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# POSTHUMOUS POEMS

OF

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

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In nobil sangue vita umile e queta,  
Ed in alto intelletto un puro core ;  
Frutto senile in sul giovenil fiore,  
E in aspetto pensoso anima lieta.

PETRARCA.

---

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## PREFACE.

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IT had been my wish, on presenting the public with the Posthumous Poems of Mr. SHELLEY, to have accompanied them by a biographical notice; as it appeared to me, that at this moment, a narration of the events of my husband's life would come more gracefully from other hands than mine, I applied to Mr. LEIGH HUNT. The distinguished friendship that Mr. SHELLEY felt for him, and the enthusiastic affection with which Mr. LEIGH HUNT clings to his friend's memory, seemed to point him out as the person best calculated for such an undertaking. His absence from this country, which prevented our mutual explanation, has unfortunately rendered my scheme abortive. I do not doubt but that on some other occasion he will pay this tribute to his lost friend, and sincerely regret that the volume which I edit has not been honoured by its insertion.

The comparative solitude in which Mr. SHELLEY lived, was the occasion that he was personally known to few; and his fearless enthusiasm in the cause,

which he considered the most sacred upon earth, the improvement of the moral and physical state of mankind, was the chief reason why he, like other illustrious reformers, was pursued by hatred and calumny. No man was ever more devoted than he, to the endeavour of making those around him happy; no man ever possessed friends more unfeignedly attached to him. The ungrateful world did not feel his loss, and the gap it made seemed to close as quickly over his memory as the murderous sea above his living frame. Hereafter men will lament that his transcendent powers of intellect were extinguished before they had bestowed on them their choicest treasures. To his friends his loss is irremediable: the wise, the brave, the gentle, is gone for ever! He is to them as a bright vision, whose radiant track, left behind in the memory, is worth all the realities that society can afford. Before the critics contradict me, let them appeal to any one who had ever known him: to see him was to love him; and his presence, like Ithuriel's spear, was alone sufficient to disclose the falsehood of the tale, which his enemies whispered in the ear of the ignorant world.

His life was spent in the contemplation of nature, in arduous study, or in acts of kindness and affection. He was an elegant scholar and a profound metaphysician: without possessing much scientific knowledge, he was unrivalled in the justness and extent of his observations on natural objects; he knew every plant

by its name, and was familiar with the history and habits of every production of the earth; he could interpret without a fault each appearance in the sky, and the varied phenomena of heaven and earth filled him with deep emotion. He made his study and reading-room of the shadowed copse, the stream, the lake and the waterfall. Ill health and continual pain preyed upon his powers, and the solitude in which we lived, particularly on our first arrival in Italy, although congenial to his feelings, must frequently have weighed upon his spirits; those beautiful and affecting "Lines, written in dejection at Naples," were composed at such an interval; but when in health, his spirits were buoyant and youthful to an extraordinary degree.

Such was his love for nature, that every page of his poetry is associated in the minds of his friends with the loveliest scenes of the countries which he inhabited. In early life he visited the most beautiful parts of this country and Ireland. Afterwards the Alps of Switzerland became his inspirers. "Prometheus Unbound" was written among the deserted and flower-grown ruins of Rome, and when he made his home under the Pisan hills, their roofless recesses harboured him as he composed "The Witch of Atlas," "Adonais" and "Hellas." In the wild but beautiful Bay of Spezia, the winds and waves which he loved became his playmates. His days were chiefly spent on the water; the management of his boat, its alterations and improvements, were his

principal occupation. At night, when the unclouded moon shone on the calm sea, he often went alone in his little shallop to the rocky caves that bordered it, and sitting beneath their shelter wrote "The Triumph of Life," the last of his productions. The beauty but strangeness of this lonely place, the refined pleasure which he felt in the companionship of a few selected friends, our entire sequestration from the rest of the world, all contributed to render this period of his life one of continued enjoyment. I am convinced that the two months we passed there were the happiest he had ever known: his health even rapidly improved, and he was never better than when I last saw him, full of spirits and joy, embark for Leghorn, that he might there welcome LEIGH HUNT to Italy. I was to have accompanied him, but illness confined me to my room, and thus put the seal on my misfortune. His vessel bore out of sight with a favourable wind, and I remained awaiting his return by the breakers of that sea which was about to engulf him.

He spent a week at Pisa, employed in kind offices towards his friend, and enjoying with keen delight the renewal of their intercourse. He then embarked with Mr. WILLIAMS, the chosen and beloved sharer of his pleasures and of his fate, to return to us. We waited for them in vain; the sea by its restless moaning seemed to desire to inform us of what we would not learn:—but a veil may well be drawn over such misery. The real anguish of these moments

transcended all the fictions that the most glowing imagination ever pourtrayed: our seclusion, the savage nature of the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, and our immediate vicinity to the troubled sea, combined to embue with strange horror our days of uncertainty. The truth was at last known,—a truth that made our loved and lovely Italy appear a tomb, its sky a pall. Every heart echoed the deep lament, and my only consolation was in the praise and earnest love that each voice bestowed and each countenance demonstrated for him we had lost,—not, I fondly hope, for ever: his unearthly and elevated nature is a pledge of the continuation of his being, although in an altered form. Rome received his ashes; they are deposited beneath its weed-grown wall, and “the world’s sole monument” is enriched by his remains.

I must add a few words concerning the contents of this volume. “Julian and Maddalo,” “The Witch of Atlas,” and most of the Translations, were written some years ago, and, with the exception of “The Cyclops,” and the Scenes from the “*Magico Prodigioso*,” may be considered as having received the author’s ultimate corrections. “The Triumph of Life” was his last work, and was left in so unfinished a state, that I arranged it in its present form with great difficulty. All his poems which were scattered in periodical works are collected in this volume, and I have added a reprint of “Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude:”—the difficulty with which a copy can be obtained, is the cause of its republica-

tion. Many of the Miscellaneous Poems, written on the spur of the occasion, and never retouched, I found among his manuscript books, and have carefully copied: I have subjoined, whenever I have been able, the date of their composition.

