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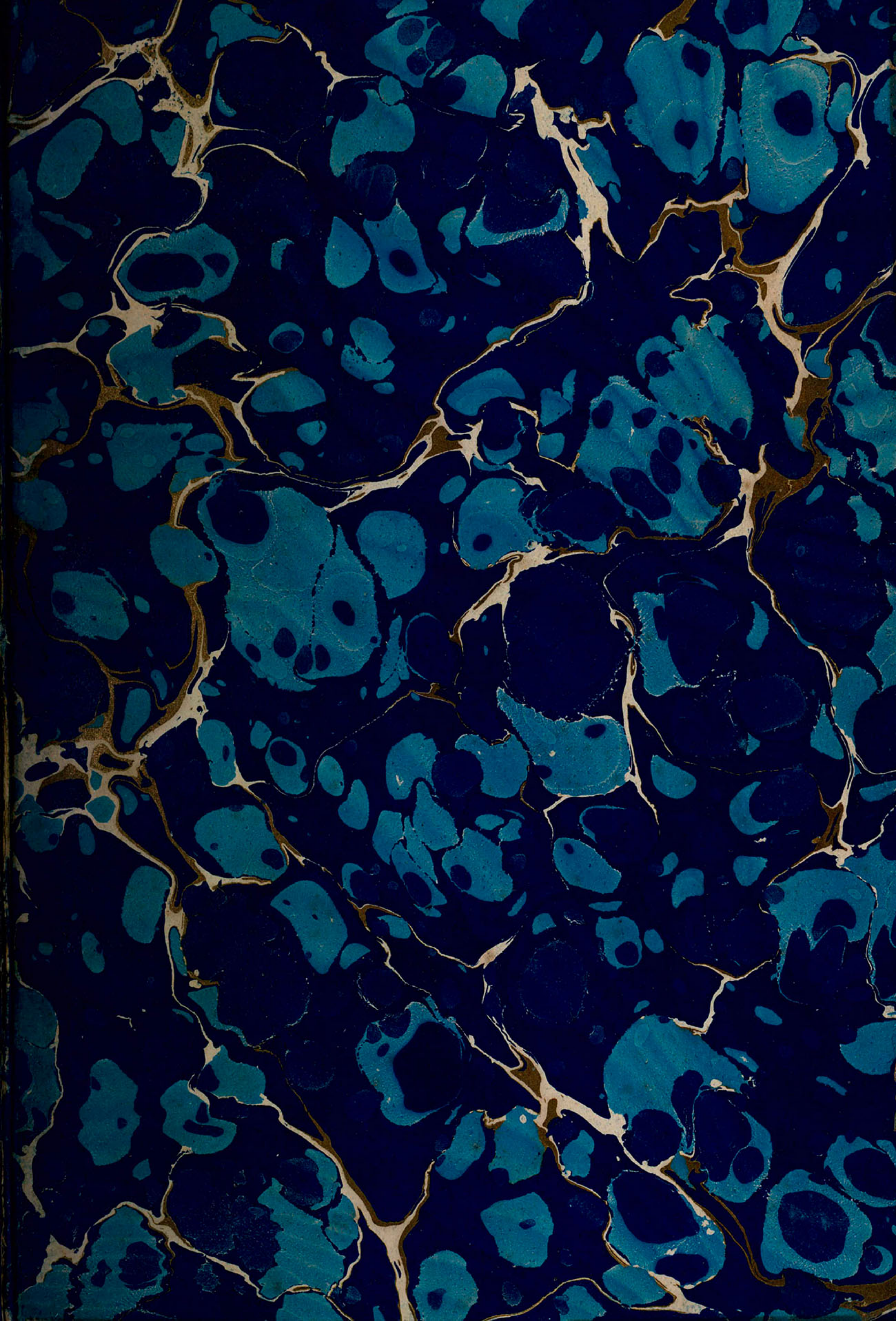
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THE COMPLETE WORKS  
OF  
ALFRED LORD TENNYSON













*Engraved by G. J. Stedart from a photograph by J. Mayall*











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## TO THE QUEEN.

Revered, beloved—O you that hold  
A nobler office upon earth  
Than arms, or power of brain, or birth  
Could give the warrior kings of old,

Victoria,—since your Royal grace  
To one of less desert allows  
This laurel greener from the brows  
Of him that utter'd nothing base ;

And should your greatness, and the care  
That yokes with empire, yield you time  
To make demand of modern rhyme  
If aught of ancient worth be there ;

Then—while a sweeter music wakes,  
And thro' wild March the throstle calls,  
Where all about your palace-walls  
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes—

Take, Madam, this poor book of song ;  
For tho' the faults were thick as dust  
In vacant chambers, I could trust  
Your kindness. May you rule us long,

And leave us rulers of your blood  
As noble till the latest day !  
May children of our children say,  
' She wrought her people lasting good ;

' Her court was pure ; her life serene ;  
God gave her peace ; her land reposed ;  
A thousand claims to reverence closed  
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen ;

' And statesmen at her council met  
Who knew the seasons when to take  
Occasion by the hand, and make  
The bounds of freedom wider yet

' By shaping some august decree,  
Which kept her throne unshaken still,  
Broad-based upon her people's will,  
And compass'd by the inviolate sea.'

March 1851.



## JUVENILIA.

### CLARIBEL.

#### A MELODY.

##### I.

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

##### II.

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

### NOTHING WILL DIE.

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

When will the clouds be aweary of  
fleeting ?

When will the heart be aweary of  
beating ?

And nature die ?

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

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

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



## ALL THINGS WILL DIE.

CLEARLY the blue river chimes in its  
flowing

Under my eye ;

Warmly and broadly the south winds are  
blowing

Over the sky.

One after another the white clouds are  
fleeting ;

Every heart this May morning in joyance  
is beating

Full merrily ;

Yet all things must die.

The stream will cease to flow ;

The wind will cease to blow ;

The clouds will cease to fleet ;

The heart will cease to beat ;

For all things must die.

All things must die.

Spring will come never more.

Oh ! vanity !

Death waits at the door.

See ! our friends are all forsaking

The wine and the merrymaking.

We are call'd—we must go.

Laid low, very low,

In the dark we must lie.

The merry glees are still ;

The voice of the bird

Shall no more be heard,

Nor the wind on the hill.

Oh ! misery !

Hark ! death is calling

While I speak to ye,

The jaw is falling,

The red cheek paling,

The strong limbs failing ;

Ice with the warm blood mixing ;

The eyeballs fixing.

Nine times goes the passing bell :

Ye merry souls, farewell.

The old earth

Had a birth,

As all men know,

Long ago.

And the old earth must die.

So let the warm winds range,

And the blue wave beat the shore ;

For even and morn

Ye will never see

Thro' eternity.

All things were born.

Ye will come never more,

For all things must die.

## LEONINE ELEGIACS.

LOW-FLOWING breezes are roaming the  
broad valley dimm'd in the gloaming :  
Thoro' the black-stemm'd pines only  
the far river shines.

Creeping thro' blossomy rushes and bowers  
of rose-blowing bushes,

Down by the poplar tall rivulets babble  
and fall.

Barketh the shepherd-dog cheerly ; the  
grasshopper carolleth clearly ;

Deeply the wood-dove coos ; shrilly the  
owlet halloos ;

Winds creep ; dewes fall chilly : in her  
first sleep earth breathes stilly :

Over the pools in the burn water-gnats  
murmur and mourn.

Sadly the far kine loweth : the glimmer-  
ing water outfloweth :

Twin peaks shadow'd with pine slope to  
the dark hyaline.

Low-throned Hesper is stayed between  
the two peaks ; but the Naiad

Throbbing in mild unrest holds him  
beneath in her breast.

The ancient poetess singeth, that Hes-  
perus all things bringeth,

Smoothing the wearied mind : bring me  
my love, Rosalind.

Thou comest morning or even ; she  
cometh not morning or even.

False-eyed Hesper, unkind, where is my  
sweet Rosalind ?

## SUPPOSED CONFESSIONS

OF A SECOND-RATE SENSITIVE MIND.

O GOD ! my God ! have mercy now.  
I faint, I fall. Men say that Thou



Didst die for me, for such as *me*,  
 Patient of ill, and death, and scorn,  
 And that my sin was as a thorn  
 Among the thorns that girt Thy brow,  
 Wounding Thy soul.—That even now,  
 In this extremest misery  
 Of ignorance, I should require  
 A sign ! and if a bolt of fire  
 Would rive the slumbrous summer noon  
 While I do pray to Thee alone,  
 Think my belief would stronger grow !  
 Is not my human pride brought low ?  
 The boastings of my spirit still ?  
 The joy I had in my freewill  
 All cold, and dead, and corpse-like grown ?  
 And what is left to me, but Thou,  
 And faith in Thee ? Men pass me by ;  
 Christians with happy countenances—  
 And children all seem full of Thee !  
 And women smile with saint-like glances  
 Like Thine own mother's when she bow'd  
 Above Thee, on that happy morn  
 When angels spake to men aloud,  
 And Thou and peace to earth were born.  
 Goodwill to me as well as all—  
 I one of them : my brothers they :  
 Brothers in Christ—a world of peace  
 And confidence, day after day ;  
 And trust and hope till things should cease,  
 And then one Heaven receive us all.

How sweet to have a common faith !  
 To hold a common scorn of death !  
 And at a burial to hear  
 The creaking cords which wound and eat  
 Into my human heart, whene'er  
 Earth goes to earth, with grief, not fear,  
 With hopeful grief, were passing sweet !

Thrice happy state again to be  
 The trustful infant on the knee !  
 Who lets his rosy fingers play  
 About his mother's neck, and knows  
 Nothing beyond his mother's eyes.  
 They comfort him by night and day ;  
 They light his little life alway ;  
 He hath no thought of coming woes ;  
 He hath no care of life or death ;  
 Scarce outward signs of joy arise,  
 Because the Spirit of happiness

And perfect rest so inward is ;  
 And loveth so his innocent heart,  
 Her temple and her place of birth,  
 Where she would ever wish to dwell,  
 Life of the fountain there, beneath  
 Its salient springs, and far apart,  
 Hating to wander out on earth,  
 Or breathe into the hollow air,  
 Whose chillness would make visible  
 Her subtil, warm, and golden breath,  
 Which mixing with the infant's blood,  
 Fulfils him with beatitude.  
 Oh ! sure it is a special care  
 Of God, to fortify from doubt,  
 To arm in proof, and guard about  
 With triple-mailed trust, and clear  
 Delight, the infant's dawning year.

