anything should know—
He, to teach me every part,
Shot, and clove me to the heart!

III.

The rose that opens all her heart,
Spills half her glory on the lawn,
I love thee best as now thou art—
A mossy rosebud in its dawn.
O love, I would not have thee break
Thy calyx of reserve and pride,
And yet, alas, for sweet Love's sake
You may not always beauty hide,
Oh, now, that beauty breaks half-blown—
You cannot, dear, that blush recall!
I pluck thee for my very own—
Now love me, darling, all in all!
I wear thee proudly on my breast—
Was ever bliss so sweet as this?
Was ever lover e'er so blest—
Love's gifts transcend his promises!
And yet, my joy is incomplete,
Although I live alone for thee,
I fain would know in truth, my sweet,
That thou hast equal need of me.
It were enough for me to love—
On thee alone Love's loss would fall,
Should'st thou ne'er know what 'tis to prove
That Love is rapture all in all.
Then, love me, love me all in all,
Or love me, dearest, not at all!



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

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IV.

O Love, could aught more heartless be
Than thy whole conduct is to me?
Thou spok'st me fair—O fie, for shame,
'Twas but to take a surer aim!
Nay, even as I soothe this smart,
Thou bend'st thy bow—alas, poor heart!

V.

With hopeless love no longer burning,
I see my hope of peace returning:
Fa la la!
Now will I play at outward scorning,
And bear no more Love's inner mourning,
Fa la la!
Alas, I cannot cease to love her,
But, lest she should my plight discover,
With seeming hate now will I move her.
Fa la la!
Since hate like love is but a burning,
Perchance 'twould seem a secret yearning—
Fa la la!
With cold indifference will I ply her,
And with a freezing stare defy her,
Fa la la!
Alas, 'tis said false woman knows
Fierce fires burn 'neath mountain snows—
I'll love or hate just as I choose—
Fa la la!

VI.

“ O Love, what can Love proffer,
What gift may he unfold,
For one whose flowing coffer
All riches seem to hold? ”
“ One pearl—and as you love me,
Come, dear, and prove it true—
The loveliest of the lovely,
The gift of giving too.”

VII.

Do I love you—
How can I tell?
Or do I hate you—
And that as well
I know not how to answer.
If self-deceit
No wit can move,
How were it meet
Self to reprove?
Love, tell me if you can, Sir!

VIII.

I welcome blame
And fear not shame,
Into this world I came
That I might love you,

My love would wrest no toll,
Save leave to weave my soul
Into an aureole
To shine above you,
And 'neath your feet
My heart should beat,
Content if it might meet
One chance caressing
My spirit like a wand,
Set in a royal hand,
Should wait at your command—
So these possessing,
Perchance you then
Might deem it vain
To leave me what is plain
An echoing hollow.
Could there be such rare bliss,
Heaven's choirs might bend, I wis,
To hear such grace as this,
" Sweet body, follow."

IX.

O Love, how doubly vain to me—
That I should cease from loving thee!
How vain to tell me thou art false—
I love thee! then, what matters else?
The heart, that's all a heart should be,
Can never love unworthily.

X.

Young Love had been all day a-fooling,
And as he lay at eve a-cooling,
 He chanced to fall asleep.
Anon began the stars to peep
 Down at the pretty boy,
 And wanting fair employ,
 Each shot a silver dart
 Straight at the urchin's heart!
Then Cupid woke up, with a quiver,
And to the stars he made his bow,
And said, " Poor archers all, I trow!
Such archery doti make me shiver."

XI.

DUET

(She)

 Hey, nonny no!
Let us to the meadows go.
I would the olden days were new
When grass was green and skies were blue,
And lads' and lasses' loves were true,
 Hey, nonny no!
I would the olden days were young,
When Phyllis to her shepherd sung,
 Hey, nonny no!

(He)

Come, let us olden antics feign—
You be Phyllis, and I her swain,
And we will toss the haycocks tall—
You, the prettiest maid of all
With kirtle tucked trim heels to show,
And dimpled elbows all aglow,
While all the rustics mop and mow—

Hey, nonny no!

Then shall you sit and sweetly sing,
And I will sit and be your king,
And I will make a pretty posy
To set it in your bosom cosy,
So shall I wish I were a flower
To nestle in so sweet a bower,
So shall I take it not amiss
To be consolèd with a kiss,
Then through the silent lanes we'd go.

While soft and slow—

Hey, nonny no!

To bed the sun the clouds would strow,
Thus, having seen him to his couch,
'Twould be my pleasure to avouch
We owed the moon the same good-will ;
So would we wait with patience till
She tossed her nightcap o'er the hill,
Then, not to shame the modest orb,
We would all peeping Tommies curb,
And shutting both our eyes, would swear
She was the chastest of the fair—

(*She*)

Thereon thy Phyllis would rebel,
And cry you had not spoken well,
And eke, to show *she* had no lack
Of modesty, would turn her back,
And, flying through the glimmering green,
No more till sunrise would be seen—

(*He*)

Could Phyllis use her shepherd so?

(*Both*)

Hey, nonny no! No, no, no, no,
Hey, nonny no!

XII.

CORYDON'S APOLOGY

My love, your name *is* Thoralis,
And I a song *did* sing
Unto a maiden named Phyllis,
Yet 'twas a simple thing.
I may have sung of coral lips
Of teeth whiter than snow,
Yet poets have their little slips
And troubles, too, you know.
They must respect strict emphasis,
Strict metre, scansion, time,
And thus it happed that "fair Phyllis"
Just fitted to the rhyme.

XIII.

TO THORALIS

I may not come anear—

Thou art no flower of mine,
Yet much I love thee, dear,
My daily thought is thine.

The peach bloom on thy cheek,
The violet in thine eye,
Are such as gods do seek,
For such will mortals die.

Thy joy, thy sweet presènce,
Like scent of rose and thyme,
Rise o'er thy heart's defence,
And dare a world to climb.

I do not wish to diè,
But death would surely be
A trusty friend, if I
Should lose my love for thee.

XIV.

Love, I have kept your trust,
You have not been betrayed ;
Yet, loving much, why must
I suffering have made?

Had I but been less true,
Your servitor less bold,
I had not wounded you,
Nor my own pain foretold.

In loving thus too much,
I have been less your friend ;
And yet the fault is such
I may in nowise mend.

If love were but a sin,
It would be clear to me
Why you have ever been
My only enemy.

XV.

No matter, love, whate'er you do—
My love for you but grows the stronger ;
'Tis yours to flout, 'tis mine to woo ;
No matter, love, whate'er you do,
Some day you will this coyness rue
And scorn my suit no longer,
No matter, love, whate'er you do,
My love for you but grows the stronger.

XVI.

If I the hand of Time could stay
To pray for life and love and beauty,
One prayer, thy name, would rise alway,
If I the hand of Time could stay,
One vision, thine, would I portray,
One saint should claim my duty.
If I the hand of Time could stay
To pray for life and love and beauty.

XVII.

VILLANELLE

Come, Pride, now break a lance,
And lay Love in the dust—
So end his merry dance.

Now court no vain mischance,
But with a mighty thrust,
Come, Pride, now break a lance.

With stately curvet prance,
And sate your murderous lust,
So end his merry dance.

O knight of arrogance!
Behold, he stands robust—
Come, Pride, now break a lance!

He lives by sufferance,
Your deadly spear adjust,
So end his merry dance.

Beware his dying glance—
Love yields when yield he must—
Come, Pride, now break a lance!
So end his merry dance.

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