I do not know whether the critics will reprehend the insertion of some of the most imperfect among these; but I frankly own, that I have been more actuated by the fear lest any monument of his genius should escape me, than the wish of presenting nothing but what was complete to the fastidious reader. I feel secure that the Lovers of SHELLEY'S Poetry (who know how more than any other poet of the present day every line and word he wrote is instinct with peculiar beauty) will pardon and thank me: I consecrate this volume to them.

The size of this collection has prevented the insertion of any prose pieces. They will hereafter appear in a separate publication.

MARY W. SHELLEY.

*London, June 1st, 1824.*

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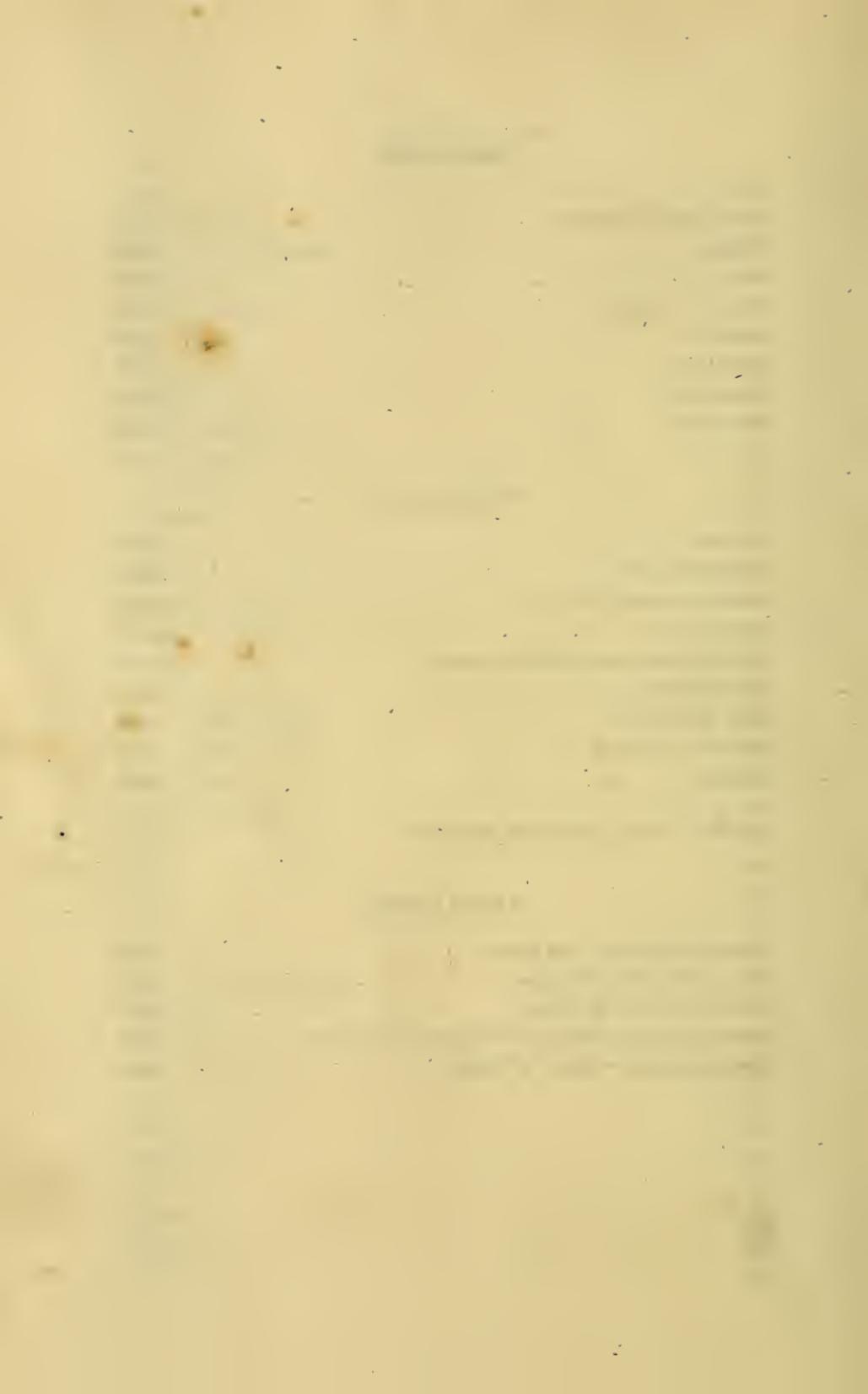
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**JULIAN AND MADDALO ;**

**A CONVERSATION.**

The meadows with fresh streams, the bees with thyme,  
The goats with the green leaves of budding spring,  
Are saturated not—nor Love with tears.

VIRGIL'S *Gallus*.

## JULIAN AND MADDALO.

COUNT MADDALO is a Venetian nobleman of ancient family and of great fortune, who, without mixing much in the society of his countrymen, resides chiefly at his magnificent palace in that city. He is a person of the most consummate genius; and capable, if he would direct his energies to such an end, of becoming the redeemer of his degraded country. But it is his weakness to be proud: he derives, from a comparison of his own extraordinary mind with the dwarfish intellects that surround him, an intense apprehension of the nothingness of human life. His passions and his powers are incomparably greater than those of other men, and instead of the latter having been employed in curbing the former, they have mutually lent each other strength. His ambition preys upon itself, for want of objects which it can consider worthy of exertion. I say that Maddalo is proud, because I can find no other word to express the centered and impatient feelings which consume him; but it is on his own hopes and affections only that he seems to tramp<sup>le</sup>, for in social life no human being can be more gentle, patient, and unassuming than Maddalo. He is cheerful, frank, and witty. His more serious conversation is a sort of intoxication; men are held by it as by a spell. He has travelled much; and there is an inexpressible charm in his relation of his adventures in different countries.