Would that my gloomed fancy were  
 As thine, my mother, when with brows  
 Propt on thy knees, my hands upheld  
 In thine, I listen'd to thy vows,  
 For me outpour'd in holiest prayer—  
 For me unworthy !—and beheld  
 Thy mild deep eyes upraised, that knew  
 The beauty and repose of faith,  
 And the clear spirit shining thro'.  
 Oh ! wherefore do we grow awry  
 From roots which strike so deep ? why  
 dare

Paths in the desert ? Could not I  
 Bow myself down, where thou hast knelt,  
 To the earth—until the ice would melt  
 Here, and I feel as thou hast felt ?  
 What Devil had the heart to scathe  
 Flowers thou hadst rear'd—to brush the  
 dew

From thine own lily, when thy grave  
 Was deep, my mother, in the clay ?  
 Myself ? Is it thus ? Myself ? Had I  
 So little love for thee ? But why  
 Prevail'd not thy pure prayers ? Why  
 pray

To one who heeds not, who can save  
 But will not ? Great in faith, and strong  
 Against the grief of circumstance  
 Wert thou, and yet unheard. What if  
 Thou pleadest still, and seest me drive  
 Thro' utter dark a full-sail'd skiff,  
 Unpiloted i' the echoing dance



Of reboant whirlwinds, stooping low  
 Unto the death, not sunk ! I know  
 At matins and at evensong,  
 That thou, if thou wert yet alive,  
 In deep and daily prayers would'st strive  
 To reconcile me with thy God.  
 Albeit, my hope is gray, and cold  
 At heart, thou wouldest murmur still—  
 'Bring this lamb back into Thy fold,  
 My Lord, if so it be Thy will.'  
 Would'st tell me I must brook the rod  
 And chastisement of human pride ;  
 That pride, the sin of devils, stood  
 Betwixt me and the light of God !  
 That hitherto I had defied  
 And had rejected God—that grace  
 Would drop from his o'er-brimming love,  
 As manna on my wilderness,  
 If I would pray—that God would move  
 And strike the hard, hard rock, and thence,  
 Sweet in their utmost bitterness,  
 Would issue tears of penitence  
 Which would keep green hope's life.  
 Alas !

I think that pride hath now no place  
 Nor sojourn in me. I am void,  
 Dark, formless, utterly destroyed.

Why not believe then ? Why not yet  
 Anchor thy frailty there, where man  
 Hath moor'd and rested ? Ask the sea  
 At midnight, when the crisp slope waves  
 After a tempest, rib and fret  
 The broad-imbased beach, why he  
 Slumbers not like a mountain tarn ?  
 Wherefore his ridges are not curls  
 And ripples of an inland mere ?  
 Wherefore he moaneth thus, nor can  
 Draw down into his vexed pools  
 All that blue heaven which hues and paves  
 The other ? I am too forlorn,  
 Too shaken : my own weakness fools  
 My judgment, and my spirit whirls,  
 Moved from beneath with doubt and fear.

'Yet,' said I, in my morn of youth,  
 The unsunn'd freshness of my strength,  
 When I went forth in quest of truth,  
 'It is man's privilege to doubt,

If so be that from doubt at length,  
 Truth may stand forth unmoved of change,  
 An image with profulgent brows,  
 And perfect limbs, as from the storm  
 Of running fires and fluid range  
 Of lawless airs, at last stood out  
 This excellence and solid form  
 Of constant beauty. For the Ox  
 Feeds in the herb, and sleeps, or fills  
 The horned valleys all about,  
 And hollows of the fringed hills  
 In summer heats, with placid lows  
 Unfearing, till his own blood flows  
 About his hoof. And in the flocks  
 The lamb rejoiceth in the year,  
 And raceth freely with his fere,  
 And answers to his mother's calls  
 From the flower'd furrow. In a time,  
 Of which he wots not, run short pains  
 Thro' his warm heart ; and then, from  
 whence

He knows not, on his light there falls  
 A shadow ; and his native slope,  
 Where he was wont to leap and climb,  
 Floats from his sick and filmed eyes,  
 And something in the darkness draws  
 His forehead earthward, and he dies.  
 Shall man live thus, in joy and hope  
 As a young lamb, who cannot dream,  
 Living, but that he shall live on ?  
 Shall we not look into the laws  
 Of life and death, and things that seem,  
 And things that be, and analyse  
 Our double nature, and compare  
 All creeds till we have found the one,  
 If one there be ?' Ay me ! I fear  
 All may not doubt, but everywhere  
 Some must clasp Idols. Yet, my God,  
 Whom call I Idol ? Let Thy dove  
 Shadow me over, and my sins  
 Be unremember'd, and Thy love  
 Enlighten me. Oh teach me yet  
 Somewhat before the heavy clod  
 Weighs on me, and the busy fret  
 Of that sharp-headed worm begins  
 In the gross blackness underneath.

O weary life ! O weary death !  
 O spirit and heart made desolate !  
 O damned vacillating state !



## THE KRAKEN.

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

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

And far away into the sickly light,  
From many a wondrous grot and secret  
cell

Unnumber'd and enormous polypi  
Winnow with giant arms the slumbering  
green.

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

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

## SONG.

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

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

## LILIAN.

## I.

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

## II.

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

## III.

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

## IV.

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

## ISABEL.

## I.

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



## II.

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

## III.

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

## MARIANA.

'Mariana in the moated grange.'

*Measure for Measure.*

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

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

Upon the middle of the night,  
 Waking she heard the night-fowl crow :  
 The cock sung out an hour ere light :  
 From the dark fen the oxen's low  
 Came to her : without hope of change,  
 In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,  
 Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed  
 morn

About the lonely moated grange.  
 She only said, 'The day is dreary,  
 He cometh not,' she said ;  
 She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,  
 I would that I were dead !'

About a stone-cast from the wall  
 A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,  
 And o'er it many, round and small,  
 The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.



Hard by a poplar shook alway,  
 All silver-green with gnarled bark :  
 For leagues no other tree did mark  
 The level waste, the rounding gray.

She only said, 'My life is dreary,  
 He cometh not,' she said ;  
 She said, 'I am weary, weary,  
 I would that I were dead !'

And ever when the moon was low,  
 And the shrill winds were up and away,  
 In the white curtain, to and fro,  
 She saw the gusty shadow sway.

But when the moon was very low,  
 And wild winds bound within their cell,  
 The shadow of the poplar fell  
 Upon her bed, across her brow.

She only said, 'The night is dreary,  
 He cometh not,' she said ;  
 She said, 'I am weary, weary,  
 I would that I were dead !'

All day within the dreamy house,  
 The doors upon their hinges creak'd ;  
 The blue fly sung in the pane ; the mouse  
 Behind the mouldering wainscot  
 shriek'd,

Or from the crevice peer'd about.  
 Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,  
 Old footsteps trod the upper floors,  
 Old voices called her from without.

She only said, 'My life is dreary,  
 He cometh not,' she said ;  
 She said, 'I am weary, weary,  
 I would that I were dead !'

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,  
 The slow clock ticking, and the sound  
 Which to the wooing wind aloof

The poplar made, did all confound  
 Her sense ; but most she loathed the hour  
 When the thick-moted sunbeam lay  
 Athwart the chambers, and the day  
 Was sloping toward his western bower.

Then, said she, 'I am very dreary,  
 He will not come,' she said ;  
 She wept, 'I am weary, weary,  
 Oh God, that I were dead !'

## TO —.

### I.

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

### II.

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

### III.

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

## MADELINE.

### I.

THOU art not steep'd in golden languors,  
 No tranced summer calm is thine,  
 Ever varying Madeline.  
 Thro' light and shadow thou dost range,  
 Sudden glances, sweet and strange,  
 Delicious spites and darling angers,  
 And airy forms of flitting change.



## II.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,  
 Thou art perfect in love-lore.  
 Revelings deep and clear are thine  
 Of wealthy smiles: but who may know  
 Whether smile or frown be fleeter?  
 Whether smile or frown be sweeter,  
 Who may know?

Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow  
 Light-glooming over eyes divine,  
 Like little clouds sun-fringed, are thine,  
 Ever varying Madeline.

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

## III.

A subtle, sudden flame,  
 By veering passion fann'd,  
 About thee breaks and dances:  
 When I would kiss thy hand,  
 The flush of anger'd shame  
 O'erflows thy calmer glances,  
 And o'er black brows drops down  
 A sudden-curved frown:  
 But when I turn away,  
 Thou, willing me to stay,  
 Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest;  
 But, looking fixedly the while,  
 All my bounding heart entanglest  
 In a golden-netted smile;  
 Then in madness and in bliss,  
 If my lips should dare to kiss  
 Thy taper fingers amorously,  
 Again thou blushest angerly;  
 And o'er black brows drops down  
 A sudden-curved frown.

## SONG—THE OWL.

## I.

WHEN cats run home and light is come,  
 And dew is cold upon the ground,

And the far-off stream is dumb,  
 And the whirring sail goes round,  
 And the whirring sail goes round;  
 Alone and warming his five wits,  
 The white owl in the belfry sits.

## II.

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

## SECOND SONG.

## TO THE SAME.

## I.

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

## II.

I would mock thy chaunt anew;  
 But I cannot mimick it;  
 Not a whit of thy tuwhoo,  
 Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
 Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
 With a lengthen'd loud halloo,  
 Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tuwhoo-o-o.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE  
ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn blew  
 free

In the silken sail of infancy,  
 The tide of time flow'd back with me,  
 The forward-flowing tide of time;  
 And many a sheeny summer-morn,  
 Adown the Tigris I was borne,



By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,  
High-walled gardens green and old ;  
True Mussulman was I and sworn,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

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

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans guard  
The outlet, did I turn away  
The boat-head down a broad canal  
From the main river sluiced, where all  
The sloping of the moon-lit sward  
Was damask-work, and deep inlay  
Of braided blooms unmown, which crept  
Adown to where the water slept.  
A goodly place, a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won  
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on  
My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,  
Until another night in night  
I enter'd, from the clearer light,  
Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,  
Imprisoning sweets, which, as they clomb  
Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the  
dome  
Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward ; and the clear canal  
Is rounded to as clear a lake.  
From the green rivage many a fall  
Of diamond rillels musical,  
Thro' little crystal arches low  
Down from the central fountain's flow  
Fall'n silver-chiming, seemed to shake  
The sparkling flints beneath the prow.

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

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

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

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

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



Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—  
 A realm of pleasance, many a mound,  
 And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn  
 Full of the city's stilly sound,  
 And deep myrrh-thickets blowing round  
 The stately cedar, tamarisks,  
 Thick rosaries of scented thorn,  
 Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks  
 Graven with emblems of the time,  
 In honour of the golden prime  
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

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

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

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

Six columns, three on either side,  
 Pure silver, underpropt a rich  
 Throne of the massive ore, from which

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

## ODE TO MEMORY.

ADDRESSED TO —.

I.

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

II.

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

III.

Whilome thou camest with the morning  
 mist,  
 And with the evening cloud,  
 Showering thy gleaned wealth into my  
 open breast  
 (Those peerless flowers which in the  
 rudest wind  
 Never grow sere,



When rooted in the garden of the mind,  
Because they are the earliest of the year).

Nor was the night thy shroud.

In sweet dreams softer than unbroken rest  
Thou leddest by the hand thine infant  
Hope.

The eddying of her garments caught from  
thee

The light of thy great presence ; and the  
cope

Of the half-attain'd futurity,

Tho' deep not fathomless,

Was cloven with the million stars which  
tremble

O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy.

Small thought was there of life's distress ;

For sure she deem'd no mist of earth  
could dull

Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and  
beautiful :

Sure she was nigher to heaven's spheres,

Listening the lordly music flowing from

The illimitable years.

O strengthen me, enlighten me !

I faint in this obscurity,

Thou dewy dawn of memory.

#### IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,

Thou of the many tongues, the myriad  
eyes !

Thou comest not with shows of flaunting  
vines

Unto mine inner eye,

Divinest Memory !

Thou wert not nursed by the waterfall  
Which ever sounds and shines

A pillar of white light upon the wall

Of purple cliffs, aloof descried :

Come from the woods that belt the gray  
hill-side,

The seven elms, the poplars four

That stand beside my father's door,

And chiefly from the brook that loves

To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed sand,

Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,

Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,

In every elbow and turn,

The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland,

O ! hither lead thy feet !

Pour round mine ears the livelong bleat  
Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wattled  
folds,

Upon the ridged wolds,

When the first matin-song hath waken'd  
loud

Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,

What time the amber morn

Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung  
cloud.

#### V.

Large dowries doth the raptured eye

To the young spirit present

When first she is wed ;

And like a bride of old

In triumph led,

With music and sweet showers

Of festal flowers,

Unto the dwelling she must sway.

Well hast thou done, great artist Memory,

In setting round thy first experiment

With royal frame-work of wrought  
gold ;

Needs must thou dearly love thy first  
essay,

And foremost in thy various gallery

Place it, where sweetest sunlight falls

Upon the storied walls ;

For the discovery

And newness of thine art so pleased thee,

That all which thou hast drawn of fairest

Or boldest since, but lightly weighs

With thee unto the love thou bearest

The first-born of thy genius. Artist-like,

Ever retiring thou dost gaze

On the prime labour of thine early days :

No matter what the sketch might be ;

Whether the high field on the bushless  
Pike,

Or even a sand-built ridge

Of heaped hills that mound the sea,

Overblown with murmurs harsh,

Or even a lowly cottage whence we see

Stretch'd wide and wild the waste enor-  
mous marsh,

Where from the frequent bridge,

Like emblems of infinity,

The trenched waters run from sky to sky ;

Or a garden bower'd close



With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,  
 Long alleys falling down to twilight grotts,  
 Or opening upon level plots  
 Of crowned lilies, standing near  
 Purple-spiked lavender :  
 Whither in after life retired  
 From brawling storms,  
 From weary wind,  
 With youthful fancy re-inspired,  
 We may hold converse with all forms  
 Of the many-sided mind,  
 And those whom passion hath not blinded,  
 Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.

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

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

## SONG.

## I.

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours  
 Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers :

To himself he talks ;

For at eventide, listening earnestly,  
 At his work you may hear him sob and  
 sigh

In the walks ;

Earthward he boweth the heavy  
 stalks

Of the mouldering flowers :

Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
 Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;

Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
 Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

## II.

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

An hour before death ;

My very heart faints and my whole soul  
 grieves

At the moist rich smell of the rotting  
 leaves,

And the breath  
 Of the fading edges of box beneath,  
 And the year's last rose.

Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
 Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;  
 Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
 Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

## A CHARACTER.

WITH a half-glance upon the sky  
 At night he said, ' The wanderings  
 Of this most intricate Universe  
 Teach me the nothingness of things.  
 Yet could not all creation pierce  
 Beyond the bottom of his eye.

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

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

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

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

## THE POET.

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



He saw thro' life and death, thro' good  
and ill,  
He saw thro' his own soul.  
The marvel of the everlasting will,  
An open scroll,

Before him lay : with echoing feet he  
threaded  
The secretest walks of fame :  
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were  
headed  
And wing'd with flame,

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

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

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

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

So many minds did gird their orbs with  
beams,  
Tho' one did fling the fire.  
Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many  
dreams  
Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the  
world  
Like one great garden show'd,  
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark  
upcurl'd,  
Rare sunrise flow'd.

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

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

And in her raiment's hem was traced in  
flame

WISDOM, a name to shake  
All evil dreams of power—a sacred name.  
And when she spake,

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

So was their meaning to her words. No  
sword

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

## THE POET'S MIND.

### I.

VEX not thou the poet's mind  
With thy shallow wit :  
Vex not thou the poet's mind ;  
For thou canst not fathom it.  
Clear and bright it should be ever,  
Flowing like a crystal river ;  
Bright as light, and clear as wind.

### II.

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



In your eye there is death,  
There is frost in your breath  
Which would blight the plants.

Where you stand you cannot hear  
From the groves within  
The wild-bird's din.

In the heart of the garden the merry bird  
chants.

It would fall to the ground if you came  
in.

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

With a low melodious thunder ;

All day and all night it is ever drawn  
From the brain of the purple mountain  
Which stands in the distance yonder :

It springs on a level of bowery lawn,  
And the mountain draws it from Heaven  
above,

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

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

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

It would shrink to the earth if you came  
in.

### THE SEA-FAIRIES.

SLOW sail'd the weary mariners and saw,  
Betwixt the green brink and the running  
foam,

Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms  
prest

To little harps of gold ; and while they  
mused

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

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

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

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

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

Hither, come hither and frolic and play ;  
Here it is only the mew that wails ;

We will sing to you all the day :  
Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,  
For here are the blissful downs and dales,  
And merrily, merrily carol the gales,  
And the spangle dances in bight and bay,  
And the rainbow forms and flies on the  
land

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

Hither, come hither and see ;  
And the rainbow hangs on the poising  
wave,

And sweet is the colour of cove and cave,  
And sweet shall your welcome be :

O hither, come hither, and be our lords,  
For merry brides are we :

We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak  
sweet words :

O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten  
With pleasure and love and jubilee :  
O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten  
When the sharp clear twang of the golden  
chords

Runs up the ridged sea.  
Who can light on as happy a shore  
All the world o'er, all the world o'er ?  
Whither away ? listen and stay : mariner,  
mariner, fly no more.

### THE DESERTED HOUSE.

I.

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



## II.

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

## III.

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

## IV.

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

## V.

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

## THE DYING SWAN.

## I.

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

## II.

Some blue peaks in the distance rose,  
And white against the cold-white sky,  
Shone out their crowning snows.  
One willow over the river wept,  
And shook the wave as the wind did sigh ;  
Above in the wind was the swallow,

Chasing itself at its own wild will,  
And far thro' the marish green and  
still

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

## III.

The wild swan's death-hymn took the soul  
Of that waste place with joy  
Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear  
The warble was low, and full and clear ;  
And floating about the under-sky,  
Prevailing in weakness, the coronach  
stole  
Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear ;  
But anon her awful jubilant voice,  
With a music strange and manifold,  
Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold ;  
As when a mighty people rejoice  
With shawms, and with cymbals, and  
harps of gold,  
And the tumult of their acclaim is roll'd  
Thro' the open gates of the city afar,  
To the shepherd who watcheth the even-  
ing star.  
And the creeping mosses and clambering  
weeds,  
And the willow-branches hoar and dank,  
And the wavy swell of the souging  
reeds,  
And the wave-worn horns of the echoing  
bank,  
And the silvery marish-flowers that  
throng  
The desolate creeks and pools among,  
Were flooded over with eddying song.

## A DIRGE.

## I.

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



II.

Thee nor carketh care nor slander ;  
Nothing but the small cold worm  
Fretteth thine enshrouded form.

Let them rave.

Light and shadow ever wander  
O'er the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

III.

Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed ;  
Chaunteth not the brooding bee  
Sweeter tones than calumny ?

Let them rave.

Thou wilt never raise thine head  
From the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

IV.

Crocodiles wept tears for thee ;  
The woodbine and eglatere  
Drip sweeter dews than traitor's tear.

Let them rave.

Rain makes music in the tree  
O'er the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

V.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,  
Bramble roses, faint and pale,  
And long purples of the dale.

Let them rave.

These in every shower creep  
Thro' the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

VI.

The gold-eyed kingcups fine ;  
The frail bluebell peereth over  
Rare broidry of the purple clover.

Let them rave.

Kings have no such couch as thine,  
As the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

VII.

Wild words wander here and there :  
God's great gift of speech abused  
Makes thy memory confused :

But let them rave.

The balm-cricket carols clear  
In the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

LOVE AND DEATH.

WHAT time the mighty moon was gather-  
ing light

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

' You must begone,' said Death, ' these  
walks are mine.'

Love wept and spread his sheeny vans  
for flight ;

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

Thou art the shadow of life, and as the  
tree

Stands in the sun and shadows all be-  
neath,

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

But I shall reign for ever over all.'

THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.

MY heart is wasted with my woe,  
Oriana.

There is no rest for me below,  
Oriana.

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

And loud the Norland whirlwinds blow,  
Oriana,

Alone I wander to and fro,  
Oriana.

Ere the light on dark was growing,  
Oriana,

At midnight the cock was crowing,  
Oriana :



Winds were blowing, waters flowing,  
We heard the steeds to battle going,  
Oriana ;  
Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,  
Oriana.

In the yew-wood black as night,  
Oriana,  
Ere I rode into the fight,  
Oriana,  
While blissful tears blinded my sight  
By star-shine and by moonlight,  
Oriana,  
I to thee my troth did plight,  
Oriana.

She stood upon the castle wall,  
Oriana :  
She watch'd my crest among them all,  
Oriana :  
She saw me fight, she heard me call,  
When forth there stept a foeman tall,  
Oriana,  
Atween me and the castle wall,  
Oriana.

The bitter arrow went aside,  
Oriana :  
The false, false arrow went aside,  
Oriana :  
The damned arrow glanced aside,  
And pierced thy heart, my love, my bride,  
Oriana !  
Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,  
Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space,  
Oriana.  
Loud, loud rung out the bugle's brays,  
Oriana.  
Oh ! deathful stabs were dealt apace,  
The battle deepen'd in its place,  
Oriana ;  
But I was down upon my face,  
Oriana.

They should have stabb'd me where I lay,  
Oriana !  
How could I rise and come away,  
Oriana ?

How could I look upon the day ?  
They should have stabb'd me where I lay,  
Oriana—  
They should have trod me into clay,  
Oriana.

O breaking heart that will not break,  
Oriana !  
O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,  
Oriana !  
Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,  
And then the tears run down my cheek,  
Oriana :  
What wantest thou ? whom dost thou seek,  
Oriana ?

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,  
Oriana.  
Thou comest atween me and the skies,  
Oriana.  
I feel the tears of blood arise  
Up from my heart unto my eyes,  
Oriana.  
Within thy heart my arrow lies,  
Oriana.

O cursed hand ! O cursed blow !  
Oriana !  
O happy thou that liest low,  
Oriana !  
All night the silence seems to flow  
Beside me in my utter woe,  
Oriana.  
A weary, weary way I go,  
Oriana.

When Norland winds pipe down the sea,  
Oriana,  
I walk, I dare not think of thee,  
Oriana.  
Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,  
I dare not die and come to thee,  
Oriana.  
I hear the roaring of the sea,  
Oriana.

### f. CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbour villages  
Playing mad pranks along the heathy leas ;



Two strangers meeting at a festival ;  
 Two lovers whispering by an orchard  
     wall ;  
 Two lives bound fast in one with golden  
     ease ;  
 Two graves grass-green beside a gray  
     church-tower,  
 Wash'd with still rains and daisy blos-  
     somed ;  
 Two children in one hamlet born and  
     bred ;  
 So runs the round of life from hour to  
     hour.

