SPES IN ARDUIS
SPES IN ARDUIS

X

UNIVERSITY OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

SPES IN ARDUIS

MATRICULATION EXAMINATION,

1903.

Queen Victoria Memorial Prize.

AWARDED TO

Fernando A. N. Pessoa

acting Registrar.

THE CHOICE WORKS

OF

EDGAR ALLAN POE

POPULAR EDITIONS. Crown 8vo., cloth, 3s. 6d. each.

SOCIAL LIFE IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE. By JOHN ASHTON. With 84 Illustrations.

CURIOSITIES OF PURITAN NOMENCLATURE. By Rev. C. W. BARDSLEY, M.A., Author of "Our English Surnames."

FIFTY YEARS AGO. By WALTER BESANT. With 144 Illustrations.

ENGLISH MERCHANTS. By H. R. FOX BOURNE. With 32 Illustrations.

MYTHS AND DREAMS. By EDWARD CLODD, President Folk-Lore Society.

GEORGE COLMAN'S HUMOROUS WORKS: "Broad Grins," "My Night-gown and Slippers," etc. With Life of the Author and Frontispiece.

THE LIFE OF GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. By BLANCHARD JERROLD. With 84 Illustrations and a Bibliography.

BRET HARTE'S CHOICE WORKS IN PROSE AND VERSE. With Portrait and 40 Illustrations.

THOMAS HOOD'S CHOICE WORKS IN PROSE AND VERSE. With Life, Portrait, and 200 Illustrations.

FINGER-RING LORE: Historical, Legendary, and Anecdotal. By WILLIAM JONES, F.S.A. With hundreds of Illustrations.

CREDULITIES, PAST AND PRESENT. By WILLIAM JONES. With Coloured Frontispiece.

CROWNS AND CORONATIONS: A History of Regalia. By WILLIAM JONES, F.S.A. With 91 Illustrations.

CHARLES LAMB'S COMPLETE WORKS, including "Poetry for Children" and "Prince Dorus." With 2 Portraits and a Facsimile of MS.

THE HISTORY OF SIGNBOARDS FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES. By JACOB LARWOOD and J. C. HOTTEN. With Coloured Frontispiece and 94 Illusts.

THE MACLISE PORTRAIT-GALLERY OF ILLUSTRIOUS LITERARY CHARACTERS: 85 Portraits by DANIEL MACLISE. With Memoirs by WILLIAM BATES, B.A.

EDGAR ALLAN POE'S CHOICE WORKS: Poems, Stories, Essays. With an Introduction by C. BAUDELAIRE.

MY FIRST BOOK. By TWENTY-TWO POPULAR AUTHORS. With 185 Illustrations.

THE ENGLISHMAN'S HOUSE: A Practical Guide for all Interested in Selecting or Building a House. By C. J. RICHARDSON. With 534 Illustrations.

OUR OLD COUNTRY TOWNS. By ALFRED RIMMER. With 54 Illustrations.

RAMBLES ROUND ETON AND HARROW. By ALFRED RIMMER. With 52 Illustrations.

ABOUT ENGLAND WITH DICKENS. By ALFRED RIMMER. With 58 Illustrations.

SHAKESPEARE THE BOY. By WILLIAM J. ROLFE, Litt.D. With 42 Illustrations.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN'S COMPLETE WORKS. With Life and Anecdotes.

STRUTT'S SPORTS AND PASTIMES OF THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND. Edited by WILLIAM HONE. With 140 Illustrations.

DEAN SWIFT'S CHOICE WORKS IN PROSE AND VERSE. With Memoir, Portrait, and Facsimiles.

THACKERAYANA: Notes and Anecdotes. With Coloured Frontispiece and hundreds of Sketches by WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

CLUBS AND CLUB-LIFE IN LONDON. By JOHN TIMBS, F.S.A. With 41 Illustrations.

ENGLISH ECCENTRICS AND ECCENTRICITIES. By JOHN TIMBS, F.S.A. With 48 Illustrations.

THE LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE OF J. M. W. TURNER. By WALTER THORNBURY. With 8 Illustrations in Colour and 2 Woodcuts.

ARTEMUS WARD'S COMPLETE WORKS. With Portrait.

STUDIES IN LIFE AND SENSE: Natural History Papers. By Dr. ANDREW WILSON, F.R.S.E. With 36 Illustrations.

CARICATURE HISTORY OF THE GEORGES; or, Annals of the House of Hanover. By THOMAS WRIGHT, F.S.A. With over 300 Illustrations.

LONDON: CHATTO & WINDUS, 111 ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

THE CHOICE WORKS

OF

EDGAR ALLAN POE

POEMS, STORIES, ESSAYS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

A NEW EDITION

LONDON

CHATTO & WINDUS

1902

CONTENTS.

PAGE

EDGAR ALLAN POE: HIS LIFE AND WORKS, FROM THE FRENCH OF CHARLES BAUDELAIRE - - - - 1

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE RAVEN - - - - - - 25
LENORE - - - - - - 28
HYMN - - - - - - 29
A VALENTINE - - - - - - 29
THE COLISEUM - - - - - 30
TO HELEN - - - - - - 31
TO —— —— - - - - - - 33
ULALUME - - - - - - 34
THE BELLS - - - - - - 36
AN ENIGMA - - - - - - 39
ANNABEL LEE - - - - - - 40
TO MY MOTHER - - - - - 41
THE HAUNTED PALACE - - - - - 41
THE CONQUEROR WORM - - - - - 43
TO F——S. S. O——D. - - - - - 44
TO ONE IN PARADISE - - - - - 44
THE VALLEY OF UNREST - - - - 45
THE CITY IN THE SEA - - - - - 46
THE SLEEPER - - - - - - 47
SILENCE - - - - - - 49

PAGE

A Dream within a Dream - - - - 49
Dream-Land - - - - - - 50
To Zante - - - - - - 51
Eulalie - - - - - - 52
Eldorado - - - - - - 53
Israfel - - - - - - 53
For Annie - - - - - - 55
To —— - - - - - - 58
Bridal Ballad - - - - - 58
To F—— - - - - - - 59
Scenes from "Politian" - - - - 60

POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.

Sonnet—To Science - - - - - 76
Al Aaraaf - - - - - - 76
To the River —— - - - - - 90
Tamerlane - - - - - - 91
To —— - - - - - - 97
A Dream - - - - - - 98
Romance - - - - - - 98
Fairy-Land - - - - - - 99
The Lake—To —— - - - - - 100
Song - - - - - - - 101
To M. L. S. - - - - - - 101

TALES OF MYSTERY AND IMAGINATION.

The Gold Bug - - - - - 105
The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar - - 138
MS. Found in a Bottle - - - - 147
A Descent into the Maelström - - - 157
The Murders in the Rue Morgue - - - 172
The Mystery of Marie Roget - - - - 204
The Purloined Letter - - - - 248
The Black Cat - - - - - 266
The Masque of the Red Death - - - 275

PAGE
The Cask of Amontillado - - - - 280
The Oval Portrait - - - - - 287
The Assignation - - - - - 290
The Tell-Tale Heart - - - - - 300
William Wilson - - - - - 305
Berenice - - - - - 324
Eleonora - - - - - 331
Ligeia - - - - - - 337
Shadow.—A Parable - - - - - 351
Silence.—A Fable - - - - - 354
A Tale of the Ragged Mountains - - - 357
King Pest - - - - - - 367
The Man of the Crowd - - - - 378
"Thou art the Man" - - - - - 386

HUMOROUS TALES AND SKETCHES.

The Spectacles - - - - - 403
The Duc de l'Omelette - - - - 425
Lionizing - - - - - - 429
Never Bet the Devil your Head - - - 434
Some Words with a Mummy - - - - 443
Why the Little Frenchman Wears his Hand in a Sling 458
The Literary Life of Thingum Bob, Esq. - - 463
How to Write a "Blackwood" Article - - 480
X-ing a Paragrab - - - - - 489
Diddling considered as one of the Exact Sciences - 495
The Angel of the Odd - - - - 505
Mellonta Tauta - - - - - 514
The Man that was Used up - - - - 526
The Business Man - - - - - 536

CRITICAL ESSAYS.

Elizabeth Barrett Barrett (Mrs. Browning) - - 547
R. H. Horne - - - - - - 569
Thomas Babington Macaulay - - - - 588

PAGE
Charles Lever - - - - - 591
Charles Dickens - - - - - 600
Longfellow's Ballads - - - - - 617
Nathaniel Hawthorne - - - - - 628
The Poetic Principle - - - - - 641
The Philosophy of Composition - - - 660
Philosophy of Furniture - - - 671

EDGAR ALLAN POE:

HIS LIFE AND WORKS.

FROM THE FRENCH OF

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE.*

"Unhappy Master, whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast, and followed faster, till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore—
Of 'Never—nevermore!'"

The Raven.

I.