Julian is an Englishman of good family, passionately attached to those philosophical notions which assert the power of man over his own mind, and the immense im-

provements of which, by the extinction of certain moral superstitions, human society may be yet susceptible. Without concealing the evil in the world, he is for ever speculating how good may be made superior. He is a complete infidel, and a scoffer at all things reputed holy; and Maddalo takes a wicked pleasure in drawing out his taunts against religion. What Maddalo thinks on these matters is not exactly known. Julian, in spite of his heterodox opinions, is conjectured by his friends to possess some good qualities. How far this is possible, the pious reader will determine. Julian is rather serious.

Of the Maniãc I can give no information. He seems by his own account to have been disappointed in love. He was evidently a very cultivated and amiable person when in his right senses. His story, told at length, might be like many other stories of the same kind: the unconnected exclamations of his agony will perhaps be found a sufficient comment for the text of every heart.

## JULIAN AND MADDALO ;

### A CONVERSATION.

---

I RODE one evening with Count Maddalo  
Upon the bank of land which breaks the flow  
Of Adria towards Venice : a bare strand  
Of hillocks, heaped from ever-shifting sand,  
Matted with thistles and amphibious weeds,  
Such as from earth's embrace the salt ooze breeds,  
Is this ; an uninhabited sea-side,  
Which the lone fisher, when his nets are dried,  
Abandons ; and no other object breaks  
The waste, but one dwarf tree and some few stakes  
Broken and unrepaired, and the tide makes  
A narrow space of level sand thereon,  
Where 'twas our wont to ride while day went down.  
This ride was my delight. I love all waste  
And solitary places ; where we taste  
The pleasure of believing what we see  
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be ;  
And such was this wide ocean, and this shore  
More barren than its billows ; and yet more  
Than all, with a remembered friend I love

To ride as then I rode;—for the winds drove  
The living spray along the sunny air  
Into our faces; the blue heavens were bare,  
Stripped to their depths by the awakening north;  
And, from the waves, sound like delight broke forth  
Harmonising with solitude, and sent  
Into our hearts aërial merriment.  
So, as we rode, we talked; and the swift thought,  
Winging itself with laughter, lingered not,  
But flew from brain to brain,—such glee was ours,  
Charged with light memories of remembered hours,  
None slow enough for sadness: till we came  
Homeward, which always makes the spirit tame.  
This day had been cheerful but cold, and now  
The sun was sinking, and the wind also.  
Our talk grew somewhat serious, as may be  
Talk interrupted with such raillery  
As mocks itself, because it cannot scorn  
The thoughts it would extinguish:—’twas forlorn,  
Yet pleasing; such as once, so poets tell,  
The devils held within the dales of hell,  
Concerning God, freewill, and destiny.  
Of all that Earth has been, or yet may be;  
All that vain men imagine or believe,  
Or hope can paint, or suffering can achieve,  
We descanted; and I (for ever still  
Is it not wise to make the best of ill?)  
Argued against despondency; but pride  
Made my companion take the darker side.  
The sense that he was greater than his kind  
Had struck, methinks, his eagle spirit blind  
By gazing on its own exceeding light.

Meanwhile the sun paused ere it should alight  
Over the horizon of the mountains—Oh!  
How beautiful is sunset, when the glow  
Of heaven descends upon a land like thee,  
Thou paradise of exiles, Italy!  
Thy mountains, seas, and vineyards, and the towers  
Of cities they encircle!—It was ours  
To stand on thee, beholding it: and then,  
Just where we had dismounted, the Count's men  
Were waiting for us with the gondola.  
As those who pause on some delightful way,  
Tho' bent on pleasant pilgrimage, we stood,  
Looking upon the evening and the flood,  
Which lay between the city and the shore,  
Paved with the image of the sky: the hoar  
And aery Alps, towards the north, appeared,  
Thro' mist, an heaven-sustaining bulwark, reared  
Between the east and west; and half the sky  
Was roofed with clouds of rich emblazonry,  
Dark purple at the zenith, which still grew  
Down the steep west into a wondrous hue  
Brighter than burning gold, even to the rent  
Where the swift sun yet paused in his descent  
Among the many folded hills—they were  
Those famous Euganean hills, which bear,  
As seen from Lido thro' the harbour piles,  
The likeness of a clump of peaked isles—  
And then, as if the earth and sea had been  
Dissolved into one lake of fire, were seen  
Those mountains towering, as from waves of flame,  
Around the vaporous sun, from which there came  
The inmost purple spirit of light, and made

Their very peaks transparent. "Ere it fade,"  
Said my companion, "I will show you soon  
A better station." So, o'er the lagune  
We glided; and from that funereal bark  
I leaned, and saw the city, and could mark  
How from their many isles, in evening's gleam,  
Its temples and its palaces did seem  
Like fabrics of enchantment piled to heav'n.  
I was about to speak, when—"We are even  
Now at the point I meant," said Maddalo,  
And bade the gondolieri cease to row.  
"Look, Julian, on the west, and listen well  
If you hear not a deep and heavy bell."  
I looked, and saw between us and the sun  
A building on an island, such an one  
As age to age might add, for uses vile,—  
A windowless, deformed and dreary pile;  
And on the top an open tower, where hung  
A bell, which in the radiance swayed and swung,  
We could just hear its hoarse and iron tongue:  
The broad sun sank behind it, and it tolled  
In strong and black relief.—"What we behold  
Shall be the madhouse and its belfry tower;"—  
Said Maddalo, "and even at this hour,  
Those who may cross the water hear that bell,  
Which calls the maniacs, each one from his cell,  
To vespers."—"As much skill as need to pray,  
In thanks or hope for their dark lot have they,  
To their stern maker," I replied.—"O, ho!  
You talk as in years past," said Maddalo.  
"'Tis strange men change not. You were ever still  
Among Christ's flock a perilous infidel,

A wolf for the meek lambs : if you can't swim,  
Beware of providence." I looked on him,  
But the gay smile had faded from his eye.  
" And such," he cried, " is our mortality ;  
And this must be the emblem and the sign  
Of what should be eternal and divine ;  
And like that black and dreary bell the soul,  
Hung in an heav'n-illuminated tower, must toll  
Our thoughts and our desires to meet below  
Round the rent heart, and pray—as madmen do ;  
For what ? they know not, till the night of death,  
As sunset that strange vision, severeth  
Our memory from itself, and us from all  
We sought, and yet were baffled." I recall  
The sense of what he said, although I mar  
The force of his expressions. The broad star  
Of day meanwhile had sunk behind the hill ;  
And the black bell became invisible ;  
And the red tower looked grey ; and all between,  
The churches, ships, and palaces, were seen  
Huddled in gloom ; into the purple sea  
The orange hues of heaven sunk silently.  
We hardly spoke, and soon the gondola  
Conveyed me to my lodging by the way.