THE MERMAN. *ind.*

## I.

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

## II.

I would be a merman bold,  
 I would sit and sing the whole of the day ;  
 I would fill the sea-halls with a voice of  
     power ;  
 But at night I would roam abroad and  
     play  
 With the mermaids in and out of the rocks,  
 Dressing their hair with the white sea-  
     flower ;  
 And holding them back by their flowing  
     locks  
 I would kiss them often under the sea,  
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd me  
     Laughingly, laughingly ;  
 And then we would wander away, away  
 To the pale-green sea-groves straight and  
     high,  
 Chasing each other merrily.

## III.

There would be neither moon nor star ;  
 But the wave would make music above  
     us afar—

Low thunder and light in the magic  
     night—

Neither moon nor star.

We would call aloud in the dreamy dells,  
 Call to each other and whoop and cry

All night, merrily, merrily ;

They would pelt me with starry spangles  
     and shells,

Laughing and clapping their hands be-  
     tween,

All night, merrily, merrily :

But I would throw to them back in mine  
 Turkis and agate and almondine :

Then leaping out upon them unseen

I would kiss them often under the sea,

And kiss them again till they kiss'd me

Laughingly, laughingly.

Oh ! what a happy life were mine

Under the hollow-hung ocean green !

Soft are the moss-beds under the sea ;

We would live merrily, merrily.

*ind.* THE MERMAID.

## I.

WHO would be  
 A mermaid fair,  
 Singing alone,  
 Combing her hair  
 Under the sea,  
 In a golden curl  
 With a comb of pearl,  
 On a throne ?

## II.

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

Low adown, low adown,  
 From under my starry sea-bud crown  
     Low adown and around,  
 And I should look like a fountain of gold



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

## III.

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

Would lean out from the hollow sphere  
     of the sea,  
 All looking down for the love of me.

## ADELINE.

## I.

MYSTERY of mysteries,  
     Faintly smiling Adeline,  
     Scarce of earth nor all divine,  
 Nor unhappy, nor at rest,  
     But beyond expression fair  
     With thy floating flaxen hair ;  
 Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes  
     Take the heart from out my breast.  
 Wherefore those dim looks of thine,  
 Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

## II.

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

## III.

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



Wherefore that faint smile of thine,  
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?

## IV.

Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,  
Some spirit of a crimson rose  
In love with thee forgets to close  
His curtains, wasting odorous sighs  
All night long on darkness blind.  
What aileth thee? whom waitest thou  
With thy soften'd, shadow'd brow,  
And those dew-lit eyes of thine,  
Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

## V.

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

## MARGARET.

## I.

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

The very smile before you speak,  
That dimples your transparent cheek,  
Encircles all the heart, and feedeth  
The senses with a still delight  
Of dainty sorrow without sound,  
Like the tender amber round,  
Which the moon about her spreadeth,  
Moving thro' a fleecy night.

## II.

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

## III.

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

## IV.

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

## V.

O sweet pale Margaret,  
O rare pale Margaret,



Come down, come down, and hear me  
speak :

Tie up the ringlets on your cheek :

The sun is just about to set,  
The arching limes are tall and shady,  
And faint, rainy lights are seen,  
Moving in the leavy beech.

Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,  
Where all day long you sit between  
Joy and woe, and whisper each.

Or only look across the lawn,  
Look out below your bower-eaves,  
Look down, and let your blue eyes dawn  
Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves.

### ROSALIND.

#### I.

My Rosalind, my Rosalind,  
My frolic falcon, with bright eyes,  
Whose free delight, from any height of  
rapid flight,  
Stoops at all game that wing the skies,  
My Rosalind, my Rosalind,  
My bright-eyed, wild-eyed falcon, whither,  
Careless both of wind and weather,  
Whither fly ye, what game spy ye,  
Up or down the streaming wind?

#### II.

The quick lark's closest-caroll'd strains,  
The shadow rushing up the sea,  
The lightning flash atween the rains,  
The sunlight driving down the lea,  
The leaping stream, the very wind,  
That will not stay, upon his way,  
To stoop the cowslip to the plains,  
Is not so clear and bold and free  
As you, my falcon Rosalind.  
You care not for another's pains,  
Because you are the soul of joy,  
Bright metal all without alloy.  
Life shoots and glances thro' your veins,  
And flashes off a thousand ways,  
Thro' lips and eyes in subtle rays.  
Your hawk-eyes are keen and bright,  
Keen with triumph, watching still  
To pierce me thro' with pointed light ;  
But oftentimes they flash and glitter

Like sunshine on a dancing rill,  
And your words are seeming-bitter,  
Sharp and few, but seeming-bitter  
From excess of swift delight.

#### III.

Come down, come home, my Rosalind,  
My gay young hawk, my Rosalind :  
Too long you keep the upper skies ;  
Too long you roam and wheel at will ;  
But we must hood your random eyes,  
That care not whom they kill,  
And your cheek, whose brilliant hue  
Is so sparkling-fresh to view,  
Some red heath-flower in the dew,  
Touch'd with sunrise. We must bind  
And keep you fast, my Rosalind,  
Fast, fast, my wild-eyed Rosalind,  
And clip your wings, and make you love :  
When we have lured you from above,  
And that delight of frolic flight, by day  
or night,  
From North to South,  
We'll bind you fast in silken cords,  
And kiss away the bitter words  
From off your rosy mouth.

### ELEÄNORE.

#### I.

THY dark eyes open'd not,  
Nor first reveal'd themselves to English  
air,  
For there is nothing here,  
Which, from the outward to the inward  
brought,  
Moulded thy baby thought.  
Far off from human neighbourhood,  
Thou wert born, on a summer morn,  
A mile beneath the cedar-wood.  
Thy bounteous forehead was not fann'd  
With breezes from our oaken glades,  
But thou wert nursed in some delicious  
land  
Of lavish lights, and floating shades :  
And flattering thy childish thought  
The oriental fairy brought,  
At the moment of thy birth,



From old well-heads of haunted rills,  
 And the hearts of purple hills,  
 And shadow'd coves on a sunny  
 shore,  
 The choicest wealth of all the  
 earth,  
 Jewel or shell, or starry ore,  
 To deck thy cradle, Eleänore.

## II.

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

## III.

Who may minister to thee?  
 Summer herself should minister  
 To thee, with fruitage golden-rinded  
 On golden salvers, or it may be,  
 Youngest Autumn, in a bower  
 Grape-thicken'd from the light, and  
 blinded  
 With many a deep-hued bell-like  
 flower  
 Of fragrant trailers, when the air  
 Sleepeth over all the heaven,  
 And the crag that fronts the Even,  
 All along the shadowing shore,  
 Crimsoned over an inland mere,  
 Eleänore!

## IV.

How may full-sail'd verse express,  
 How may measured words adore  
 The full-flowing harmony  
 Of thy swan-like stateliness,  
 Eleänore?  
 The luxuriant symmetry  
 Of thy floating gracefulness,  
 Eleänore?  
 Every turn and glance of thine,  
 Every lineament divine,  
 Eleänore,

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

## V.

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

## VI.

Sometimes, with most intensity  
 Gazing, I seem to see  
 Thought folded over thought, smiling  
 asleep,  
 Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep  
 In thy large eyes, that, overpower'd quite,  
 I cannot veil, or droop my sight,  
 But am as nothing in its light:  
 As tho' a star, in inmost heaven set,  
 Ev'n while we gaze on it,  
 Should slowly round his orb, and slowly  
 grow  
 To a full face, there like a sun remain  
 Fix'd—then as slowly fade again,  
 And draw itself to what it was  
 before;  
 So full, so deep, so slow,  
 Thought seems to come and go  
 In thy large eyes, imperial Eleänore.



## VII.

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

## VIII.

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

I die with my delight, before  
 I hear what I would hear from  
 thee ;

Yet tell my name again to me,  
 I *would* be dying evermore,  
 So dying ever, Eleänore.

## KATE.

I KNOW her by her angry air,  
 Her bright black eyes, her bright black  
 hair,  
 Her rapid laughs wild and shrill,  
 As laughs of the woodpecker  
 From the bosom of a hill.  
 'Tis Kate—she sayeth what she will :  
 For Kate hath an unbridled tongue,  
 Clear as the twanging of a harp.  
 Her heart is like a throbbing star.  
 Kate hath a spirit ever strung  
 Like a new bow, and bright and sharp  
 As edges of the scymetar.  
 Whence shall she take a fitting mate ?  
 For Kate no common love will feel ;  
 My woman-soldier, gallant Kate,  
 As pure and true as blades of steel.

Kate saith 'the world is void of might.'  
 Kate saith 'the men are gilded flies.'  
 Kate snaps her fingers at my vows ;  
 Kate will not hear of lovers' sighs.  
 I would I were an arméd knight,  
 Far-famed for well-won enterprise,  
 And wearing on my swarthy brows  
 The garland of new-wreathed emprise :  
 For in a moment I would pierce  
 The blackest files of clanging fight,  
 And strongly strike to left and right,  
 In dreaming of my lady's eyes.  
 Oh ! Kate loves well the bold and  
 fierce ;  
 But none are bold enough for Kate  
 She cannot find a fitting mate.

## I.

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



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

## II.

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

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

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

## EARLY SONNETS.

## I.

TO ——. *vg.*

As when with downcast eyes we muse and  
 brood,

And ebb into a former life, or seem  
 To lapse far back in some confused dream  
 To states of mystical similitude ;  
 If one but speaks or hems or stirs his chair,  
 Ever the wonder waxeth more and more,  
 So that we say, 'All this hath been before,  
 All this hath been, I know not when or  
 where.'

So, friend, when first I look'd upon your  
 face,  
 Our thought gave answer each to each, so  
 true—

Opposed mirrors each reflecting each—

That tho' I knew not in what time or place,  
 Methought that I had often met with you,  
 And either lived in either's heart and  
 speech.

## II.

TO J. M. K. *fair.*

My hope and heart is with thee—thou  
 wilt be

A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest  
 To scare church-harpies from the master's  
 feast ;

Our dusted velvets have much need of  
 thee :

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

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

Brow-beats his desk below. Thou from  
 a throne

Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the  
 dark

Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and  
 mark.

III. *fine.*

MINE be the strength of spirit, full and  
 free,

Like some broad river rushing down  
 alone,

With the selfsame impulse wherewith he  
 was thrown

From his loud fount upon the echoing  
 lea :—

Which with increasing might doth forward  
 flee

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

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

Mine be the power which ever to its sway  
 Will win the wise at once, and by degrees

May into uncongenial spirits flow ;

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

The lavish growths of southern Mexico.



## IV.

five

## ALEXANDER.

WARRIOR of God, whose strong right  
arm debased  
The throne of Persia, when her Satrap  
bled  
At Issus by the Syrian gates, or fled  
Beyond the Memmian naphtha-pits, dis-  
graced  
For ever—thee (thy pathway sand-erased)  
Gliding with equal crowns two serpents  
led  
Joyful to that palm-planted fountain-fed  
Ammonian Oasis in the waste.  
There in a silent shade of laurel brown  
Apart the Chamian Oracle divine  
Shelter'd his unapproached mysteries :  
High things were spoken there, unhanded  
down ;  
Only they saw thee from the secret shrine  
Returning with hot cheek and kindled  
eyes.