NOT long ago, there was brought before one of our tribunals a criminal whose forehead was tattooed with the singularly strange device—*Never a chance.* Thus as a book bears its title, he carried above his eyes the etiquette-law of his life, and the cross-examination proved this curious writing to be cruelly veracious. There are, in the history of literature, many analogous destinies of actual damnation,—many men who bear the word *Luckless* written in mysterious characters in the sinuous folds of their foreheads. The blind angel of Expiation hovers for ever around them, punishing them with rods for the edification of others. It is in vain that their lives exhibit talents, virtues or graces. Society has for them a special anathema, accusing them even of those infirmities which its own persecutions have generated. What would Hoffmann not have done to disarm Destiny? what Balzac not attempted to compel Fortune? Does there, then, exist some diabolic Providence which prepares misery from the cradle; which throws, and throws with premeditation, these spiritual and angelic natures into hostile ranks, as martyrs were once hurled into the arena? Can there, then, be holy souls destined to the sacrificial altar, compelled to march to death and glory across the very ruins of their lives? Will the nightmare of gloom eternally besiege these chosen souls? Vainly they may

* Translated by H. Curwen.

struggle, vainly conform themselves to the world, to its foresight, to its cunning; let them grow perfect in prudence, batten up every entry, nail down every window, against the shafts of Fate; still the Demon will enter by a key-hole; some fault will arise from the very perfection of their breastplate; some superlative quality will be the germ of their damnation:

> "L'aigle, pour le briser, du haut du firmament,
> Sur leur front découvert lâchera la tortue,
> Car ils doivent périr inévétablement."

Their destiny is written in their very constitution; sparkling with a sinister brilliancy in their looks and in their gestures; circulating through their arteries in every globule of their blood.

A famous author of our time has written a book to prove that the poet can find a happy home neither in democratic nor aristocratic society—not a whit the more in a republic than in a monarchy, absolute or limited—and who was able peremptorily to reply to him? I bring to-day a new legend to support his theory; to-day, I add a new saint to the holy army of martyrs, for I have to write the history of one of those illustrious unfortunates, over-rich, with poetry and passion, who came after so many others, to serve in this dull world the rude apprenticeship of genius among inferior souls.

A lamentable tragedy this Life of Edgar Poe! His death a horrible unravelling of the drama, where horror is besmutched with trivialities! All the documents I have studied strengthen me in the conviction that the United States was for Poe only a vast prison through which he ran, hither and thither, with the feverish agitation of a being created to breathe in a purer world—only a wild barbarous country—barbarous and gas-lit—and that his interior life, spiritual as a poet, spiritual even as a drunkard, was but one perpetual effort to escape the influence of this antipathetical atmosphere. There is no more pitiless dictator than that of "Public Opinion" in democratic societies; beseech it not for charity, nor indulgence, nor any elasticity whatsoever, in the application of its laws to the varied and complex cases of moral life. We might say that from the impious love of liberty has been born a new tyranny—the tyranny of fools—which, in its insensible ferocity, resembles the idol of Juggernaut. One biographer tells us gravely, and with the best possible intention in the world, that

Poe, if he had willed to regulate his genius, to apply his creative faculties in a manner more appropriate to the American soil, might have become a money-making author; another—an outspoken cynic this—that beautiful as Poe's genius was, it would have been better for him to have possessed only talent, since talent can pile up a banker's balance much more readily than genius; a third, a friend of the poet, a man who has edited many reviews and journals, confesses that it was difficult to employ Poe, and that he was compelled to pay him less than the others, because he wrote in a style too far removed from the vulgar. How this "savours of the shop," as Joseph de Maistre would say.

Some have even dared more, and, uniting the dullest unintelligence of his genius to the ferocity of the hypocritical trading-class, insulted him to the uttermost,—after his untimely end, rudely hectoring his poor speechless corpse; particularly Mr. Rufus Griswold, who, to quote here George Graham's vengeful saying, then "committed an immortal infamy." Poe, feeling, perhaps, the sinister foreboding of a sudden death, had nominated Griswold and Willis as his literary executors, to set his papers in order, to write his life and to restore his memory. The first—the *pedagogue vampire*—has defamed his friend at full length in an enormous article—wearisome and crammed with hatred—which was prefixed to the posthumous edition of Poe's works; are there then no regulations in America to keep the curs out of the cemeteries? Mr. Willis, however, has proved, on the contrary, that kindliness and respect go hand in hand with true wit, and that charity, which is ever a moral duty, is also one of the dictates of good taste.

Talk of Poe with an American—he will, perhaps, confess his genius, perhaps even show a personal pride in it; but, with that sardonic superiority which betokens your positive man, he will tell you of the poet's disordered life; of his alcoholized breath, ready to have taken light at any candle-flame; of his vagabond habits; he will reiterate that the poet was an erratic and strange being, an orbitless planet, rolling incessantly from Baltimore to New York, from New York to Philadelphia, from Philadelphia to Boston, from Boston to Baltimore, from Baltimore to Richmond; and, if deeply moved by these preludes of a grievous history, you try to make him understand that the individual was not alone blameworthy, that it must have been difficult to write or think at ease in a country where there are a million sovereigns,

a country without, strictly speaking, a metropolis, and without an aristocracy, his eyes will open fiercely, and, sparkling with rage, drivel of suffering patriotism will foam to his lips, and America, by his mouth, will hurl curses at its old mother, Europe, and at the philosophy of ancient days.

I repeat once more my firm conviction that Edgar Poe and his country were never upon a level. The United States is a gigantic and infantine country, not unnaturally jealous of the old continent. Proud of its material development, abnormal and almost monstrous, this new comer into history has a *naïve* faith in the all-powerfulness of industry, being firmly convinced, moreover, like some unfortunates among ourselves, that it will finish by devouring the devil himself. Time and money are there held in such extraordinary esteem; material activity, exaggerated almost to the proportions of a national mania, leaves room in their minds for little that is not of the earth. Poe, who came of a good race, and who, moreover, declared the great misfortune of his country to be its lack of an aristocracy, expected, as he often argued, that in a nation without an aristocracy, the worship of the beautiful would but corrupt itself, lessen and disappear; who accused his fellow-citizens, in their emphatic and costly luxury, of all the symptoms of bad taste that characterize the *parvenu;* who considered Progress, the grand idea of modern times, as the ecstasy of silly idlers, and who styled the modern perfection of the human dwelling an eyesore and a rectangular abomination;—Poe, I say, was there a singularly solitary brain. Believing only in the immutable—in the eternity of nature, he enjoyed—a cruel privilege truly in a society amorous of itself—the grand common-sense of Machiavelli, who marches before the student like a column of fire across the deserts of history. What would he have written, what have thought, if he had heard the sentimental theologian, out of love for the human race, suppress hell itself;—the rag-shop philosopher propose an insurance company to put an end to wars by the subscription of a half-penny per head;—the abolition of capital punishment and orthography, those two correlative follies, and a host of sick persons writing, with the ear even close to the belly, fantastic grumblings as flatulent as the element which dictated them? If you add to this impeccable vision of the True, —an actual infirmity under certain circumstances, and exquisite delicacy of taste, revolting from everything out of exact proportion,

an insatiate love for the beautiful, which had assumed the power of a morbid passion, you altogether cease to be astonished that to such a man life had become a hell, that such a life speedily arrived at an untimely end—nay, you will admire his enthusiasm for bearing with it for so long a time.

II.

The family of Poe was one of the most respectable in Baltimore. His maternal grandfather had served as a quartermaster-general in the war of independence, and had gained the friendship and high esteem of La Fayette, who, during his last journey through the States, had specially sought out the general's widow, to express his gratitude for the services her husband had rendered. His great-grandfather had married the daughter of the English admiral, MacBride, who was allied with the noblest English houses. David Poe, the general's son and Edgar's father, falling violently in love with an English actress, Elizabeth Arnold, then famous for her beauty, ran away with her and married her, and, to bring their destinies still more intimately together, took to the stage, appearing with his wife on the boards of the different theatres in the chief towns of the Union. The young couple died at Richmond almost at the same time, leaving three little children,—the youngest of whom was Edgar,—in the most helpless and abandoned condition.

Edgar Poe was born at Baltimore, in the year 1813,—I give this date upon his own authority, for his writings protest against the statement of Griswold, who places the birth in 1811. If ever, to borrow an expression from our poet, the "Spirit of Romance,"—a spirit sinister and stormy—presided at a birth, it was certainly at his. Poe was the veritable offspring of passion and adventure. Mr. Allan, a wealthy merchant, took a great fancy to the unfortunate little lad, whom nature had dowered with a charming manner, and, being childless, adopted him as a son, to be henceforth known as Edgar Allan Poe. He was thus brought up in happy circumstances, and in the legitimate hope of succeeding to one of those fortunes which give a lofty altitude to the character. He accompanied his adopted parents upon a journey through England, Scotland and Ireland, but before returning to their native country, they entrusted him to the care of Dr. Bransby, who kept a school of some importance at Stoke-Newington, a northern suburb of London. Poe has himself, in *William Wilson*, described this

quaint old house, with its Elizabethan gables, and all his schoolboy impressions.