The following morn was rainy, cold, and dim :  
Ere Maddalo arose I called on him,  
And whilst I waited, with his child I played ;  
A lovelier toy sweet Nature never made ;  
A serious, subtle, wild, yet gentle being ;  
Graceful without design, and unforeseeing ;  
With eyes—Oh ! speak not of her eyes ! which seem

Twin mirrors of Italian Heaven, yet gleam  
 With such deep meaning as we never see  
 But in the human countenance. With me  
 She was a special favourite: I had nursed  
 Her fine and feeble limbs, when she came first  
 To this bleak world; and she yet seemed to know  
 On second sight, her ancient playfellow,  
 Less changed than she was by six months or so.  
 For, after her first shyness was worn out,  
 We sate there, rolling billiard balls about,  
 When the Count entered. Salutations past:  
 "The words you spoke last night might well have cast  
 A darkness on my spirit:—if man be  
 The passive thing you say, I should not see  
 Much harm in the religions and old saws,  
 (Though *I* may never own such leaden laws)  
 Which break a teachless nature to the yoke:  
 Mine is another faith."—Thus much I spoke,  
 And, noting he replied not, added—"See  
 This lovely child; blithe, innocent and free;  
 She spends a happy time, with little care;  
 While we to such sick thoughts subjected are,  
 As came on you last night. It is our will  
 Which thus enchains us to permitted ill.  
 We might be otherwise; we might be all  
 We dream of, happy, high, majestic.  
 Where is the love, beauty, and truth we seek,  
 But in our minds? And, if we were not weak,  
 Should we be less in deed than in desire?"—  
 —"Aye, if we were not weak,—and we aspire,  
 How vainly! to be strong," said Maddalo:  
 "You talk Utopia"—

“ It remains to know,”

I then rejoined, “ and those who try, may find  
How strong the chains are which our spirit bind :  
Brittle perchance as straw. We are assured  
Much may be conquered, much may be endured,  
Of what degrades and crushes us. We know  
That we have power over ourselves to do  
And suffer—*what*, we know not till we try ;  
But something nobler than to live and die :  
So taught the kings of old philosophy,  
Who reigned before religion made men blind ;  
And those who suffer with their suffering kind,  
Yet feel this faith, religion.”

“ My dear friend,”

Said Maddalo, “ my judgment will not bend  
To your opinion, though I think you might  
Make such a system refutation-tight,  
As far as words go. I knew one like you,  
Who to this city came some months ago,  
With whom I argued in this sort,—and he  
Is now gone mad—and so he answered me,  
Poor fellow !—But if you would like to go,  
We’ll visit him, and his wild talk will shew  
How vain are such aspiring theories.”—

“ I hope to prove the induction otherwise,  
And that a want of that true theory still,  
Which seeks a soul of goodness in things ill,  
Or in himself or others, has thus bow’d  
His being :—there are some by nature proud,  
Who, patient in all else, demand but this—

To love and be beloved with gentleness :—  
 And being scorned, what wonder if they die  
 Some living death ? This is not destiny,  
 But man's own wilful ill."—

As thus I spoke,  
 Servants announced the gondola, and we  
 Through the fast-falling rain and high-wrought sea  
 Sailed to the island where the madhouse stands.  
 We disembarked. The clap of tortured hands,  
 Fierce yells, and howlings, and lamentings keen,  
 And laughter where complaint had merrier been,  
 Accosted us. We climbed the oozy stairs  
 Into an old court-yard. I heard on high,  
 Then, fragments of most touching melody,  
 But looking up saw not the singer there.—  
 Thro' the black bars in the tempestuous air  
 I saw, like weeds on a wreck'd palace growing,  
 Long tangled locks flung wildly forth and flowing,  
 Of those who on a sudden were beguiled  
 Into strange silence, and looked forth and smiled,  
 Hearing sweet sounds. Then I :—

“ Methinks there were  
 A cure of these with patience and kind care,  
 If music can thus move. But what is he,  
 Whom we seek here ?”

“ Of his sad history  
 I know but this,” said Maddalo : “ he came  
 To Venice a dejected man, and fame  
 Said he was wealthy, or he had been so.  
 Some thought the loss of fortune wrought him woe ;

But he was ever talking in such sort  
 As you do,—but more sadly ;—he seem'd hurt,  
 Even as a man with his peculiar wrong,  
 To hear but of the oppression of the strong,  
 Or those absurd deceits (I think with you  
 In some respects, you know) which carry thro'  
 The excellent impostors of this earth  
 When they outface detection. He had worth,  
 Poor fellow ! but a humourist in his way.”—

—“ Alas, what drove him mad !”

“ I cannot say :

A lady came with him from France, and when  
 She left him and returned, he wander'd then  
 About yon lonely isles of desart sand,  
 Till he grew wild. He had no cash or land  
 Remaining :—the police had brought him here—  
 Some fancy took him, and he would not bear  
 Removal, so I fitted up for him  
 Those rooms beside the sea, to please his whim ;  
 And sent him busts, and books, and urns for flowers,  
 Which had adorned his life in happier hours,  
 And instruments of music. You may guess  
 A stranger could do little more or less  
 For oneso gentle and unfortunate—  
 And those are his sweet strains which charm the weight  
 From madmen's chains, and make this hell appear  
 A heaven of sacred silence, hushed to hear.”

“ Nay, this was kind of you,—he had no claim,  
 As the world says.”