## V.

## BUONAPARTE.

HE thought to quell the stubborn hearts  
of oak,  
Madman !—to chain with chains, and bind  
with bands  
That island queen who sways the floods  
and lands  
From Ind to Ind, but in fair daylight woke,  
When from her wooden walls,—lit by  
sure hands,—  
With thunders, and with lightnings, and  
with smoke,—  
Peal after peal, the British battle broke,  
Lulling the brine against the Coptic sands.  
We taught him lowlier moods, when El-  
sinore  
Heard the war moan along the distant sea,  
Rocking with shatter'd spars, with sudden  
fires  
Flamed over : at Trafalgar yet once more  
We taught him : late he learned humility  
Perforce, like those whom Gideon school'd  
with briers.

## VI.

## POLAND.

How long, O God, shall men be ridden  
down,  
And trampled under by the last and least  
Of men ? The heart of Poland hath not  
ceased  
To quiver, tho' her sacred blood doth  
drown  
The fields, and out of every smouldering  
town  
Cries to Thee, lest brute Power be in-  
creased,  
Till that o'ergrown Barbarian in the East  
Transgress his ample bound to some new  
crown :—  
Cries to Thee, 'Lord, how long shall  
these things be ?  
How long this icy-hearted Muscovite  
Oppress the region ?' Us, O Just and  
Good,  
Forgive, who smiled when she was torn  
in three ;  
Us, who stand now, when we should aid  
the right—  
A matter to be wept with tears of blood !

## VII.

CARESS'D or chidden by the slender hand,  
And singing airy trifles this or that,  
Light Hope at Beauty's call would perch  
and stand,  
And run thro' every change of sharp and  
flat ;  
And Fancy came and at her pillow sat,  
When Sleep had bound her in his rosy  
band,  
And chased away the still-recurring gnat,  
And woke her with a lay from fairy land.  
But now they live with Beauty less and  
less,  
For Hope is other Hope and wanders far,  
Nor cares to lisp in love's delicious creeds ;  
And Fancy watches in the wilderness,  
Poor Fancy sadder than a single star,  
That sets at twilight in a land of reeds.



VIII. *ind.*

THE form, the form alone is eloquent !  
 A nobler yearning never broke her rest  
 Than but to dance and sing, be gaily  
     drest,  
 And win all eyes with all accomplish-  
     ment :  
 Yet in the whirling dances as we went,  
 My fancy made me for a moment blest  
 To find my heart so near the beauteous  
     breast  
 That once had power to rob it of content.  
 A moment came the tenderness of tears,  
 The phantom of a wish that once could  
     move,  
 A ghost of passion that no smiles re-  
     store—  
 For ah ! the slight coquette, she cannot  
     love,  
 And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand  
     years,  
 She still would take the praise, and care  
     no more.

IX. *my*

WAN Sculptor, weepst thou to take the  
     cast  
 Of those dead lineaments that near thee  
     lie ?  
 O sorrowest thou, pale Painter, for the  
     past,  
 In painting some dead friend from memory ?  
 Weep on : beyond his object Love can  
     last :  
 His object lives : more cause to weep  
     have I :  
 My tears, no tears of love, are flowing fast,  
No tears of love, but tears that Love can  
     die.  
 I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,  
 Nor care to sit beside her where she sits—  
 Ah pity—hint it not in human tones,  
 But breathe it into earth and close it up  
 With secret death for ever, in the pits  
 Which some green Christmas crams with  
     weary bones.

X. *five*

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

And range of evil between death and birth,  
 That I should fear,—if I were loved by  
     thee ?

All the inner, all the outer world of pain  
 Clear Love would pierce and cleave, if  
     thou wert mine,  
 As I have heard that, somewhere in the  
     main,  
Fresh-water springs come up through  
     bitter brine.

'Twere joy, not fear, claspt hand-in-hand  
     with thee,  
 To wait for death—mute—careless of all  
     ills,  
 Apart upon a mountain, tho' the surge  
 Of some new deluge from a thousand hills  
 Flung leagues of roaring foam into the  
     gorge  
 Below us, as far on as eye could see.

XI. *fair*

## THE BRIDESMAID.

O BRIDESMAID, ere the happy knot was  
     tied,  
 Thine eyes so wept that they could hardly  
     see ;  
 Thy sister smiled and said, ' No tears for  
     me !  
 A happy bridesmaid makes a happy bride.'  
 And then, the couple standing side by  
     side,  
 Love lighted down between them full of  
     glee,  
 And over his left shoulder laugh'd at  
     thee,  
 ' O happy bridesmaid, make a happy  
     bride.'  
 And all at once a pleasant truth I learn'd,  
 For while the tender service made thee  
     weep,  
 I loved thee for the tear thou couldst not  
     hide,  
 And prest thy hand, and knew the press  
     return'd,  
 And thought, ' My life is sick of single  
     sleep :  
 O happy bridesmaid, make a happy  
     bride !'



## THE LADY OF SHALOTT

## AND OTHER POEMS.

## THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

## PART I.

ON either side the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye,  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
And thro' the field the road runs by

To many-tower'd Camelot;  
And up and down the people go,  
Gazing where the lilies blow  
Round an island there below,  
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
Little breezes dusk and shiver  
Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
By the island in the river

Flowing down to Camelot.  
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers,  
And the silent isle imbowers  
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,  
Slide the heavy barges trail'd  
By slow horses; and unhail'd  
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd

Skimming down to Camelot:  
But who hath seen her wave her hand?  
Or at the casement seen her stand?  
Or is she known in all the land,  
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early  
In among the bearded barley,  
Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
From the river winding clearly,

Down to tower'd Camelot:  
And by the moon the reaper weary,  
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy  
Lady of Shalott.'

## PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day  
A magic web with colours gay.

She has heard a whisper say,  
A curse is on her if she stay  
To look down to Camelot.  
She knows not what the curse may be,  
And so she weaveth steadily,  
And little other care hath she,  
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear  
That hangs before her all the year,  
Shadows of the world appear.  
There she sees the highway near  
Winding down to Camelot:

There the river eddy whirls,  
And there the surly village-churls,  
And the red cloaks of market girls,  
Pass onward from Shalott.

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

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

## PART III.

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



That sparkled on the yellow field,  
Beside remote Shalott.

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

All in the blue unclouded weather  
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,  
The helmet and the helmet-feather  
Burn'd like one burning flame together,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
As often thro' the purple night,  
Below the starry clusters bright,  
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
Moves over still Shalott.

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

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

## PART IV.

IN the stormy east-wind straining,  
The pale yellow woods were waning,  
The broad stream in his banks complain-  
ing,  
Heavily the low sky raining  
Over tower'd Camelot ;  
Down she came and found a boat

Beneath a willow left afloat,  
And round about the prow she wrote  
*The Lady of Shalott.*

And down the river's dim expanse  
Like some bold seër in a trance,  
Seeing all his own mischance—  
With a glassy countenance  
Did she look to Camelot.  
And at the closing of the day  
She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;  
The broad stream bore her far away,  
The Lady of Shalott.

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

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

Under tower and balcony,  
By garden-wall and gallery,  
A gleaming shape she floated by,  
Dead-pale between the houses high,  
Silent into Camelot.

Out upon the wharfs they came,  
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
And round the prow they read her name,  
*The Lady of Shalott.*

Who is this ? and what is here ?  
And in the lighted palace near  
Died the sound of royal cheer ;  
And they cross'd themselves for fear,  
All the knights at Camelot :  
But Lancelot mused a little space ;  
He said, 'She has a lovely face ;  
God in his mercy lend her grace,  
The Lady of Shalott.'



## MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

WITH one black shadow at its feet,  
The house thro' all the level shines,  
Close-latticed to the brooding heat,  
And silent in its dusty vines :

A faint-blue ridge upon the right,  
An empty river-bed before,  
And shallows on a distant shore,  
In glaring sand and inlets bright.

But 'Ave Mary,' made she moan,  
And 'Ave Mary,' night and morn,  
And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all alone,  
To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

She, as her carol sadder grew,  
From brow and bosom slowly down  
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew  
Her streaming curls of deepest brown  
To left and right, and made appear  
Still-lighted in a secret shrine,  
Her melancholy eyes divine,  
The home of woe without a tear.

And 'Ave Mary,' was her moan,  
'Madonna, sad is night and morn,'  
And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all alone,  
To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

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

And on the liquid mirror glow'd  
The clear perfection of her face.  
'Is this the form,' she made her  
moan,  
'That won his praises night and  
morn?'

And 'Ah,' she said, 'but I wake  
alone,  
I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn.'

Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would bleat,  
Nor any cloud would cross the vault,  
But day increased from heat to heat,  
On stony drought and steaming salt ;  
Till now at noon she slept again,  
And seem'd knee-deep in mountain  
grass,  
And heard her native breezes pass,

And runlets babbling down the glen.  
She breathed in sleep a lower moan,  
And murmuring, as at night and  
morn,  
She thought, 'My spirit is here alone,  
Walks forgotten, and is forlorn.'

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

And, rising, from her bosom drew  
Old letters, breathing of her worth,  
For 'Love,' they said, 'must needs be  
true,  
To what is loveliest upon earth.'  
An image seem'd to pass the door,  
To look at her with slight, and say  
'But now thy beauty flows away,  
So be alone for evermore.'

'O cruel heart,' she changed her tone,  
'And cruel love, whose end is scorn,  
Is this the end to be left alone,  
To live forgotten, and die forlorn?'

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

At eve a dry cicala sung,  
There came a sound as of the sea ;



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

*marvellous.*  
 THE TWO VOICES.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The sullen answer slid betwixt:

'Not that the grounds of hope were  
fix'd,

The elements were kindlier mix'd.'

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

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

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

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



marvellous.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

'A hidden hope,' the voice replied :

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

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

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

Yet fill my glass : give me one kiss :  
My own sweet Alice, we must die.  
There's somewhat in this world amiss  
Shall be unriddled by and by.

*Shelleyan.*



There's somewhat flows to us in life,  
 But more is taken quite away.  
 Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,  
 That we may die the self-same day.

Have I not found a happy earth?  
 I least should breathe a thought of  
 pain.

Would God renew me from my birth  
 I'd almost live my life again.  
 So sweet it seems with thee to walk,  
 And once again to woo thee mine—  
 It seems in after-dinner talk  
 Across the walnuts and the wine—

To be the long and listless boy  
 Late-left an orphan of the squire,  
 Where this old mansion mounted high  
 Looks down upon the village spire:  
 For even here, where I and you  
 Have lived and loved alone so long,  
 Each morn my sleep was broken thro'  
 By some wild skylark's matin song.

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

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

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

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

Then leapt a trout. In lazy mood  
 I watch'd the little circles die;  
 They past into the level flood,  
 And there a vision caught my eye;  
 The reflex of a beauteous form,  
 A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,  
 As when a sunbeam wavers warm  
 Within the dark and dimpled beck.