He returned to Richmond in 1822, and continued his studies in America under the best masters of the neighbourhood. At the University of Charlottesville, which he entered in 1825, he distinguished himself, not only by an intelligence quasi-miraculous, but also by a sinister abundance of passions—a precocity truly American—which was finally the cause of his expulsion. We must note in passing that Poe had already at Charlottesville manifested the most remarkable aptitude for the physical and mathematical sciences. Later on he made a frequent use of these in his strange stories, drawing from them resources altogether unexpected. But I have reason to believe that it was not to this order of compositions that he attached the most importance, and that—perhaps on account of this precocious aptitude—he was not far from considering them as facile juggleries, when compared with works of pure imagination. Some unfortunate gaming debts led to a temporary coolness on the part of his adopted father, and Edgar—a very curious fact, and one proving, say what they will, a strong dose of chivalry in his impressionable brain—conceived the project of aiding the Greeks in their struggle against the tyranny of the Turks. What became of him in the East, what he did there, whether he ever really had a chance of studying the classic borders of the Mediterranean, why he was found at St. Petersburgh, without a passport, and, politically comprised, compelled to appeal to the American ambassador to escape the penalty of the Russian laws, and for aid to return home—all this is still a mystery: we know nothing of it: this is a void which he alone could have filled up. Edgar Poe's life, his youth, his adventures in Russia, and his correspondence have for long been announced in the American journals, but have not yet appeared.

Returning to America in 1829 he expressed a wish to enter the military college at West Point; he was, in fact, admitted, and there, as elsewhere, he gave signs of an intelligence admirably endowed, but at the same time undisciplined: and, at the end of some few months, he was dismissed. At this moment an event occurred in his adopted family which had the gravest consequence upon the whole of his after life. Mrs. Allan, for whom he felt a truly filial affection, died, and Mr. Allan married a lady of extreme youth. A domestic quarrel thereupon took place, into which I cannot enter,

since it has been clearly explained by no one of his biographers. There is, however, no ground for astonishment that he was henceforth definitely separated from Mr. Allan, who, having children by his second marriage, completely cut off all hopes of succeeding to his fortune.

Shortly after quitting Richmond Poe had published a small volume of poems; this was, indeed, a brilliant first attempt. For all who could feel and appreciate English poetry, there was already that extra-terrestrial accent, that calmness of melancholy, that delicious solemnity, which characterizes the master-singers.

Misery now for some time made him a soldier, and it is to be presumed that he employed the dull leisure of a garrison life in preparing materials for his future compositions—weird compositions they are, which seem to have been created to show that weirdness is an integral part of the beautiful. Soon embarking in a literary career, where alone beings of a certain order are able to breathe, Poe would have died of extreme misery, but for a lucky chance which gave him the opportunity of bread-earning. The proprietor of a small magazine announced two prizes—one for the best story, the other for the best poem. A singularly clear and beautiful handwriting attracted the attention of a Mr. Kennedy, who presided over the committee of selection, and inspired him with the desire of personally examining the manuscripts. He declared at once that Poe had gained both the prizes, but one only was allotted to him. The president was anxious to see the unknown author, and the editor of the magazine introduced him to a young man of striking beauty, dressed in rags and a tattered coat, buttoned to the chin, possessing the air of a true gentleman, looking at once haughty, and very hungry. Kennedy kindly did what lay in his power, introducing him to the notice of Mr. Thomas White who had founded the *Southern Literary Messenger* at Richmond. White was a man of audacious literary enterprise, but without any literary talent whatever. Poe soon became essential as an assistant, and, at the age of two-and-twenty, found himself the editor of a review, the entire destinies of which depended upon his personal efforts. He speedily established its prosperity, and many years afterwards the *Southern Literary Messenger* acknowledged that to this eccentric outcast, to this incorrigible drunkard, its numerous subscribers and its profitable notoriety were mainly due. In this journal many of the stories which are hereafter presented to our

readers, made their first appearance. For nearly two years Poe, with a marvellous ardour, astonished his public by series of compositions of a kind altogether novel, and by critical articles, the vivacity, the terseness, the severe reasoning of which were admirably adapted to enforce attention. Other articles discussed literature in its every branch, and the young writer's thorough and broad education now stood him in good stead. It is worth our while to learn, that for these important duties, this indefatigable labour, he received five hundred dollars, that is about one hundred and eight pounds sterling, per annum. "*Immediately*," says Griswold, as if he meant to convey, "Believing himself now rich enough—the young fool!"—he married a young lady, beautiful, charming, and of an heroic nature, but *without a farthing*, adds this same Griswold with a sneer of disdain. The young lady was his cousin, Virginia Clemm.

In spite of the services rendered to his journal, White quarrelled with his editor before two years had elapsed. The reason of their separation is evidently to be found in the attacks of hypochondria, and the fitful outbursts of intoxication, to which the poet was subject—characteristic incidents which darkened his spiritual sky, like those gloomy clouds which suddenly give to the most romantic landscape an air of melancholy apparently irreparable. Henceforward we watch the unfortunate poet striking his tent, like a nomad of the desert, and, carrying his light *penates* hither and thither through the principal cities of the union. Everywhere, in a brilliant manner, he edited reviews, or contributed to them, scattering broadcast, with a miraculous rapidity, critical and philosophical articles, and stories teeming with a magic beauty, which appeared in a collected form, under the title of *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*—a remarkable and intentional title, for arabesque and grotesque ornamentation repulses the human figure; and we shall see that, in most respects, the works of Poe are extra, or superhuman. We learn next, by scandalous paragraphs cruelly inserted in the papers, that Poe and his wife, in a state of utter destitution, were taken dangerously ill at Fordham. Here his devoted wife died, and shortly after her death the poet experienced his first attack of *delirium tremens*. A new paragraph suddenly appeared in one of the papers—in that one which was bitterest against him—which, condemning his contempt of the world, and his disgust for it, made one of those sidling attacks upon his charac-

ter on the part of public opinion, against which he had always to defend himself—of all the sterilely fatiguing struggles the most sterile.

He now, doubtless, did gain money, almost enough to support life; but I have proofs that he had always the most discouraging difficulties to surmount. At this time he dreamt, like so many other writers, of starting a review for himself—of being, as it were, at home; and indeed he had suffered sufficiently to justify an ardent desire for a definite haven for his thoughts. To arrive at this end, to procure a sufficient sum of money, he had recourse to lecturing—a branch of speculation which the college of France has put in the power of all literary men, the author publishing his lecture only after he has first derived all possible prior benefits. Poe had already given at New York a lecture called *Eureka*—his cosmogenic poem, which had even originated a stormy discussion. He now determined to lecture in his own country—Virginia, expecting, as he wrote Willis, to make a circuit in the east and south, where he trusted to the support of his literary friends, and of his old fellow-students at Charlottesville and West Point. He visited in turn the principal towns of Virginia; and the people of Richmond again saw him whom they had known formerly as so young, so poor, so forlorn. Now he appeared handsome, elegant, correct as genius itself. I even believe that for some time he had pushed his condescension so far as to join a temperance society. He chose a theme as large as it was elevated—*The Principles of Poetry*, and he developed it with that lucidity which was one of his privileges. He believed—the true poet that he was—that the aim of poetry is of the same nature as its principle—that it ought never to have in view anything but itself.

The happy reception with which he was welcomed, flooded his poor heart with pride and joy; he showed himself so enchanted with it that he even talked of definitely establishing himself at Richmond, and ending his days in the spot which childhood had rendered dear to him. However, he had business at New York, and he started on the 4th October, complaining of weakness and shiverings. Feeling himself worse on arriving at Baltimore at six in the evening, he caused his luggage to be moved to the station from which he meant to leave for Philadelphia, and then entered a tavern to take some exciting stimulant. There, unfortunately, he came across old acquaintances, and stopped late. On the following morning in the pale shadows of the early day, a corpse was found

upon the high-way—a corpse with life still stirring within it, but marked already with the royal stamp of death. On this body, which was recognized by none, were found neither papers nor money. They bore it straightway to the hospital, and there died Edgar Poe, on the evening of Sunday, the 7th October, 1849, at the age of thirty-seven, conquered by *delirium tremens*, the terrible guest who had haunted his brain once or twice previously. Thus disappeared from this world one of our greatest literary heroes, the man of genius who in the *Black Cat* had written these prophetic words :—"What disease is like Alcohol !"