“ None but the very same  
 Which I on all mankind, were I, as he,  
 Fall'n to such deep reverse. His melody  
 Is interrupted now; we hear the din  
 Of madmen, shriek on shriek, again begin :  
 Let us now visit him : after this strain,  
 He ever communes with himself again,  
 And sees and hears not any.”

Having said

These words, we called the keeper, and he led  
 To an apartment opening on the sea.—  
 There the poor wretch was sitting mournfully  
 Near a piano, his pale fingers twined  
 One with the other; and the ooze and wind  
 Rushed thro' an open casement, and did sway  
 His hair, and starred it with the brackish spray ;  
 His head was leaning on a music book,  
 And he was muttering ; and his lean limbs shook ;  
 His lips were pressed against a folded leaf  
 In hue too beautiful for health, and grief  
 Smiled in their motions as they lay apart,  
 As one who wrought from his own fervid heart  
 The eloquence of passion : soon he raised  
 His sad meek face, and eyes lustrous and glazed,  
 And spoke,—sometimes as one who wrote, and thought  
 His words might move some heart that heeded not,  
 If sent to distant lands ;—and then as one  
 Reproaching deeds never to be undone,  
 With wondering self-compassion ;—then his speech  
 Was lost in grief, and then his words came each  
 Unmodulated and expressionless,—

But that from one jarred accent you might guess  
It was despair made them so uniform :  
And all the while the loud and gusty storm  
Hissed thro' the window, and we stood behind,  
Stealing his accents from the envious wind,  
Unseen. I yet remember what he said  
Distinctly, such impression his words made.

“ Month after month,” he cried, “ to bear this load,  
And, as a jade urged by the whip and goad,  
To drag life on—which like a heavy chain  
Lengthens behind with many a link of pain,  
And not to speak my grief—O, not to dare  
To give a human voice to my despair ;  
But live, and move, and, wretched thing ! smile on,  
As if I never went aside to groan,  
And wear this mask of falsehood even to those  
Who are most dear—not for my own repose—  
Alas ! no scorn, or pain, or hate, could be  
So heavy as that falsehood is to me—  
But that I cannot bear more altered faces  
Than needs must be, more changed and cold embraces,  
More misery, disappointment, and mistrust  
To own me for their father. Would the dust  
Were covered in upon my body now !  
That the life ceased to toil within my brow !  
And then these thoughts would at the last be fled :  
Let us not fear such pain can vex the dead.

“ What Power delights to torture us ? I know  
That to myself I do not wholly owe  
What now I suffer, though in part I may.

Alas ! none strewed fresh flowers upon the way  
 Where, wandering heedlessly, I met pale Pain,  
 My shadow, which will leave me not again.  
 If I have erred, there was no joy in error,  
 But pain, and insult, and unrest, and terror ;  
 I have not, as some do, bought penitence  
 With pleasure, and a dark yet sweet offence ;  
 For then if love, and tenderness, and truth  
 Had overlived Hope's momentary youth,  
 My creed should have redeemed me from repenting ;  
 But loathed scorn and outrage unrelenting  
 Met love excited by far other seeming  
 Until the end was gained :—as one from dreaming  
 Of sweetest peace, I woke, and found my state  
 Such as it is.—

“ O, thou, my spirit's mate !  
 Who, for thou art compassionate and wise,  
 Wouldst pity me from thy most gentle eyes  
 If this sad writing thou shouldst ever see,  
 My secret groans must be unheard by thee ;  
 Thou wouldst weep tears, bitter as blood, to know  
 Thy lost friend's incommunicable woe.  
 Ye few by whom my nature has been weighed  
 In friendship, let me not that name degrade,  
 By placing on your hearts the secret load  
 Which crushes mine to dust. There is one road  
 To peace, and that is truth, which follow ye !  
 Love sometimes leads astray to misery.  
 Yet think not, tho' subdued (and I may well  
 Say that I am subdued)—that the full hell  
 Within me would infect the untainted breast

Of sacred nature with its own unrest ;  
As some perverted beings think to find  
In scorn or hate a medicine for the mind  
Which scorn or hate hath wounded.—O, how vain !  
The dagger heals not, but may rend again.  
Believe that I am ever still the same  
In creed as in resolve ; and what may tame  
My heart, must leave the understanding free,  
Or all would sink under this agony.—  
Nor dream that I will join the vulgar eye,  
Or with my silence sanction tyranny,  
Or seek a moment's shelter from my pain  
In any madness which the world calls gain ;  
Ambition, or revenge, or thoughts as stern  
As those which make me what I am, or turn  
To avarice or misanthropy or lust.  
Heap on me soon, O grave, thy welcome dust !  
Till then the dungeon may demand its prey ;  
And Poverty and Shame may meet and say,  
Halting beside me in the public way,—  
' That love-devoted youth is ours : let's sit  
Beside him : he may live some six months yet.'—  
Or the red scaffold, as our country bends,  
May ask some willing victim ; or ye, friends !  
May fall under some sorrow, which this heart  
Or hand may share, or vanquish, or avert ;  
I am prepared, in truth, with no proud joy,  
To do or suffer aught, as when a boy  
I did devote to justice, and to love,  
My nature, worthless now.

“ I must remove  
A veil from my pent mind. 'Tis torn aside!