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

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

I loved the brimming wave that swam  
 Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,  
 The sleepy pool above the dam,  
 The pool beneath it never still,  
 The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,  
 The dark round of the dripping  
 wheel,

The very air about the door  
 Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the wold,  
 When April nights began to blow,  
 And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,  
 I saw the village lights below;



I knew your taper far away,  
And full at heart of trembling hope,  
From off the wold I came, and lay  
Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

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

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

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

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

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

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

And down I went to fetch my bride:  
But, Alice, you were ill at ease;  
This dress and that by turns you tried,  
Too fearful that you should not please.  
I loved you better for your fears,  
I knew you could not look but well;  
And dews, that would have fall'n in tears,  
I kiss'd away before they fell.

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

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

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

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

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

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

And now those vivid hours are gone,  
Like mine own life to me thou art,  
Where Past and Present, wound in one,  
Do make a garland for the heart:



So sing that other song I made,  
Half-anger'd with my happy lot,  
The day, when in the chestnut shade  
I found the blue Forget-me-not.

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

Even so.

Love is hurt with jar and fret.  
Love is made a vague regret.  
Eyes with idle tears are wet.  
Idle habit links us yet.  
What is love? for we forget:

Ah, no! no!

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True  
wife,

Round my true heart thine arms entwined  
My other dearer life in life,

Look thro' my very soul with thine!  
Untouch'd with any shade of years,

May those kind eyes for ever dwell!  
They have not shed a many tears,  
Dear eyes, since first I knew them  
well.

Yet tears they shed: they had their part  
Of sorrow: for when time was ripe,  
The still affection of the heart

Became an outward breathing type,  
That into stillness past again,  
And left a want unknown before;  
Although the loss had brought us pain,  
That loss but made us love the more,

With farther lookings on. The kiss,  
The woven arms, seem but to be  
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,  
The comfort, I have found in thee:  
But that God bless thee, dear—who  
wrought

Two spirits to one equal mind—  
With blessings beyond hope or thought,  
With blessings which no words can find.

Arise, and let us wander forth,  
To yon old mill across the wolds;  
For look, the sunset, south and north,  
Winds all the vale in rosy folds,

And fires your narrow casement glass,  
Touching the sullen pool below:  
On the chalk-hill the bearded grass  
Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

*ind.* FATIMA.

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

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

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

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

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

My whole soul waiting silently,  
All naked in a sultry sky,



Droops blinded with his shining eye :  
 I *will* possess him or will die.  
 I will grow round him in his place,  
 Grow, live, die looking on his face,  
 Die, dying clasp'd in his embrace.

## CENONE.

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier  
 Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.  
 The swimming vapour slopes athwart the  
     glen,  
 Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine  
     to pine,  
 And loiters, slowly drawn. On either  
     hand  
 The lawns and meadow-ledges midway  
     down  
 Hang rich in flowers, and far below them  
     roars  
 The long brook falling thro' the clov'n  
     ravine  
 In cataract after cataract to the sea.  
 Behind the valley topmost Gargarus  
 Stands up and takes the morning : but in  
     front  
 The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal  
 Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,  
 The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon  
 Mournful CEnone, wandering forlorn  
 Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.  
 Her cheek had lost the rose, and round  
     her neck  
 Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.  
 She, leaning on a fragment twined with  
     vine,  
 Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-  
     shade  
 Sloped downward to her seat from the  
     upper cliff.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 For now the noonday quiet holds the hill :  
 The grasshopper is silent in the grass :  
 The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,  
 Rests like a shadow, and the winds are  
     dead.  
 The purple flower droops: the golden bee

Is lily-cradled : I alone awake.  
 My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,  
 My heart is breaking, and my eyes are  
     dim,  
 And I am all aweary of my life.

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

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

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Far-off the torrent call'd me from the cleft :  
 Far up the solitary morning smote  
 The streaks of virgin snow. With down-  
     dropt eyes  
 I sat alone : white-breasted like a star  
 Fronting the dawn he moved ; a leopard  
     skin  
 Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny  
     hair  
 Cluster'd about his temples like a God's :  
 And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow  
     brightens  
 When the wind blows the foam, and all  
     my heart  
 Went forth to embrace him coming ere  
     he came.

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 He smiled, and opening out his milk-  
     white palm



Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,  
That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd  
And listen'd, the full-flowing river of  
speech  
Came down upon my heart.

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

‘For the most fair,’ would seem to award  
it thine,

As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt  
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace  
Of movement, and the charm of married  
brows.”

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

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

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

Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,  
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard  
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of  
Gods.”

‘Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
It was the deep midnight: one silvery  
cloud  
Had lost his way between the piney sides  
Of this long glen. Then to the bower  
they came,  
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded  
bower,  
And at their feet the crocus brake like  
fire,

Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,  
Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,  
And overhead the wandering ivy and  
vine,

This way and that, in many a wild festoon  
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs  
With bunch and berry and flower thro'  
and thro'.

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

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

Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that  
grows

Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods  
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made  
Proffer of royal power, ample rule  
Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue  
Wherewith to embellish state, “from  
many a vale

And river-sunder'd champaign clothed  
with corn,

Or labour'd mine undrainable of ore.  
Honour,” she said, “and homage, tax  
and toll,

From many an inland town and haven  
large,  
Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing  
citadel

In glassy bays among her tallest towers.”

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

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

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

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

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

Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd  
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats  
Above the thunder, with undying bliss  
In knowledge of their own supremacy.”







Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my  
arms  
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips  
prest  
Close, close to thine in that quick-falling  
dew  
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains  
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
They came, they cut away my tallest  
pines,  
My tall dark pines, that plumed the  
craggy ledge  
High over the blue gorge, and all between  
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract  
Foster’d the callow eaglet—from beneath  
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the  
dark morn  
The panther’s roar came muffled, while  
I sat  
Low in the valley. Never, never more  
Shall lone Ænone see the morning mist  
Sweep thro’ them; never see them over-  
laid  
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,  
Between the loud stream and the trem-  
bling stars.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I wish that somewhere in the ruin’d folds,  
Among the fragments tumbled from the  
glens,  
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with  
her  
The Abominable, that uninvited came  
Into the fair Peleïan banquet-hall,  
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,  
And bred this change; that I might speak  
my mind, X  
XAnd tell her to her face how much I hate  
Her presence, hated both of Gods and  
men.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand  
times,  
In this green valley, under this green hill,  
Ev’n on this hand, and sitting on this  
stone?

Seal’d it with kisses? water’d it with  
tears?

O happy tears, and how unlike to these!  
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my  
face?

O happy earth, how canst thou bear my  
weight?

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

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

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

Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear  
Dead sounds at night come from the in-  
most hills,

Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see  
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother  
Conjectures of the features of her child  
Ere it is born: her child!—a shudder comes  
Across me: never child be born of me,  
Unblest, to vex me with his father’s eyes!

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,  
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to  
me

Walking the cold and starless road of  
Death

Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love  
With the Greek woman. I will rise and  
go

Down into Troy, and ere the stars come  
forth

Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says  
A fire dances before her, and a sound  
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.

What this may be I know not, but I  
know

That, wheresoe’er I am by night and  
day,

All earth and air seem only burning  
fire.’



## THE SISTERS.

WE were two daughters of one race :

She was the fairest in the face :

The wind is blowing in turret and tree.

They were together, and she fell ;

Therefore revenge became me well.

O the Earl was fair to see !

She died : she went to burning flame :

She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.

The wind is howling in turret and tree.

Whole weeks and months, and early and late,

To win his love I lay in wait :

O the Earl was fair to see !

I made a feast ; I bad him come ;

I won his love, I brought him home.

The wind is roaring in turret and tree.

And after supper, on a bed,

Upon my lap he laid his head :

O the Earl was fair to see !

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest :

His ruddy cheek upon my breast.

The wind is raging in turret and tree.

I hated him with the hate of hell,

But I loved his beauty passing well.

O the Earl was fair to see !

I rose up in the silent night :

I made my dagger sharp and bright.

The wind is raving in turret and tree.

As half-asleep his breath he drew,

Three times I stabb'd him thro' and thro'.

O the Earl was fair to see !

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,

He look'd so grand when he was dead.

The wind is blowing in turret and tree.

I wrapt his body in the sheet,

And laid him at his mother's feet.

O the Earl was fair to see !

TO —.

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I SEND you here a sort of allegory,  
(For you will understand it) of a soul,

A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,  
A spacious garden full of flowering weeds,  
A glorious Devil, large in heart and brain,  
That did love Beauty only, (Beauty seen  
In all varieties of mould and mind)

And Knowledge for its beauty ; or if  
Good,

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

That doat upon each other, friends to  
man,

Living together under the same roof,  
And never can be sunder'd without tears.  
And he that shuts Love out, in turn shall  
be

Shut out from Love, and on her threshold  
lie

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

Moulded by God, and temper'd with the  
tears

Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

## THE PALACE OF ART.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-house,  
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.

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

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnish'd  
brass

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

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or  
shelf

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

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

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

Sleeps on his luminous ring.'



To which my soul made answer readily :  
 ' Trust me, in bliss I shall abide  
 In this great mansion, that is built for me,  
 So royal-rich and wide.'

\* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \*

Four courts I made, East, West and  
 South and North,  
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom  
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth  
 A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there  
 ran a row

Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty woods,  
 Echoing all night to that sonorous flow  
 Of spouted fountain-floods.

And round the roofs a gilded gallery  
 That lent broad verge to distant lands,  
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where the  
 sky  
 Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one  
 swell

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

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

So that she thought, ' And who shall  
 gaze upon  
 My palace with unblinded eyes,  
 While this great bow will waver in the sun,  
 And that sweet incense rise ?'

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

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

\* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \*

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

Full of great rooms and small the palace  
 stood,

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

For some were hung with arras green  
 and blue,  
 Showing a gaudy summer-morn,  
 Where with puff'd cheek the belted hunter  
 blew  
 His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of  
 sand,  
 And some one pacing there alone,  
 Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,  
 Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry  
 waves.  
 X You seem'd to hear them climb and fall  
 And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing  
 caves,  
 Beneath the windy wall.

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

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.  
 In front they bound the sheaves. Behind  
 Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,  
 And hoary to the wind.

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



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

On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,

A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,  
As fit for every mood of mind,

Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was there

Not less than truth design'd.

\* \* \* \*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

\* \* \* \*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

\* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \*

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

And so she throve and prosper'd : so  
three years  
She prosper'd : on the fourth she fell,  
Like Herod, when the shout was in his  
ears,  
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

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







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

## LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

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

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

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

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

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
When thus he met his mother’s view,  
She had the passions of her kind,  
She spake some certain truths of you.  
Indeed I heard one bitter word  
That scarce is fit for you to hear ;  
Her manners had not that repose  
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

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

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,  
From yon blue heavens above us bent  
The gardener Adam and his wife  
Smile at the claims of long descent.  
Howe’er it be, it seems to me,  
’Tis only noble to be good.  
Kind hearts are more than coronets,  
And simple faith than Norman blood.

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

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



## THE MAY QUEEN.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

## NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now ;  
You'll kiss me, my own mother, and forgive me ere I go ;







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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



v. five

## THE LOTOS-EATERS.

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

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

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

All round the coast the languid air did  
swoon,

Breathing like one that hath a weary  
dream.

Full-faced above the valley stood the  
moon;

And like a downward smoke, the slender  
stream

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

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

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did  
go;

And some thro' wavering lights and  
shadows broke,

Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.