This death was almost a suicide—a suicide prepared from an early period ; at all events it caused all the scandal of one. The clamour of the public was deafening, and *virtue* gave full utterance to her emphatic cant, freely and voluptuously. The more indulgent funeral orations could only give way to that inevitable tradesfolk morality, which was careful not to neglect so admirable an opportunity. Mr. Griswold defamed sternly ; Mr. Willis, sincerely afflicted, was more than befitted the occasion. Alas, and alas ! he who had stormed the most arduous heights of the æsthetic, who had plunged into the least explored depths of the human intellect, who, across a life resembling a tempest where no hopes of calm came ever, had discovered new means and ways unknown to dazzle the imagination, to charm all minds thirsting for the beautiful, had just a few hours since died in the wards of a hospital—what a destiny ! So much grandeur, so great a misery, to raise a whirlwind of commonplace moralities, to become the food and the theme of virtuous journalists :—

Ut declamatio fias.

These spectacles are in no wise novel ; rarely, indeed, is the funeral of a young and illustrious artist aught else than a meeting-ground for scandals. Society, moreover, bears no love to their despairing unfortunates, and whether it be that they trouble her feast-days, or that she innocently looks upon them as so many remorses, society is incontestably right. Who cannot recall the declamations of all Paris at the death of Balzac, who nevertheless died with due propriety. And more recently still—just one year back from the day I pen these lines—when a writer virtuous above suspicion, endowed with the loftiest intelligence, and unlike this other, *always admirably lucid*, went discreetly without disturbing a single being—so discreetly, indeed, that his discretion resembled

contempt—to set his soul free in the blackest alley he could find—what nauseous homilies were there—what refined assassinations! One celebrated journalist, to whom Jesus shall never teach a generous manner, found the adventure lively enough to be celebrated in the grossest jest. Among the many enumerations of the Rights of Man that the wisdom of the nineteenth century has recommended so complacently and so often, two most important ones have been forgotten, these two are the right of contradicting oneself, and the right of *going hence*. But society looks upon him who goes as an insolent fellow; she would willingly chastise the sorry human remains, just as that hapless soldier, stricken with vampirism, whom the sight of a corpse exasperated to madness, and yet we might say that, under the pressure of certain circumstances, after a serious examination of certain incompatibilities, with a firm belief in certain dogmas and metempsychoses, we might say without emphasis or word-play that a suicide is sometimes the most reasonable action in a life. Thus, a company of phantoms have banded themselves together, numerous already, each member of which comes back to us boasting of his actual repose, converting us to his own persuasion!

Once for all let us avow that the melancholy end of the author of *Eureka* excited some exceptional pity, without which the world would be no longer tenable. Mr. Willis, as I have said, spoke honestly and even with emotion, of the good relations there had always existed between Poe and himself. John Neal and George Graham endeavoured to call Griswold to some sense of shame. Mr. Longfellow—all honour to him, since Poe had cruelly maltreated him—knew how, in a manner worthy of a poet, to praise Poe's great powers as a poet and a prose writer. An unknown pen declared that American literature had lost its strongest head.

Sick at heart, and unutterably wretched was Mrs. Clemm, for Edgar was at once to her as son and daughter. A terrible destiny, says Willis, from whom I borrow these details, almost word for word, a terrible destiny was that one she watched over and protected; for Edgar Poe was an embarrassing being, besides the fact that he wrote with a fastidious difficulty, and in a style too much above the common intellectual level to be highly paid, he was always plunged in monetary distresses, and often he and his sick wife stood in urgent need of the common necessaries of life. Willis saw one day a lady, old, sweet-countenanced, and grave,

enter his office. It was Mrs. Clemm in search of work for her dear Edgar. The biographer tells us that he was sincerely struck, not only at the exact appreciation she displayed of the talent of her son, but also by her whole appearance—her voice, low and sad, her manners, maybe of the past, but beautiful and commanding. During several years, he adds, we watched this indefatigable servitor to genius, poorly and insufficiently clad, going from journal to journal, to sell now a poem, now an article, saying sometimes that *he* was ill—the only explanation, the only reason, the invariable excuse that she gave when her son was momentarily struck with one of those attacks of literary sterility so common to nervous writers ; and never allowing her lips to breathe a syllable that could be interpreted as a doubt, as a lessening of confidence in the genius and the will of her well-beloved. When her daughter died she attached herself to the survivor with a maternal ardour doubly strengthened ; living with him, taking tender care of him, watching over him, defending him against life and against himself. If ever, concludes Willis, with just and lofty reason, "if ever woman's devotion, born with a first love, and fed with human passion, hallow its object, as it is allowed to do, what does not a devotion like this—pure, disinterested, and holy as the watch of an invisible spirit—say for him who inspired it?" Other detractors of Poe have in effect remarked that he possessed seductions so powerful that they could only be virtues.

We may divine how terrible the news was to this unfortunate mother. She wrote to Willis a letter of which we quote a few lines:

"I have this morning heard of the death of my darling Eddie. . . . Can you give me any circumstances or particulars? . . . Oh! do not desert your friend in this bitter affliction. . . . Ask Mr. —— to come, as I must deliver a message to him from my poor Eddie. . . . I need not ask you to notice his death, and to speak well of him. I know you will. But say what an affectionate son he was to me his poor desolate mother. . . ."

This woman appears to me grand and more than antique. Stricken with an irreparable blow, she thinks only of the reputation of him who was all in all to her, and it does not sufficiently content her to say that he was a genius, but all the world must know that he was a man dutiful and affectionate. It is evident that this mother—torch and hearth-side lightened by a ray from the highest heavens—has been sent as an example to our

race, too little careful of heroism and devotion, of all that is noblest in duty. Were it not a justice to inscribe before the poet's works the name of her who was the moral sun of his life?—to embalm in his glory the name of that woman whose tenderness knew how to soothe his wounds, and whose image will incessantly hover above the martyrology of literature?

III.

The life of Poe, his morals, his manners, his physical being, all that constituted his personal surroundings, appear as at once gloomy and brilliant. His person, singularly entrancing, was like his works, marked with an indefinable stamp of melancholy. Moreover he was remarkably well endowed in all respects. As a youth he had displayed a rare aptitude for all physical exercises, and though made with the feet and hands of a woman, bearing throughout indeed this character of feminine delicacy, he was more than robust, and capable of marvellous feats of strength. He had in early youth gained a swimming wager for a distance surpassing the ordinary measurement of the possible. We might say that Nature endows those of whom she expects great things with an energetic temperament, just as she gives a strong vitality to the trees which stand as symbols of grief and mourning. These men, with an outward appearance sometimes almost pitiable, are built as athletes, good for orgie or for toil, quick to excess and capable of astonishing sobriety.

There are some points relative to Poe upon which there is a unanimous agreement, for example his high natural distinction, his eloquence and his beauty, of which, as they say, he was perhaps a little vain. His manner, a strange blending of haughtiness and sweetness, was full of firmness. Physiognomy, walk, gestures, every motion of his head, declared him, especially in his happiest days, as a chosen creature. All his being breathed a penetrating solemnity. He was really marked by nature like those figures of chance by-passers, which at once attract the eye of an observer, and preoccupy his memory. Even the pedantic and sour Griswold avows that when he went to pay Poe a visit, and when he found him pale and still stricken with the death and illness of his wife, he was struck beyond measure, not only at the perfection of his manners, but still more with his aristocratic physiognomy, and the

perfumed atmosphere of his chamber, in other respects modestly enough furnished. Griswold ignores that the poet, more than other men, possesses that marvellous privilege attributed to the women of France and Spain, of knowing how to deck themselves with a mere nothing, and that Poe, amorous of beauty in all things, would have found a means to transform a thatched cottage into a palace of a novel kind. Has he not written, in a spirit most original and most curious, of designs for furniture, of plans of country houses and gardens, and of remodelled landscapes?

There still exists a charming letter from Mrs. Frances Osgood, who was one of Poe's friends, giving us the most curious details upon his manners, his person, and his home-life. This lady—who was herself a distinguished writer—courageously denies all personal knowledge of the vices and the faults cast up at the poet's memory.

"With men," she said to Griswold, "your views may be perfectly just, but to women he was different. . . I think no one can know him—no one has known him personally—certainly no woman—without feeling a deep interest in him. I have never seen him otherwise than gentle, generous, well-bred and fastidiously refined. . . .

"My first meeting with the poet was at Aston-House. A few days previous Mr. Willis had handed me at the *table d'hôte*, that strange and thrilling poem entitled the *Raven*, saying that the author wanted my opinion of it. Its effect upon me was so singular, so like that of 'weird unearthly music' that it was with a feeling almost of shame that I heard he desired an introduction. . . I shall never forget the morning when I was summoned to the drawing-room by Mr. Willis to receive him. With his proud and beautiful head erect, his dark eyes flashing with the electric light of feeling and of thought, a peculiar, an inimitable blending of sweetness and hauteur in his expression and manner, he greeted me calmly, gravely, almost coldly, yet with so marked an earnestness that I could not help being deeply impressed by it. From that moment until his death we were friends. . . . And in his last words, ere reason had for ever left her imperial throne in that overtaxed brain, I have a touching memento of his undying faith and friendship.