O! pallid as Death's dedicated bride,  
 Thou mockery which art sitting by my side,  
 Am I not wan like thee? At the grave's call  
 I haste, invited to thy wedding-ball,  
 To meet the ghastly paramour, for whom  
 Thou hast deserted me,—and made the tomb  
 Thy bridal bed. But I beside thy feet  
 Will lie, and watch ye from my winding-sheet  
 Thus—wide awake tho' dead——Yet stay, O, stay!  
 Go not so soon—I know not what I say—  
 Hear but my reasons—I am mad, I fear,  
 My fancy is o'erwrought—thou art not here.  
 Pale art thou, 'tis most true——but thou art gone—  
 Thy work is finished; I am left alone.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Nay, was it I who wooed thee to this breast,  
 Which like a serpent thou envenomest  
 As in repayment of the warmth it lent?  
 Didst thou not seek me for thine own content?  
 Did not thy love awaken mine? I thought  
 That thou wert she who said ‘ You kiss me not  
 Ever; I fear you do not love me now.’  
 In truth I loved even to my overthrow  
 Her, who would fain forget these words; but they  
 Cling to her mind, and cannot pass away.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ You say that I am proud; that when I speak,  
 My lip is tortured with the wrongs, which break  
 The spirit it expresses.—Never one  
 Humbled himself before, as I have done!  
 Even the instinctive worm on which we tread  
 'Turns, tho' it wound not—then, with prostrate head,

Sinks in the dust, and writhes like me—and dies :  
 ——No:—wears a living death of agonies !  
 As the slow shadows of the pointed grass  
 Mark the eternal periods, its pangs pass,  
 Slow, ever-moving, making moments be  
 As mine seem,—each an immortality !

\* \* \* \* \*

“ That you had never seen me ! never heard  
 My voice ! and, more than all, had ne'er endured  
 The deep pollution of my loathed embrace !  
 That your eyes ne'er had lied love in my face !  
 That, like some maniac monk, I had torn out  
 The nerves of manhood by their bleeding root  
 With mine own quivering fingers ! so that ne'er  
 Our hearts had for a moment mingled there,  
 To disunite in horror ! These were not  
 With thee like some suppressed and hideous thought,  
 Which flits athwart our musings, but can find  
 No rest within a pure and gentle mind—  
 Thou sealed'st them with many a bare broad word,  
 And seard'st my memory o'er them,—for I heard  
 And can forget not—they were ministered,  
 One after one, those curses. Mix them up  
 Like self-destroying poisons in one cup ;  
 And they will make one blessing, which thou ne'er  
 Didst imprecate for on me——death !

“ It were

A cruel punishment for one most cruel,  
 If such can love, to make that love the fuel  
 Of the mind's hell—hate, scorn, remorse, despair :

But *me*, whose heart a stranger's tear might wear,  
 As water-drops the sandy fountain stone;  
 Who loved and pitied all things, and could moan  
 For woes which others hear not, and could see  
 The absent with the glass of phantasy,  
 And near the poor and trampled sit and weep,  
 Following the captive to his dungeon deep;  
*Me*, who am as a nerve o'er which do creep  
 The else-unfelt oppressions of this earth,  
 And was to thee the flame upon thy hearth,  
 When all beside was cold:—that thou on me  
 Shouldst rain these plagues of blistering agony—  
 Such curses are from lips once eloquent  
 With love's too partial praise! Let none relent  
 Who intend deeds too dreadful for a name  
 Henceforth, if an example for the same  
 They seek:—for thou on me lookedst so and so,  
 And didst speak thus and thus. I live to shew  
 How much men bear and die not.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Thou wilt tell,  
 With the grimace of hate, how horrible  
 It was to meet my love when thine grew less;  
 Thou wilt admire how I could e'er address  
 Such features to love's work. . . . This taunt, tho' true,  
 (For indeed nature nor in form nor hue  
 Bestowed on me her choicest workmanship)  
 Shall not be thy defence: for since thy life  
 Met mine first, years long past,—since thine eye kindled  
 With soft fire under mine,—I have not dwindled,

Nor changed in mind, or body, or in aught  
 But as love changes what it loveth not  
 After long years and many trials.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ How vain

Are words! I thought never to speak again,  
 Not even in secret, not to my own heart—  
 But from my lips the unwilling accents start,  
 And from my pen the words flow as I write,  
 Dazzling my eyes with scalding tears.—my sight  
 Is dim to see that charactered in vain,  
 On this unfeeling leaf, which burns the brain  
 And eats into it, blotting all things fair,  
 And wise and good, which time had written there.  
 Those who inflict must suffer, for they see  
 The work of their own hearts, and that must be  
 Our chastisement or recompense.—O, child!  
 I would that thine were like to be more mild  
 For both our wretched sakes,—for thine the most,  
 Who feel'st already all that thou hast lost,  
 Without the power to wish it thine again.  
 And, as slow years pass, a funereal train,  
 Each with the ghost of some lost hope or friend  
 Following it like its shadow, wilt thou bend  
 No thought on my dead memory?

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Alas, love!

Fear me not: against thee I'd not move  
 A finger in despite. Do I not live  
 That thou mayst have less bitter cause to grieve?

I give thee tears for scorn, and love for hate ;  
 And, that thy lot may be less desolate  
 Than his on whom thou tramplest, I refrain  
 From that sweet sleep which medicines all pain.  
 Then—when thou speakest of me—never say,  
 ‘ He could forgive not’—Here I cast away  
 All human passions, all revenge, all pride ;  
 I think, speak, act no ill ; I do but hide  
 Under these words, like embers, every spark  
 Of that which has consumed me. Quick and dark  
 The grave is yawning :—as its roof shall cover  
 My limbs with dust and worms, under and over ;  
 So let oblivion hide this grief—The air  
 Closes upon my accents, as despair  
 Upon my heart—let death upon despair !”

He ceased, and overcome, leant back awhile ;  
 Then rising, with a melancholy smile, ‘  
 Went to a sofa, and lay down, and slept  
 A heavy sleep, and in his dreams he wept,  
 And muttered some familiar name, and we  
 Wept without shame in his society.  
 I think I never was impress’d so much ;  
 The man who were not, must have lack’d a touch  
 Of human nature.—Then we linger’d not,  
 Although our argument was quite forgot ;  
 But, calling the attendants, went to dine  
 At Maddalo’s :—yet neither cheer nor wine  
 Could give us spirits, for we talked of him,  
 And nothing else, till daylight made stars dim.  
 And we agreed it was some dreadful ill  
 Wrought on him boldly, yet unspeakable,

By a dear friend ; some deadly change in love  
Of one vow'd deeply which he dreamed not of ;  
For whose sake he, it seemed, had fixed a blot  
Of falsehood in his mind, which flourish'd not  
But in the light of all-beholding truth ;  
And having stamped this canker on his youth,  
She had abandoned him :—and how much more  
Might be his woe, we guessed not :—he had store  
Of friends and fortune once, as we could guess  
From his nice habits and his gentleness :  
These now were lost—it were a grief indeed  
If he had changed one unsustaining reed  
For all that such a man might else adorn.  
The colours of his mind seemed yet unworn ;  
For the wild language of his grief was high—  
Such as in measure were called poetry.  
And I remember one remark, which then  
Maddalo made: he said—“ Most wretched men  
Are cradled into poetry by wrong :  
They learn in suffering what they teach in song.”