They saw the gleaming river seaward  
flow

From the inner land: far off, three  
mountain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,

Stood sunset-flush'd: and, dew'd with  
showery drops,

Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the  
woven copse.

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

Was seen far inland, and the yellow down  
Border'd with palm, and many a winding  
vale

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

And round about the keel with faces  
pale,

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

Branches they bore of that enchanted  
stem,

Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they  
gave

To each, but whoso did receive of them,

And taste, to him the gushing of the wave

Far far away did seem to mourn and rave

On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,

His voice was thin, as voices from the  
grave;

And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,

And music in his ears his beating heart  
did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow  
sand,

Between the sun and moon upon the  
shore;

And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,  
Of child, and wife, and slave; but ever-  
more

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

Weary the wandering fields of barren  
foam.

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

And all at once they sang, 'Our island  
home

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

## CHORIC SONG.

I.

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

Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;

Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,

Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;

Music that brings sweet sleep down from  
the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,

And thro' the moss the ivies creep,

And in the stream the long-leaved flowers  
weep,

And from the craggy ledge the poppy  
hangs in sleep.



## II.

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

All things have rest: why should we toil  
alone,

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

Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,  
'There is no joy but calm!'  
Why should we only toil, the roof and  
crown of things?

## III.

Lo! in the middle of the wood,  
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud  
With winds upon the branch, and there  
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,  
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon  
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow  
Falls, and floats adown the air.

Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,  
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,  
Drops in a silent autumn night.

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

Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

## IV.

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

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

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

Let us alone. What pleasure can we  
have

To war with evil? Is there any peace

In ever climbing up the climbing wave?  
All things have rest, and ripen toward  
the grave

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

## V.

How sweet it were, hearing the down-  
ward stream,

With half-shut eyes ever to seem  
Falling asleep in a half-dream!

To dream and dream, like yonder amber  
light,

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

To hear each other's whisper'd speech;  
Eating the Lotos day by day,

To watch the crisping ripples on the  
beach,

And tender curving lines of creamy spray;  
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly  
To the influence of mild-minded melan-  
choly;

To muse and brood and live again in  
memory,

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

## VI.

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

For surely now our household hearths are  
cold:

Our sons inherit us: our looks are  
strange:

And we should come like ghosts to trouble  
joy.

Or else the island princes over-bold  
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel  
sings

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

Is there confusion in the little isle?

Let what is broken so remain.



The Gods are hard to reconcile :  
 'Tis hard to settle order once again.  
 There is confusion worse than death,  
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,  
 Long labour unto aged breath,  
 Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars  
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on the  
 pilot-stars.

## VII.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,  
 How sweet (while warm airs lull us,  
     blowing lowly)  
 With half-dropt eyelid still,  
 Beneath a heaven dark and holy,  
 To watch the long bright river drawing  
     slowly  
 His waters from the purple hill—  
 To hear the dewy echoes calling  
 From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined  
     vine—  
 To watch the emerald-colour'd water  
     falling  
 Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath  
     divine !  
 Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling  
     brine,  
 Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out  
     beneath the pine.

## VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak :  
 The Lotos blows by every winding creek :  
 All day the wind breathes low with  
     mellower tone :  
 Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone  
 Round and round the spicy downs the  
     yellow Lotos-dust is blown.  
 We have had enough of action, and of  
     motion we,  
 Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,  
     when the surge was seething free,  
 Where the wallowing monster spouted  
     his foam-fountains in the sea.  
 Let us swear an oath, and keep it with  
     an equal mind,  
 In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie  
     reclined  
 On the hills like Gods together, careless  
     of mankind.

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

## A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their shade,  
     '*The Legend of Good Women*,' long ago  
 Sung by the morning star of song, who  
     made  
     His music heard below ;  
 Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose  
     sweet breath  
 Preluded those melodious bursts that fill  
 The spacious times of great Elizabeth  
     With sounds that echo still.



And, for a while, the knowledge of his  
art

Held me above the subject, as strong  
gales

Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho'  
my heart,

Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In  
every land

I saw, wherever light illumineth,  
Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand  
The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient  
song

Peopled the hollow dark, like burning  
stars,

And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and  
wrong,

And trumpets blown for wars ;

And clattering flints batter'd with clanging  
hoofs ;

And I saw crowds in column'd sanctu-  
aries ;

And forms that pass'd at windows and on  
roofs

Of marble palaces ;

Corpses across the threshold ; heroes tall  
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet

Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall ;  
Lances in ambush set ;

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with  
heated blasts

That run before the fluttering tongues  
of fire ;

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

And ever climbing higher ;

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen  
plates,

Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers  
woes,

Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron  
grates,

And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when  
to land

Bluster the winds and tides the self-same  
way,

Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level  
sand,

Torn from the fringe of spray.

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

As when a great thought strikes along  
the brain,

And flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down  
A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,

That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town ;  
And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing  
thought

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

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

Into the gulfs of sleep.

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

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

Enormous elm-tree-boles did stoop and  
lean

Upon the dusky brushwood underneath  
Their broad curved branches, fledged with  
clearest green,

New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her journey  
done,

And with dead lips smiled at the twi-  
light plain,

Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,  
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,  
Not any song of bird or sound of rill ;

Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre  
Is not so deadly still



As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine  
 turn'd  
 Their humid arms festooning tree to  
 tree,  
 And at the root thro' lush green grasses  
 burn'd  
 The red anemone.

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

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,  
 Pour'd back into my empty soul and  
 frame  
 The times when I remember to have been  
 Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear under-tone  
 Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unbliss-  
 ful clime,  
 'Pass freely thro': the wood is all thine  
 own,  
 Until the end of time.'

At length I saw a lady within call,  
 Stiller than chisell'd marble, standing  
 there;  
 A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,  
 And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with sur-  
 prise  
 Froze my swift speech: she turning on  
 my face  
 The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,  
 Spoke slowly in her place.

'I had great beauty: ask thou not my  
 name:  
 No one can be more wise than destiny.  
 Many drew swords and died. Where'er  
 I came  
 I brought calamity.'

'No marvel, sovereign lady: in fair field  
 Myself for such a face had boldly died,'  
 I answer'd free; and turning I appeal'd  
 To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks averse,  
 To her full height her stately stature  
 draws;  
 'My youth,' she said, 'was blasted with  
 a curse:  
 This woman was the cause.

'I was cut off from hope in that sad place,  
 Which men call'd Aulis in those iron  
 years:  
 My father held his hand upon his face;  
 I, blinded with my tears,

'Still strove to speak: my voice was  
 thick with sighs  
 As in a dream. Dimly I could descry  
 The stern black-bearded kings with wolf-  
 ish eyes,  
 Waiting to see me die.

'The high masts flicker'd as they lay afloat;  
 The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and  
 the shore;  
 The bright death quiver'd at the victim's  
 throat;  
 Touch'd; and I knew no more.'

Whereto the other with a downward brow:  
 'I would the white cold heavy-plung-  
 ing foam,  
 Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me deep  
 below,  
 Then when I left my home.'

Her slow full words sank thro' the silence  
 drear,  
 As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea:  
 Sudden I heard a voice that cried, 'Come  
 here,  
 That I may look on thee.'

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,  
 One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd;  
 A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold  
 black eyes,  
 Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, began:  
 'I govern'd men by change, and so I  
 sway'd  
 All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen  
 a man.  
 Once, like the moon, I made



'The ever-shifting currents of the blood  
According to my humour ebb and flow.  
I have no men to govern in this wood :  
That makes my only woe.

'Nay—yet it chafes me that I could not  
bend  
One will ; nor tame and tutor with  
mine eye  
That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Prythee,  
friend,  
Where is Mark Antony ?

'The man, my lover, with whom I rode  
sublime  
On Fortune's neck : we sat as God by  
God :  
The Nilus would have risen before his time  
And flooded at our nod.

'We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep,  
and lit  
Lamps which out-burn'd Canopus. O  
my life  
In Egypt ! O the dalliance and the wit,  
The flattery and the strife,

'And the wild kiss, when fresh from war's  
alarms,  
My Hercules, my Roman Antony,  
My mailed Bacchus leapt into my arms,  
Contented there to die !

'And there he died : and when I heard  
my name  
Sigh'd forth with life I would not brook  
my fear  
Of the other : with a worm I balk'd his  
fame.  
What else was left ? look here !'

(With that she tore her robe apart, and half  
The polish'd argent of her breast to  
sight  
Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a  
laugh,  
Showing the aspick's bite.)

'I died a Queen. The Roman soldier  
found  
Me lying dead, my crown about my  
brows,

A name for ever !—lying robed and  
crown'd,  
Worthy a Roman spouse.'

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range  
Struck by all passion, did fall down  
and glance  
From tone to tone, and glided thro' all  
change  
Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for  
delight ;  
Because with sudden motion from the  
ground  
She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd with  
light  
The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest  
darts ;  
As once they drew into two burning rings  
All beams of Love, melting the mighty  
hearts  
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard  
A noise of some one coming thro' the  
lawn,  
And singing clearer than the crested bird  
That claps his wings at dawn.

'The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel  
From craggy hollows pouring, late and  
soon,  
Sound all night long, in falling thro' the  
dell,  
Far-heard beneath the moon.

'The balmy moon of blessed Israel  
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with  
beams divine :  
All night the splinter'd crags that wall  
the dell  
With spires of silver shine.'

As one that museth where broad sunshine  
laves  
The lawn by some cathedral, thro' the  
door  
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves  
Of sound on roof and floor



Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd and  
tied

To where he stands,—so stood I, when  
that flow  
Of music left the lips of her that died  
To save her father's vow ;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,  
A maiden pure ; as when she went  
along  
From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with welcome  
light,  
With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth : ' Heaven heads  
the count of crimes  
With that wild oath.' She render'd  
answer high :  
' Not so, nor once alone ; a thousand times  
I would be born and die.

' Single I grew, like some green plant,  
whose root  
Creeps to the garden water-pipes be-  
neath,  
Feeding the flower ; but ere my flower  
to fruit  
Changed, I was ripe for death.

' My God, my land, my father—these did  
move  
Me from my bliss of life, that Nature  
gave,  
Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of  
love  
Down to a silent grave.

' And I went mourning, " No fair Hebrew  
boy  
Shall smile away my maiden blame  
among  
The Hebrew mothers"—emptied of all  
joy,  
Leaving the dance and song,

' Leaving the olive-gardens far below,  
Leaving the promise of my bridal  
bower,  
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that  
glow  
Beneath the battled tower.

' The light white cloud swam over us.  
Anon

We heard the lion roaring from his den ;  
We saw the large white stars rise one by  
one,  
Or, from the darken'd glen,

' Saw God divide the night with flying  
flame,  
And thunder on the everlasting hills.  
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief  
became  
A solemn scorn of ills.

' When the next moon was roll'd into  
the sky,  
Strength came to me that equall'd my  
desire.  
How beautiful a thing it was to die  
For God and for my sire !

' It comforts me in this one thought to  
dwell,  
That I subdued me to my father's will ;  
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,  
Sweetens the spirit still.