"It was in his own simple yet poetical home that to me the character of Edgar Poe appeared in its most beautiful light. Playful,

affectionate, witty, alternately docile and wayward as a petted child —for his young, gentle and idolized wife and for all who came, he had, even in the midst of his most harassing literary duties, a kind word, a pleasant smile, a graceful and courteous attention. At his desk beneath the romantic picture of the loved and lost Lenore, he would sit, hour after hour, patient, assiduous and uncomplaining, tracing in an exquisitely clear chirography, and with almost superhuman swiftness, the lightning thoughts—the 'rare and radiant' fancies, as they flashed through his wonderful and ever wakeful brain. I recollect one morning towards the close of his residence in this city, when he seemed unusually gay and light-hearted. Virginia, his sweet wife, had written me a pressing invitation to come to them; and I who could never resist her affectionate summons, and who enjoyed his society far more in his own house than elsewhere, hastened to Amity Street. I found him just completing his series of papers entitled the 'Literati of New York.' 'See,' said he, displaying in laughing triumph several little rolls of narrow paper (he always wrote thus for the press,) 'I am going to show you, by the difference of length in these, the different degrees of estimation in which I hold all you literary people. In each of these one of you is rolled up and discussed. Come, Virginia, and help me!' And, one by one, they unfolded them. At last they came to one which seemed interminable. Virginia, laughing, ran to one corner of the room with one end, and her husband to the opposite with the other. 'And whose lengthened sweetness long drawn out is that?' said I. 'Hear her,' he cried, 'just as if her little vain heart didn't tell her it's herself!'

"During that year, while travelling for my health, I maintained a correspondence with Mr. Poe, in accordance with the earnest entreaties of his wife, who imagined that my influence over him had a restraining and beneficial effect. . . . Of the charming love and confidence that existed between his wife and himself, always delightfully apparent to me, in spite of the many little poetical episodes, in which the impassioned romance of his temperament compelled him to indulge; of this I cannot speak too earnestly—too warmly. I believe she was the only woman he ever truly loved."

In Poe's *Tales* there is no mention of love; at least *Ligeia*, *Eleonora* are not, properly speaking, love-stories; the principal idea upon which they hinge being quite other. Perhaps he believed that prose is not a language lofty enough for that strange and

almost untranslatable sentiment; for his poems, on the other hand, are strongly saturated with it. There the divine passion appears magnificent,—of the stars, yet always veiled with a mist of unchangeable melancholy. In his articles he speaks sometimes of love, as of a thing at which his pen should tremble. In the *Domain of Arnheim* he affirms that the four elementary conditions of happiness are, life in the open air, the love of a woman, forgetfulness of all ambition, and the creation of a new ideal of beauty. What corroborates the idea of Mrs. Osgood in regard to Poe's chivalrous respect for women is, that in spite of his prodigious talent for the grotesque and horrible, there is throughout his works not a single passage which treats of wantonness, or even of sensual enjoyment. His portraits of women are, so to speak, crowned with aureoles, they daze us from the midst of a supernatural mist, and are limned in the emphatic manner of a worshipper. As to the *little romantic episodes*, can there be any room for astonishment that a being so nervous, in whom the yearning for the beautiful was ever the chief characteristic, should, with a passionate ardour, have cultivated gallantry, that volcanic and musk-scented flower, for which the feverish brain of a poet has always been the chosen soil?

Of his singular personal beauty, of which so many biographers speak, the mind can, I think, form an approximate idea, in summoning to its aid all the vague notions, vague yet characteristic, contained in the word *romantic*, which serves generally to render the shades of beauty that consist above all in expression. Poe had a grand forehead, where certain "bumps" betrayed the overflow of the faculties which they are supposed to represent—such as construction, comparison, causality—and where the sense of ideality, *par excellence* the æsthetic sense, lorded it in haughty calmness. Yet in spite of these gifts, perhaps even on account of their exorbitant privileges, his profile was not exactly pleasant. As whenever one sense is excessive, a deficit could but result from the abundance, a poverty from the usurpation. He had large eyes, at once sombre and full of light, of an indecisive and gloomy colour approaching violet; his nose was noble and solidly cut; his mouth fine and sad, though slightly smiling; his skin a clear brown; the face generally pale; the physiognomy a trifle distracted, and imperceptibly tinged with melancholy.

His conversation was very remarkable, and essentially full of interest. He was not what we term a good talker—a horrible thing

indeed—besides, his speech, like his pen, detested coventionalities ; but a vast knowledge, an acquaintance with many tongues, deep studies, and impressions garnered in numerous countries, made this speech a powerful teacher. His eloquence, essentially poetic, full of method, yet soaring above every known method, an arsenal of images chosen from a world but little frequented by common minds, a prodigious art in drawing secret and novel deductions from an evident and absolutely acceptable proposition, in opening out astonishing perspectives, and, in a word, the art of ravishing, of causing his listeners to think, to dream, snatching them from the trammels of routine—such were the dazzling powers of which many men have kept the memory. But sometimes it would happen —at all events, they say so—that the poet, indulging himself in a caprice, would brusquely recall his friends to earth again by some painful cynicism, brutally demolishing his spiritual fancy. It is, moreover, to be noted that he showed little difficulty in the choice of his listeners, and I think the reader will, without trouble, recollect many other grand and original intelligences to whom all company seemed good ;—certain minds, alone in the midst of a crowd, and who, scattering their thoughts in a monologue, have little delicacy in the matter of their public. It is, in fact, a kind of brotherhood founded on contempt.

Of his drunkenness—celebrated and cast up at him with a persistence which might make one believe that all the authors of the United States, Poe alone excepted, are angels of sobriety,—it is still necessary to speak. Several versions are plausible : none exclude the others. Above all, I am obliged to remark that Willis and Mrs. Osgood both affirm that a *minimum* quantity of wine or spirit sufficed to completely perturb his organization. It is easy, too, to suppose that a man so really solitary, so profoundly unfortunate, who had often declared our social system a paradox and an imposture,—a man who, tormented by a pitiless destiny, repeated often that society was but a rabble of miserable wretches—(this saying is reported by Griswold, as scandalized as a man can be, who thinks the same thing, but dares not speak it)—it is natural, say I, to suppose that this poet, thrown as a child into the hazards of free life, his brain circled tightly round with a toil bitter and continuous, should have occasionally sought the delight of forgetfulness in the flagon. Literary rancours, vertigoes from the crushing marvels of infinity, troubles of household poverty,

insults to his misery,—all, all were forgotten in the depths of intoxication as in a preparatory tomb. But, just as this explanation may appear, I still mistrust it from the fact of its deplorable simplicity.

I am told that he drank, not as a gourmand, but as a savage—with that activity and time-economy altogether American, as if accomplishing a homicidal function, as if he had within himself something that must be killed—*a worm that would not die.* They say, too, that one day, when he was on the point of marrying a second time (the banns were published, but as he was being congratulated upon a union that was to prove in his hands the highest convictions of happiness and assured existence, he had said: "It is possible that you may have heard the banns; but note this—I shall never marry!") he went hopelessly drunk to scandalize the neighbourhood of her who should have been his wife, having this recourse to his vice to disembarrass himself of a perjury towards that poor dead spouse whose image always haunted his mind, and whom he had sung so admirably in his *Annabel Lee.* I consider then, that, in a great number of cases, the infinitely important fact of premeditation is proved and established.

On the other hand, I read in a long article in the *Southern Literary Messenger*—the same review whose fortunes he had founded—that the purity and the finish of his style, the firmness and severity of his thought, the ardour of his labour, were never in the slightest degree altered by this terrible habit; that the production of the greater part of his excellent short pieces preceded, or followed, one of his drunken crises; that, after the publication of *Eureka*, he sacrificed deplorably to his longing; and that at New York, on the very morning on which the *Raven* appeared, while the poet's name was on every lip, he crossed Broadway, stumbling outrageously. You must remark that the words *preceded*, or *followed*, imply that drunkenness could serve as a stimulant as well as a soothing draught.

Now, it is incontestable that, like those fugitive and striking impressions—most striking in their repetition when they have been most fugitive—which sometimes follow an exterior symptom, such at the striking of a clock, a note of music, or a forgotten perfume and which are themselves followed by an event similar to the event already known, and which occupy the same place in a chain previously revealed—like those singular periodical dreams which frequent our slumbers—there exist in drunkenness not only the

entanglements of dreams, but whole series of reasonings, which have need to reproduce themselves, of the medium which has given them birth. If the reader has followed me without repugnance, he has already divined my conclusion. I believe that, in many cases, not certainly in all, the intoxication of Poe was a mnemonic means, a method of work, a method energetic and fatal, but appropriate to his passionate nature. The poet had learned to drink as a laborious author exercises himself in filling note-books. He could not resist the desire of finding again those visions, marvellous or awful—those subtle conceptions which he had met before in a preceding tempest; they were old acquaintances which imperatively attracted him, and to renew his knowledge of them, he took a road most dangerous, but most direct. The works that give us so much pleasure to-day were, in reality, the cause of his death.