If I had been an unconnected man,  
I, from this moment, should have form'd some plan  
Never to leave sweet Venice: for to me  
It was delight to ride by the lone sea :  
And then the town is silent—one may write,  
Or read in gondolas by day or night,  
Having the little brazen lamp alight,  
Unseen, uninterrupted :—books are there,  
Pictures, and casts from all those statues fair  
Which were twin-born with poetry ;—and all  
We seek in towns, with little to recal

Regret for the green country :—I might sit  
In Maddalo's great palace, and his wit  
And subtle talk would cheer the winter night,  
And make me know myself :—and the fire light  
Would flash upon our faces, till the day  
Might dawn, and make me wonder at my stay.  
But I had friends in London too. The chief  
Attraction here was that I sought relief  
From the deep tenderness that maniac wrought  
Within me—'twas perhaps an idle thought,  
But I imagined that if, day by day,  
I watched him, and seldom went away,  
And studied all the beatings of his heart  
With zeal, as men study some stubborn art  
For their own good, and could by patience find  
An entrance to the caverns of his mind,  
I might reclaim him from his dark estate.  
In friendships I had been most fortunate,  
Yet never saw I one whom I would call  
More willingly my friend ;—and this was all  
Accomplish'd not ;—such dreams of baseless good  
Oft come and go, in crowds or solitude,  
And leave no trace !—but what I now design'd,  
Made, for long years, impression on my mind.  
—The following morning, urged by my affairs,  
I left bright Venice.—

After many years,  
And many changes, I returned ; the name  
Of Venice, and its aspect, was the same ;  
But Maddalo was travelling, far away,  
Among the mountains of Armenia.

His dog was dead : his child had now become  
 A woman, such as it has been my doom  
 To meet with few ; a wonder of this earth,  
 Where there is little of transcendent worth,—  
 Like one of Shakspeare's women. Kindly she,  
 And with a manner beyond courtesy,  
 Receiv'd her father's friend ; and, when I ask'd  
 Of the lorn maniac, she her memory task'd,  
 And told, as she had heard, the mournful tale :  
 " That the poor sufferer's health began to fail,  
 Two years from my departure ; but that then  
 The lady, who had left him, came again.  
 Her mien had been imperious, but she now  
 Look'd meek ; perhaps remorse had brought her low.  
 Her coming made him better ; and they stayed  
 Together at my father's,—for I played,  
 As I remember, with the lady's shawl ;  
 I might be six years old :—But, after all,  
 She left him."—

“ Why, her heart must have been tough ;  
 How did it end ? ”

“ And was not this enough ?  
 They met, they parted.”

“ Child, is there no more ”

“ Something within that interval, which bore  
 The stamp of *why* they parted, *how* they met ;—  
 Yet if thine aged eyes disdain to wet  
 Those wrinkled cheeks with youth's remember'd tears,

Ask me no more ; but let the silent years  
Be clos'd and cered over their memory,  
As yon mute marble where their corpses lie."  
I urged and questioned still : she told me how  
All happen'd—but the cold world shall not know.

*Rome, May, 1819.*

**THE WITCH OF ATLAS.**



## THE WITCH OF ATLAS.

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### I.

BEFORE those cruel Twins, whom at one birth  
Incestuous Change bore to her father Time,  
Error and Truth, had hunted from the earth  
All those bright natures which adorned its prime,  
And left us nothing to believe in, worth  
The pains of putting into learned rhyme,  
A lady-witch there lived on Atlas' mountain  
Within a cavern by a secret fountain.

### II.

Her mother was one of the Atlantides :  
The all-beholding Sun had ne'er beholden  
In his wide voyage o'er continents and seas  
So fair a creature, as she lay enfolden  
In the warm shadow of her loveliness ;—  
He kissed her with his beams, and made all golden  
The chamber of grey rock in which she lay—  
She, in that dream of joy, dissolved away.

## III.

'Tis said, she was first changed into a vapour,  
 And then into a cloud, such clouds as flit,  
 Like splendour-winged moths about a taper,  
 Round the red west when the sun dies in it :  
 And then into a meteor, such as caper  
 On hill-tops when the moon is in a fit ;  
 Then, into one of those mysterious stars  
 Which hide themselves between the Earth and Mars.

## IV.

Ten times the Mother of the Months had bent  
 Her bow beside the folding-star, and bidden  
 With that bright sign the billows to indent  
 The sea-deserted sand : like children chidden,  
 At her command they ever came and went :—  
 Since in that cave a dewy splendour hidden,  
 Took shape and motion : with the living form  
 Of this embodied Power, the cave grew warm.

## V.

A lovely lady garmented in light  
 From her own beauty—deep her eyes, as are  
 Two openings of unfathomable night  
 Seen through a tempest's cloven roof—her hair  
 Dark—the dim brain whirls dizzy with delight,  
 Picturing her form ; her soft smiles shone afar,  
 And her low voice was heard like love, and drew  
 All living things towards this wonder new.

## VI.

And first the spotted cameleopard came,  
And then the wise and fearless elephant;  
Then the sly serpent, in the golden flame  
Of his own volumes intervolved;—all gaunt  
And sanguine beasts her gentle looks made tame.  
They drank before her at her sacred fount;  
And every beast of beating heart grew bold,  
Such gentleness and power even to behold.

## VII.

The brinded lioness led forth her young,  
That she might teach them how they should forego  
Their inborn thirst of death; the pard unstrung  
His sinews at her feet, and sought to know  
With looks whose motions spöke without a tongue  
How he might be as gentle as the doe.  
The magic circle of her voice and eyes  
All savage natures did imparadise.