' Moreover it is written that my race  
Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from  
Aroer  
On Arnon unto Minneth.' Here her face  
Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

She lock'd her lips : she left me where I  
stood :  
' Glory to God,' she sang, and past  
afar,  
Thridding the sombre boskage of the wood,  
Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,  
As one that from a casement leans his  
head,  
When midnight bells cease ringing sud-  
denly,  
And the old year is dead.

' Alas ! alas !' a low voice, full of care,  
Murmur'd beside me : ' Turn and look  
on me :  
I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair,  
If what I was I be.



'Would I had been some maiden coarse  
and poor !

O me, that I should ever see the light !  
Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor  
Do hunt me, day and night.'

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and  
trust :

To whom the Egyptian : 'O, you  
tamely died !  
You should have clung to Fulvia's waist,  
and thrust  
The dagger thro' her side.'

With that sharp sound the white dawn's  
creeping beams,

Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the mystery  
Of folded sleep. The captain of my  
dreams  
Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the  
dark,

Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her last  
trance  
Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of  
Arc,  
A light of ancient France ;

Or her who knew that Love can vanquish  
Death,

Who kneeling, with one arm about  
her king,  
Drew forth the poison with her balmy  
breath,  
Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labours longer from the deep  
Gold-mines of thought to lift the  
hidden ore

That glimpses, moving up, than I from  
sleep  
To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With what  
dull pain

Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to  
strike  
Into that wondrous track of dreams  
again !

But no two dreams are like.

As when a soul laments, which hath been  
blest,

Desiring what is mingled with past  
years,  
In yearnings that can never be exprest  
By signs or groans or tears ;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with choicest  
art,

Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,  
Wither beneath the palate, and the heart  
Faints, faded by its heat.

### THE BLACKBIRD.

O BLACKBIRD ! sing me something well :  
While all the neighbours shoot thee  
round,

I keep smooth plats of fruitful ground,  
Where thou may'st warble, eat and dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all  
Are thine ; the range of lawn and  
park :

The unnetted black-hearts ripen dark,  
All thine, against the garden wall.

Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,  
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,  
With that gold dagger of thy bill  
To fret the summer jenneting.

A golden bill ! the silver tongue,  
Cold February loved, is dry :  
Plenty corrupts the melody  
That made thee famous once, when  
young :

And in the sultry garden-squares,  
Now thy flute-notes are changed to  
coarse,

I hear thee not at all, or hoarse  
As when a hawker hawks his wares.

Take warning ! he that will not sing  
While yon sun prospers in the blue,  
Shall sing for want, ere leaves are  
new,  
Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.



## THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,  
And the winter winds are wearily sigh-  
ing :

Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,  
And tread softly and speak low,  
For the old year lies a-dying.

Old year, you must not die ;  
You came to us so readily,  
You lived with us so steadily,  
Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still : he doth not move :  
He will not see the dawn of day.  
He hath no other life above.  
He gave me a friend, and a true true-love,  
And the New-year will take 'em away.

Old year, you must not go ;  
So long as you have been with us,  
Such joy as you have seen with us,  
Old year, you shall not go.

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim ;  
A jollier year we shall not see.  
But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,  
And tho' his foes speak ill of him,  
He was a friend to me.

Old year, you shall not die ;  
We did so laugh and cry with you,  
I've half a mind to die with you,  
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,  
But all his merry quips are o'er.  
To see him die, across the waste  
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,  
But he'll be dead before.

Every one for his own.  
The night is starry and cold, my  
friend,  
And the New-year blithe and bold,  
my friend,  
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes ! over the snow  
I heard just now the crowing cock.  
The shadows flicker to and fro :  
The cricket chirps : the light burns low :  
'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.

Shake hands, before you die.  
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you :  
What is it we can do for you ?  
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.  
Alack ! our friend is gone.  
Close up his eyes : tie up his chin :  
Step from the corpse, and let him in  
That standeth there alone,  
And waiteth at the door.  
There's a new foot on the floor, my  
friend,  
And a new face at the door, my  
friend,  
A new face at the door.

## TO J. S.

THE wind, that beats the mountain, blows  
More softly round the open wold,  
And gently comes the world to those  
That are cast in gentle mould.

And me this knowledge bolder made,  
Or else I had not dared to flow  
In these words toward you, and invade  
Even with a verse your holy woe.

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,  
Those in whose laps our limbs are  
nursed,  
Fall into shadow, soonest lost :  
Those we love first are taken first.

God gives us love. Something to love  
He lends us ; but, when love is grown  
To ripeness, that on which it throve  
Falls off, and love is left alone.

This is the curse of time. Alas !  
In grief I am not all unlearn'd ;  
Once thro' mine own doors Death did  
pass ;  
One went, who never hath return'd.

He will not smile—not speak to me  
Once more. Two years his chair is  
seen  
Empty before us. That was he  
Without whose life I had not been.



Your loss is rarer ; for this star  
 Rose with you thro' a little arc  
 Of heaven, nor having wander'd far  
 Shot on the sudden into dark.

I knew your brother : his mute dust  
 I honour and his living worth :  
 A man more pure and bold and just  
 Was never born into the earth.

I have not look'd upon you nigh,  
 Since that dear soul hath fall'n asleep.  
 Great Nature is more wise than I :  
 I will not tell you not to weep.

And tho' mine own eyes fill with dew,  
 Drawn from the spirit thro' the brain,  
 I will not even preach to you,  
 'Weep, weeping dulls the inward  
 pain.'

Let Grief be her own mistress still.  
 She loveth her own anguish deep  
 More than much pleasure. Let her will  
 Be done—to weep or not to weep.

I will not say, 'God's ordinance  
 Of Death is blown in every wind ;'  
 For that is not a common chance  
 That takes away a noble mind.

His memory long will live alone  
 In all our hearts, as mournful light  
 That broods above the fallen sun,  
 And dwells in heaven half the night.

Vain solace ! Memory standing near  
 Cast down her eyes, and in her  
 throat

Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear  
 Dropt on the letters as I wrote.

I wrote I know not what. In truth,  
 How *should* I soothe you anyway,  
 Who miss the brother of your youth ?  
 Yet something I did wish to say :

For he too was a friend to me :  
 Both are my friends, and my true  
 breast  
 Bleedeth for both ; yet it may be  
 That only silence suiteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would  
 make  
 Grief more. 'Twere better I should  
 cease

Although myself could almost take  
 The place of him that sleeps in  
 peace.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace :  
 Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,  
 While the stars burn, the moons increase,  
 And the great ages onward roll.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.  
 Nothing comes to thee new or strange.  
 Sleep full of rest from head to feet ;  
Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

## ON A MOURNER.

## I.

NATURE, so far as in her lies,  
 Imitates God, and turns her face  
 To every land beneath the skies,  
 Counts nothing that she meets with  
 base,  
 But lives and loves in every place ;

## II.

Fills out the homely quickset-screens,  
 And makes the purple lilac ripe,  
 Steps from her airy hill, and greens  
 The swamp, where humm'd the drop-  
 ping snipe,  
 With moss and braided marish-pipe ;

## III.

And on thy heart a finger lays,  
 Saying, 'Beat quicker, for the time  
 Is pleasant, and the woods and ways  
 Are pleasant, and the beech and lime  
 Put forth and feel a gladder clime.'

## IV.

And murmurs of a deeper voice,  
 Going before to some far shrine,  
 Teach that sick heart the stronger choice,  
 Till all thy life one way incline  
 With one wide Will that closes thine.



## V.

And when the zoning eve has died  
 Where yon dark valleys wind forlorn,  
 Come Hope and Memory, spouse and  
 bride,  
 From out the borders of the morn,  
 With that fair child betwixt them born.

## VI.

And when no mortal motion jars  
 The blackness round the tombing sod,  
 Thro' silence and the trembling stars  
 Comes Faith from tracts no feet have  
 trod,  
 And Virtue, like a household god

## VII.

Promising empire ; such as those  
 Once heard at dead of night to greet  
 Troy's wandering prince, so that he rose  
 With sacrifice, while all the fleet  
 Had rest by stony hills of Crete.

ind.

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,  
 Within this region I subsist,  
 Whose spirits falter in the mist,  
 And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till,  
 That sober-suited Freedom chose,  
 The land, where girt with friends or  
 foes

A man may speak the thing he will ;

A land of settled government,  
 A land of just and old renown,  
 Where Freedom slowly broadens  
 down

From precedent to precedent :

Where faction seldom gathers head,  
 But by degrees to fullness wrought,  
 The strength of some diffusive thought  
 Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute  
 Opinion, and induce a time  
 When single thought is civil crime,  
 And individual freedom mute ;

Tho' Power should make from land to  
 land

The name of Britain trebly great—  
 Tho' every channel of the State  
 Should fill and choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth,  
 Wild wind ! I seek a warmer sky,  
 And I will see before I die  
 The palms and temples of the South.

*fair.*

OF old sat Freedom on the heights,  
 The thunders breaking at her feet :  
 Above her shook the starry lights :  
 She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,  
 Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,  
 But fragments of her mighty voice  
 Came rolling on the wind.

Then stept she down thro' town and field  
 To mingle with the human race,  
 And part by part to men reveal'd  
 The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,  
 From her isle-altar gazing down,  
 Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,  
 And, King-like, wears the crown :

Her open eyes desire the truth.  
 The wisdom of a thousand years  
 Is in them. May perpetual youth  
 Keep dry their light from tears ;

That her fair form may stand and shine,  
 Make bright our days and light our  
 dreams,

Turning to scorn with lips divine  
The falsehood of extremes !

LOVE thou thy land, with love far-brought  
 From out the storied Past, and used  
 Within the Present, but transfused  
 Thro' future time by power of thought.



True love turn'd round on fixed poles,  
Love, that endures not sordid ends,  
For English natures, freemen, friends,  
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,  
Nor feed with crude imaginings  
The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings  
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might  
To weakness, neither hide the ray  
From those, not blind, who wait for  
day,  
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds ;  
But let her herald, Reverence, fly  
Before her to whatever sky  
Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the years :  
Cut Prejudice against the grain :  
But gentle words' are always gain :  
Regard the weakness of thy peers :

Nor toil for title, place, or touch  
Of pension, neither count on praise :  
It grows to guerdon after-days :  
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch :

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;  
Not master'd by some modern term ;  
Not swift nor slow to change, but firm :  
And in its season bring the law ;

That from Discussion's lip may fall  
With Life, that, working strongly,  
binds—  
Set in all lights by many minds,  
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,  
And moist and dry, devising long,  
Thro' many agents making strong,  
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control  
Our being, lest we rust in ease.  
We all are changed by still degrees,  
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free  
To ingroove itself with that which flies,  
And work, a joint of state, that plies  
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act ;  
For all the past of Time reveals  
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife  
A motion toiling in the gloom—  
The Spirit of the years to come  
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits  
Completion in a painful school ;  
Phantoms of other forms of rule,  
New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour,  
But vague in vapour, hard to mark ;  
And round them sea and air are dark  
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,  
Is bodied forth the second whole.  
Regard gradation, lest the soul  
Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,  
And heap their ashes on the head ;  
To shame the boast so often made,  
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star  
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,  
To follow flying steps of Truth  
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,  
Must ever shock, like armed foes,  
And this be true, till Time shall close,  
That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease  
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,  
But with his hand against the hilt,  
Would pace the troubled land, like  
Peace ;