IV.

Of the works of this singular genius I have very little to say; the public will soon prove what it thinks of them. It would to me be difficult, but not impossible, to unravel his method, to explain his process, especially in that part of his works whose effect principally lies in a skilfully-managed analysis. I could introduce the reader into the mystery of his fabrication, paying a special attention to that portion of American genius which caused him to rejoice over a conquered difficulty, a resolved enigma, a successful effort of strength, which urged him on to delight himself with a childish and almost perverse enjoyment in the world of probabilities and conjectures, to create *canards* to which his subtle aid gave all the appearances of reality. No one can deny that Poe was a marvellous juggler; and I know that he gave his esteem especially to another portion of his works. I have a few, and very brief, important remarks to make.

It was not by his material miracles, however they may have made his renown, that he won the admiration of thinkers, but by his love of the beautiful, by his knowledge of the harmonical conditions of beauty, by his profound and plaintive poetry, carefully wrought, nevertheless, and correct and transparent as a crystal jewel—by his admirable style, pure and strange—compact as the joints of a coat of mail—complacent and minute, and the slightest turn of which served to push his reader towards the desired end—and, above all, by that quite special genius, by that unique temperament

which permitted him to paint and explain, in a manner, impeccable, entrancing, terrible, the *exception* in moral order. Diderot, to take one example of a hundred, is a blood-red author; Poe is a writer of the nerves—even something more—and the best I know.

With him every entry into a subject is attractive, without violence, like a whirlwind. His solemnity surprises the mind, and keeps it on the watch. We feel at once that something grave is at stake; and slowly, little by little, a history is unfurled the interest of which rests upon some imperceptible deviation of the intellect, upon an audacious hypothesis, upon an imprudent dose of nature in the amalgam of the faculties. The reader, thralled as if by vertigo, is constrained to follow the author in his entangling deductions.

No man, I repeat, has told with greater magic the *exceptions* of human life and nature, the ardours of the curiosities of convalescence, the close of seasons charged with enervating splendours, sultry weather, humid and misty, where the south wind softens and distends the nerves, like the chords of an instrument; where the eyes are filled with tears that come not from the heart; hallucination at first giving place to doubt, soon convinced and full of reasons as a book; absurdity installing itself in the intellect, and governing it with a crushing logic; hysteria usurping the place of will, a contradiction established between the nerves and the mind, and mien out of all accord expressing grief by laughter. He analyses them where they are most fugitive; he poises the imponderable, and describes in that minute and scientific manner, whose effects are terrible, all that imaginary world which floats around the nervous man, and conducts him on to evil.

The very ardour with which he threw himself into the grotesque, out of love for the grotesque, and into the horrible, out of love for the horrible, seems to verify the sincerity of his work, and the accord of the poet with the man. I have already remarked that in many men this ardour was often the result of a vast unoccupied vital energy, sometimes of a self-promoted chastity, and also of a profound back-driven sensibility. The supernatural delight that a man can experience in watching his own blood flow—sudden, violent, useless movements, loud cries thrown into the air, without any mental will—are phenomena of the same order.

Upon the heart of this literature where the air is rarified, the mind can feel that vague anguish, that fear prompt to tears, that

sickness of the heart, which dwells in places vast and strange. But the admiration is stronger; and, then, art is so great! all the accessories are there thoroughly appropriate to the characters. The silent solitude of nature, the bustling agitation of the city, are all described there, nervously and fantastically. Like our Eugene Delacroix, who has elevated his art to the height of grand poetry, Edgar Poe loves to move his figures upon a ground of green or violet, where the phosphorescence of putrefaction, and the odour of the hurricane, reveal themselves. Nature inanimate, so styled, participates of the nature of living beings, and, like it, trembles with a shiver, supernatural and galvanic. Space is fathomed by opium; for opium gives a magic tinge to all the hues, and causes every noise to vibrate with the most sonorous magnificence. Sometimes glorious visions, full of light and colour, suddenly unroll themselves in its landscape; and on the furthest horizon-line we see oriental cities and palaces, mist covered, in the distance, which the sun floods with golden showers.

The characters of Poe, or rather *the* character of Poe, the man with sharpened faculties, the man with nerves relaxed, the man whose ardent and patient will bids a defiance to difficulties, whose glance is steadfastly fixed, with the rigidness of a sword, upon objects that increase the more, the more he gazes—this man is Poe himself; and his women, all luminous and sickly, dying of a thousand unknown ills, and speaking with a voice resembling music, are still himself; or, at least, by their strange aspirations, by their knowledge, by their incurable melancholy, they participate strongly in the nature of their creator. As to his ideal woman—his *Titanide*, she reveals herself under different names, scattering in his, alas! too scanty poems, portraits, or rather modes of feeling beauty, which the temperament of the author brings together, and confounds in a unity, vague but sensible, and where, more delicately, perhaps, than elsewhere, glows that insatiable passion for the beautiful which forms his greatest claim, that is to say, the essence of all his claims, to the affection and the respect of poets.

MISCELLANEOUS

AND

YOUTHFUL POEMS.

PREFACE TO THE POEMS.

THESE trifles are collected and republished chiefly with a view to their redemption from the many improvements to which they have been subjected while going at random "the rounds of the press." I am naturally anxious that what I have written should circulate as I wrote it, if it circulate at all. In defence of my own taste, nevertheless, it is incumbent upon me to say that I think nothing in this volume of much value to the public, or very creditable to myself. Events not to be controlled have prevented me from making, at any time, any serious effort in what, under happier circumstances, would have been the field of my choice. With me poetry has been not a purpose, but a passion; and the passions should be held in reverence; they must not, they cannot at will be excited, with an eye to the paltry compensations, or the more paltry commendations, of mankind.

E. A. P.

THE RAVEN.

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
"'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;
This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door;——
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,

And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"
Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping something louder than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is and this mystery explore—
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—
'Tis the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he,
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing farther then he uttered; not a feather then he fluttered—
Till I scarcely more than muttered "Other friends have flown before—
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before,"
Then the bird said "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store

Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.
"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this Home by horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting—
"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

LENORE.

H, broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown for ever!
Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the Stygian river;
And, Guy De Vere, hast *thou* no tear?—weep now or never more!
See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love, Lenore!
Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral song be sung!—
An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young—
A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young.

"Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her for her pride,
And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her—that she died!
How *shall* the ritual, then, be read?—the requiem how be sung
By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours, the slanderous tongue
That did to death the innocence that died, and died so young?"

Peccavimus; but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath song
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no wrong!
The sweet Lenore hath "gone before," with Hope, that flew beside,
Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have been thy bride—
For her, the fair and *debonair*, that now so lowly lies,
The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes—
The life still there, upon her hair—the death upon her eyes.

"Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I upraise,
But waft the angel on her flight with a Pæan of old days!
Let *no* bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid its hallowed mirth,
Should catch the note, as it doth float up from the damnèd Earth.
To friends above, from fiends below, the indignant ghost is riven—
From Hell unto a high estate far up within the Heaven—
From grief and groan, to a golden throne, beside the King of Heaven."

HYMN.

AT morn—at noon—at twilight dim—
Maria! thou hast heard my hymn!
In joy and woe—in good and ill—
Mother of God, be with me still!
When the Hours flew brightly by,
And not a cloud obscured the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee;
Now, when storms of Fate o'ercast
Darkly my Present and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine!

A VALENTINE.

FOR her this rhyme is penned, whose luminous eyes
Brightly expressive as the twins of Lœda,
Shall find her own sweet name, that, nestling lies
Upon the page, enwrapped from every reader.
Search narrowly the lines!—they hold a treasure
Divine—a talisman—an amulet
That must be worn *at heart*. Search well the measure—
The words—the syllables! Do not forget
The trivialest point, or you may lose your labour!
And yet there is in this no Gordian knot
Which one might not undo without a sabre,
If one could merely comprehend the plot.

Enwritten upon the leaf where now are peering
Eyes scintillating soul, there lie *perdus*
Three eloquent words oft uttered in the hearing
Of poets, by poets—as the name is a poet's, too.
Its letters, although naturally lying
Like the knight Pinto—Mendez Ferdinando—
Still form a synonym for Truth.—Cease trying!
You will not read the riddle, though you do the best you *can* do.

[*To translate the address, read the first letter of the first line in connection with the second letter of the second line, the third letter of the third line, the fourth of the fourth, and so on to the end The name will thus appear.*]

THE COLISEUM.

TYPE of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length—at length—after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst,
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie,)
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory!

Vastness! and Age! and Memories of Eld!
Silence! and Desolation! and dim Night!
I feel ye now—I feel ye in your strength—
O spells more sure than e'er Judæan king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls!
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat!
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle!
Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolled,

Glides, spectre-like, unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the hornéd moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones!

But stay! these walls—these ivy-clad arcades—
These mouldering plinths—these sad and blackened shafts—
These vague entablatures—this crumbling frieze—
These shattered cornices—this wreck—this ruin—
These stones—alas! these gray stones—are they all—
All of the famed, and the colossal left
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?

"Not all"—the Echoes answer me—"not all!
Prophetic sounds and loud, arise forever
From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
As melody from Memnon to the Sun.
We rule the hearts of mightiest men—we rule
With a despotic sway all giant minds.
We are not impotent—we pallid stones.
Not all our power is gone—not all our fame—
Not all the magic of our high renown—
Not all the wonder that encircles us—
Not all the mysteries that in us lie—
Not all the memories that hang upon
And cling around about us as a garment,
Clothing us in a robe of more than glory."

TO HELEN.

I SAW thee once—once only—years ago:
I must not say *how* many—but *not* many.
It was a July midnight; and from out
A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring,
Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven,
There fell a silvery silken veil of light,
With quietude, and sultriness, and slumber,
Upon the upturn'd faces of a thousand
Roses that grew in an enchanted garden,
Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tiptoe—
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses

That gave out, in return for the love-light,
Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death—
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses
That smiled and died in this parterre, enchanted
By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence.

Clad all in white, upon a violet bank
I saw thee half reclining; while the moon
Fell on the upturn'd faces of the roses,
And on thine own, upturn'd—alas, in sorrow!

Was it not Fate, that, on this July midnight—
Was it not Fate, (whose name is also Sorrow,)
That bade me pause before that garden-gate,
To breathe the incense of those slumbering roses?
No footstep stirred: the hated world all slept,
Save only thee and me. (Oh, Heaven!—oh, God!
How my heart beats in coupling those two words!)
Save only thee and me. I paused—I looked—
And in an instant all things disappeared.
(Ah, bear in mind this garden was enchanted!)

The pearly lustre of the moon went out:
The mossy banks and the meandering paths,
The happy flowers and the repining trees,
Were seen no more: the very roses' odours
Died in the arms of the adoring airs.
All—all expired save thee—save less than thou:
Save only the divine light in thine eyes—
Save but the soul in thine uplifted eyes.
I saw but them—they were the world to me.
I saw but them—saw only them for hours—
Saw only them until the moon went down.
What wild heart-histories seemed to lie enwritten
Upon those crystalline, celestial spheres!
How dark a woe! yet how sublime a hope!
How silently serene a sea of pride!
How daring an ambition! yet how deep—
How fathomless a capacity for love!

But now, at length, dear Dian sank from sight,
Into a western couch of thunder-cloud;

And thou, a ghost, amid the entombing trees
Didst glide way. *Only thine eyes remained.*
They *would not* go—they never yet have gone.
Lighting my lonely pathway home that night,
They have not left me (as my hopes have) since.
They follow me—they lead me through the years--
They are my ministers—yet I their slave.
Their office is to illumine and enkindle—
My duty, *to be saved* by their bright light,
And purified in their electric fire,
And sanctified in their elysian fire.
They fill my soul with Beauty (which is Hope),
And are far up in Heaven—the stars I kneel to
In the sad, silent watches of my night;
While even in the meridian glare of day
I see them still—two sweetly scintillant
Venuses, unextinguished by the sun!

TO — —.

NOT long ago, the writer of these lines,
In the mad pride of intellectuality,
Maintained "the power of words"—denied that ever
A thought arose within the human brain
Beyond the utterance of the human tongue:
And now, as if in mockery of that boast,
Two words—two foreign soft dissyllables—
Italian tones, made only to be murmured
By angels dreaming in the moonlit "dew
That hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill,"—
Have stirred from out the abysses of his heart,
Unthought-like thoughts that are the souls of thought,
Richer, far wilder, far diviner visions
Than even the seraph harper, Israfel,
(Who has "the sweetest voice of all God's creatures,")
Could hope to utter. And I! my spells are broken.
The pen falls powerless from my shivering hand.
With thy dear name as text, though bidden by thee,
I cannot write—I cannot speak or think—
Alas, I cannot feel; for 'tis not feeling,

This standing motionless upon the golden
Threshold of the wide-open gate of dreams.
Gazing, entranced, adown the gorgeous vista,
And thrilling as I see, upon the right,
Upon the left, and all the way along,
Amid unpurpled vapours, far away
To where the prospect terminates—*thee only.*

ULALUME.

THE skies they were ashen and sober;
The leaves they were crisped and sere—
The leaves they were withering and sere—
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir—
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic,
Of cypress, I roamed with my soul—
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll—
As the lavas that restlessly roll—
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole—
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—
Our memories were treacherous and sere—
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year—
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber—
(Though once we had journeyed down here)—
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
And star-dials pointed to morn—
As the star-dials hinted of morn—
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn—
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:
She rolls through an ether of sighs—
She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
To point us the path to the skies—
To the Lethean peace of the skies—
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes—
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust—
Her pallor I strangely mistrust:—
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings until they trailed in the dust—
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust—
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming:
Let us on by this tremulous light!
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
Its Sybilic splendour is beaming
With Hope and in Beauty to-night:—
See!—it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
And be sure it will lead us aright—

We safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom—
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb—
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?"
She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—
'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crisped and sere—
As the leaves that were withering and sere,
And I cried—"It was surely October
On *this* very night of last year
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here—
That I brought a dread burden down here—
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber—
This misty mid region of Weir—
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

THE BELLS.

I.

HEAR the sledges with the bells—
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme

To the tintinabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II.

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!
Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
How it swells!
How it dwells
On the Future! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

III.

Hear the loud alarum bells—
Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire.
Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,

And a resolute endeavour
Now—now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
Of Despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling,
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells—
Of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
In the clamour and the clangour of the bells!

IV.

Hear the tolling of the bells—
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people—ah, the people—
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone—

They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—
They are Ghouls:
And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A pæan from the bells!
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells!
And he dances, and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the pæan of the bells—
Of the bells:
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells—
Bells, bells, bells—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

AN ENIGMA.

"SELDOM we find," says Solomon Don Dunce,
"Half an idea in the profoundest sonnet.
Through all the flimsy things we see at once
As easily as through a Naples bonnet—
Trash of all trash!—how *can* a lady don it!
Yet heavier far than your Petrarchan stuff—
Owl-downy nonsense that the faintest puff
Twirls into trunk-paper the while you con it."
And, veritably, Sol is right enough.
The general tuckermanities are arran[t]

Bubbles—ephemeral and *so* transparent—
But *this* is, now,—you may depend upon it—
Stable, opaque, immortal—all by dint
Of the dear names that lie concealed within 't

ANNABEL LEE.

IT was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of ANNABEL LEE;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and *she* was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea:
But we loved with a love that was more than love—
I and my ANNABEL LEE;
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
So that her high-born kinsman came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my ANNABEL LEE.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In the sepulchre there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

TO MY MOTHER.

BECAUSE I feel that, in the Heavens above,
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love,
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you—
You who are more than mother unto me,
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death installed you,
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.
My mother—my own mother, who died early,
Was but the mother of myself; but you
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,
And thus are dearer than the mother I knew
By that infinity with which my wife
Was dearer to my soul than its own soul-life.

THE HAUNTED PALACE.

IN the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion—
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago,)

And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A wingèd odour went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,
Through two luminous windows, saw
Spirits moving musically,
To a lute's well-tunèd law,
Round about a throne where, sitting
(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate.
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travellers, now, within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms, that move fantastically
To a discordant melody,
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever
And laugh—but smile no more.

THE CONQUEROR WORM.

LO! 'tis a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years.
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre, to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly—
Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
Invisible Woe!

That motley drama—oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore,
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout
A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And the angels sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbrued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
And, over each quivering form,

The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

TO F——s S. O——d.

THOU would'st be loved?—then let thy heart
From its present pathway part not!
Being everything which now thou art,
Be nothing which thou art not.
So with the world thy gentle ways,
Thy grace, thy more than beauty,
Shall be an endless theme of praise,
And love—a simple duty.

TO ONE IN PARADISE.

THOU wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine—
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
"No more—no more—no more—"
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

THE VALLEY OF UNREST.

ONCE it smiled a silent dell
Where the people did not dwell;
They had gone unto the wars,
Trusting to the mild-eyed stars,
Nightly, from their azure towers,
To keep watch above the flowers,
In the midst of which all day
The red sun-light lazily lay.
Now each visitor shall confess
The sad valley's restlessness.
Nothing there is motionless—
Nothing save the airs that brood
Over the magic solitude.
Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees
That palpitate like the chill seas
Around the misty Hebrides!
Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven
That rustle through the unquiet Heaven
Uneasily, from morn till even,
Over the violets there that lie
In myriad types of the human eye—
Over the lilies there that wave
And weep above a nameless grave!
They wave:—from out their fragrant tops
Eternal dews come down in drops.
They weep:—from off their delicate stems
Perennial tears descend in gems.

THE CITY IN THE SEA.

LO! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and the best
Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)
Resemble nothing that is ours. Marvellous.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie. Very euphonious.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently—
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—
Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—
Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—
Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Whose wreathèd friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye—
Not the gaily-jewelled dead
Tempt the waters from their bed;

For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass—
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea—
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene.

But lo! a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide—
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven.
The waves have now a redder glow
The hours are breathing faint and low—
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

THE SLEEPER.

AT midnight, in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapour, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.
The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave;
Wrapping the fog about its breast,
The ruin moulders into rest;
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All Beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies
(Her casement open to the skies)
Irene, with her Destinies!

Oh, lady bright! can it be right—
This window open to the night?
The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
Laughingly through the lattice drop—
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully—so fearfully—
Above the closed and fringed lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!
Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear?
Why and what art thou dreaming here?
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees!
Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
And this all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
For ever with unopened eye,
While the dim sheeted ghosts go by!

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
As it is lasting, so be deep!
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold—
Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And winged pannels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls,
Of her grand family funerals—
Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood, many an idle stone—

Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
It was the dead who groaned within.

SILENCE.

THERE are some qualities—some incorporate things,
That have a double life, which thus is made
A type of that twin entity which springs
From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.
There is a two-fold *Silence*—sea and shore—
Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,
Newly with grass o'ergrown; some solemn graces,
Some human memories and tearful lore,
Render him terrorless: his name's "No More."
He is the corporate Silence: dread him not!
No power hath he of evil in himself;
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot!)
Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,
That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod
No foot of man,) commend thyself to God!

A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM.

TAKE this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow—
You are not wrong, who deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less *gone*?
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand—

How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep—while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is *all* that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

DREAM-LAND.

BY a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule—
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
Out of SPACE—out of TIME.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,
And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods,
With forms that no man can discover
For the dews that drip all over;
Mountains toppling evermore
Into seas without a shore;
Seas that restlessly aspire,
Surging, unto skies of fire;
Lakes that endlessly outspread
Their lone waters—lone and dead,—
Their still waters—still and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead,—
Their sad waters, sad and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily,—
By the mountains—near the river
Murmuring lowly murmuring ever,—

By the gray woods,—by the swamp
Where the toad and the newt encamp,—
By the dismal tarns and pools
Where dwell the Ghouls,—
By each spot the most unholy—
In each nook most melancholy,—
There the traveller meets aghast
Sheeted Memories of the Past—
Shrouded forms that start and sigh
As they pass the wanderer by—
White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth—and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion
'Tis a peaceful, soothing region—
For the spirit that walks in shadow
'Tis—oh 'tis an Eldorado!
But the traveller, travelling through it,
May not—dare not openly view it;
Never its mysteries are exposed
To the weak human eye unclosed;
So wills its King, who hath forbid
The uplifting of the fringed lid;
And thus the sad Soul that here passes
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a rout obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have wandered home but newly
From this ultimate dim Thule.

TO ZANTE.

FAIR isle, that from the fairest of all flowers,
Thy gentlest of all gentle names dost take!
How many memories of what radiant hours
At sight of thee and thine at once awake!

How many scenes of what departed bliss!
How many thoughts of what entombèd hopes!
How many visions of a maiden that is
No more—no more upon thy verdant slopes!
No more! alas, that magical sad sound
Transforming all! Thy charms shall please *no more*—
Thy memory *no more!* Accursèd ground
Henceforth I hold thy flower-enamelled shore,
O hyacinthine isle! O purple Zante!
"Isola d'oro! Fior di Levante!"

EULALIE.

I DWELT alone
In a world of moan,
And my soul was a stagnant tide,
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blushing bride—
Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smiling bride.

Ah, less—less bright
The stars of the night
Than the eyes of the radiant girl;
And never a flake
That the vapour can make
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl,
Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most unregarded curl—
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's most humble and careless curl.

Now Doubt—now Pain
Come never again,
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh,
And all day long
Shines bright and strong,
Astarté within the sky,
While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her matron eye—
While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her violet eye.

ELDORADO.

GAILY bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,—
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

ISRAFEL.*

IN Heaven a spirit doth dwell
"Whose heart-strings are a lute;"
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,

* And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—KORAN.

And the giddy stars (so legends tell)
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
In her highest noon,
The enamoured moon
Blushes with love,
While, to listen, the red levin
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,
Which were seven,)
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
By which he sits and sings—
The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty—
Where Love's a grown-up God—
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,
Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervour of thy lute—
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sours;
Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

FOR ANNIE.

THANK Heaven! the crisis—
The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last—
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know,
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length—
But no matter!—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composed
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead—
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart:—ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—
The pitiless pain—
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain—
With the fever called "Living"
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures
That torture the worst
Has abated—the terrible
Torture of thirst
For the naphthaline river
Of Passion accurst:—
I have drank of a water
That quenches all thirst:—

Of a water that flows,
With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy
And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
In a different bed—
And, to *sleep*, you must slumber
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
  Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
  Regretting its roses—
Its old agitations
  Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly
  Lying, it fancies
A holier odour
  About it, of pansies—
A rosemary odour,
  Commingled with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
  Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
  Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
  And the beauty of Annie—
Drowned in a bath
  Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
  She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
  To sleep on her breast—
Deeply to sleep
  From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
  She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
  To keep me from harm—
To the queen of the angels
  To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,
  Now, in my bed,
(Knowing her love)
  That you fancy me dead—

And I rest so contentedly,
Now in my bed,
(With her love at my breast)
That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
Thinking me dead :—

But my heart it is brighter
Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
For it sparkles with Annie—
It glows with the light
Of the love of my Annie—
With the thought of the light
Of the eyes of my Annie.

TO ——.

HEED not that my earthly lot
Hath—little of Earth in it—
That years of love have been forgot
In the hatred of a minute :—
I mourn not that the desolate
Are happier, sweet, than I,
But that *you* sorrow for *my* fate
Who am a passer by.

BRIDAL BALLAD.

THE ring is on my hand,
And the wreath is on my brow ;
Satins and jewels grand
Are all at my command,
And I am happy now.

And my lord he loves me well ;
But, when first he breathed his vow,
I felt my bosom swell—

For the words rang as a knell,
And the voice seemed *his* who fell
In the battle down the dell,
And who is happy now.

But he spoke to re-assure me,
And he kissed my pallid brow,
While a reverie came o'er me,
And to the church-yard bore me,
And I sighed to him before me,
Thinking him dead D'Elormie,
"Oh, I am happy now!"

And thus the words were spoken,
And this the plighted vow,
And, though my faith be broken,
And, though my heart be broken,
Behold the golden token
That *proves* me happy now!

Would God I could awaken!
For I dream I know not how,
And my soul is sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be taken,—
Lest the dead who is forsaken
May not be happy now.

TO F———.

BELOVED! amid the earnest woes
That crowd around my earthly path—
(Drear path, alas! where grows
Not even one lonely rose)—
My soul at least a solace hath
In dreams of thee, and therein knows
An Eden of bland repose.

And thus my memory is to me
Like some enchanted far-off isle
In some tumultuous sea—
Some ocean throbbing far and free

With storms—but where meanwhile
Serenest skies continually
Just o'er that one bright island smile.

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN;"

AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA.

I.

ROME.—A Hall in a Palace. Alessandra and Castiglione.

ALESSANDRA. Thou art sad, Castiglione,
Castiglione. Sad!—not I.
Oh, I'm the happiest, happiest man in Rome!
A few days more, thou knowest, my Alessandra,
Will make thee mine. Oh, I am very happy!
Aless. Methinks thou hast a singular way of showing
Thy happiness!—what ails thee, cousin of mine?
Why didst thou sigh so deeply?
Cas. Did I sigh?
I was not conscious of it. It is a fashion,
A silly—a most silly fashion I have
When I am *very* happy. Did I sigh? *(Sighing.)*
Aless. Thou didst. Thou art not well. Thou hast indulged
Too much of late, and I am vexed to see it.
Late hours and wine, Castiglione,—these
Will ruin thee! thou art already altered—
Thy looks are haggard—nothing so wears away
The constitution as late hours and wine.
Cas. (musing). Nothing, fair cousin, nothing—not even deep sorrow—
Wears it away like evil hours and wine.
I will amend.
Aless. Do it! I would have thee drop
Thy riotous company, too—fellows low born—
Ill suit the like with old Di Broglio's heir
And Alessandra's husband.
Cas. I will drop them.
Aless. Thou wilt—thou must. Attend thou also more
To thy dress and equipage—they are over plain