## VIII.

And old Silenus, shaking a green stick  
Of lilies, and the wood-gods in a crew  
Came, blithe, as in the olive copses thick  
Cicadæ are, drunk with the noonday dew:  
And Driope and Faunus followed quick,  
Teazing the God to sing them something new,  
Till in this cave they found the lady lone,  
Sitting upon a seat of emerald stone.

## IX.

And Universal Pan, 'tis said, was there,  
And though none saw him,—through the adamant  
Of the deep mountains, through the trackless air,  
And through those living spirits, like a want  
He past out of his everlasting lair  
Where the quick heart of the great world doth pant,  
And felt that wondrous lady all alone,—  
And she felt him, upon her emerald throne.

## X.

And every nymph of stream and spreading tree,  
And every shepherdess of Ocean's flocks,  
Who drives her white waves over the green sea;  
And Ocean, with the brine on his grey locks,  
And quaint Priapus with his company  
All came, much wondering how the enwombed rocks  
Could have brought forth so beautiful a birth;—  
Her love subdued their wonder and their mirth.

## XI.

The herdsmen and the mountain maidens came,  
And the rude kings of pastoral Garamant—  
These spirits shook within them, as a flame  
Stirred by the air under a cavern gaunt:  
Pigmies, and Polyphemes, by many a name,  
Centaurs and Satyrs, and such shapes as haunt  
Wet clefts,—and lumps neither alive nor dead,  
Dog-headed, bosom-eyed and bird-footed.

## XII.

For she was beautiful : her beauty made  
The bright world dim, and every thing beside  
Seemed like the fleeting image of a shade :  
No thought of living spirit could abide,  
Which to her looks had ever been betrayed,  
On any object in the world so wide,  
On any hope within the circling skies,  
But on her form, and in her inmost eyes.

## XIII.

Which when the lady knew, she took her spindle  
And twined three threads of fleecy mist, and three  
Long lines of light, such as the dawn may kindle  
The clouds and waves and mountains with, and she  
As many star-beams, ere their lamps could dwindle  
In the belated moon, wound skilfully ;  
And with these threads a subtle veil she wove—  
A shadow for the splendour of her love.

## XIV.

The deep recesses of her odorous dwelling  
Were stored with magic treasures—sounds of air,  
Which had the power all spirits of compelling,  
Folded in cells of chrystal silence there ;  
Such as we hear in youth, and think the feeling  
Will never die—yet ere we are aware,  
The feeling and the sound are fled and gone,  
And the regret they leave remains alone.

## XV.

And there lay Visions swift, and sweet, and quaint,  
Each in its thin sheath like a chrysalis ;  
Some eager to burst forth, some weak and faint  
With the soft burthen of intensest bliss ;  
It is its work to bear to many a saint  
Whose heart adores the shrine which holiest is,  
Even Love's—and others white, green, grey and black,  
And of all shapes—and each was at her beck.

## XVI.

And odours in a kind of aviary  
Of ever-blooming Eden-trees she kept,  
Clipt in a floating net, a love-sick Fairy  
Had woven from dew-beams while the moon yet slept ;  
As bats at the wired window of a dairy,  
They beat their vans ; and each was an adept,  
When loosed and missioned, making wings of winds,  
To stir sweet thoughts or sad in destined minds.

## XVII.

And liquors clear and sweet, whose healthful might  
Could medicine the sick soul to happy sleep,  
And change eternal death into a night  
Of glorious dreams—or if eyes needs must weep,  
Could make their tears all wonder and delight,  
She in her chrysal vials did closely keep :  
If men could drink of those clear vials, 'tis said  
The living were not envied of the dead.

## XVIII.

Her cave was stored with scrolls of strange device,  
The works of some Saturnian Archimage,  
Which taught the expiations at whose price  
Men from the Gods might win that happy age  
Too lightly lost, redeeming native vice ;  
And which might quench the earth-consuming rage  
Of gold and blood—till men should live and move  
Harmonious as the sacred stars above.

## XIX.

And how all things that seem untameable,  
Not to be checked and not to be confined,  
Obey the spells of wisdom's wizard skill ;  
Time, Earth and Fire—the Ocean and the Wind,  
And all their shapes—and man's imperial will ;  
And other scrolls whose writings did unbind  
The inmost lore of Love—let the prophane  
Tremble to ask what secrets they contain.

## XX.

And wondrous works of substances unknown,  
To which the enchantment of her father's power  
Had changed those ragged blocks of savage stone,  
Were heaped in the recesses of her bower ;  
Carved lamps and chalices, and phials which shone  
In their own golden beams—each like a flower,  
Out of whose depth a fire-fly shakes his light  
Under a cypress in a starless night.

## XXI.

At first she lived alone in this wild home,  
 And her own thoughts were each a minister,  
 Clothing themselves or with the ocean-foam,  
 Or with the wind, or with the speed of fire,  
 To work whatever purposes might come  
 Into her mind ; such power her mighty Sire  
 Had girt them with, whether to fly or run,  
 Through all the regions which he shines upon.

## XXII.

The Ocean-nymphs and Hamadryades,  
 Oreads and Naiads with long weedy locks,  
 Offered to do her bidding through the seas,  
 Under the earth, and in the hollow rocks,  
 And far beneath the matted roots of trees,  
 And in the gnarled heart of stubborn oaks,  
 So they might live forever in the light  
 Of her sweet presence—each a satellite.

## XXIII.

“ This may not be,” the wizard maid replied ;  
 “ The fountains where the Naiades bedew  
 Their shining hair, at length are drained and dried ;  
 The solid oaks forget their strength, and strew  
 Their latest leaf upon the mountains wide ;  
 The boundless ocean, like a drop of dew  
 Will be consumed—the stubborn centre must  
 Be scattered, like a cloud of summer dust.

## XXIV.

“ And ye with them will perish one by one :  
If I must sigh to think that this shall be,  
If I must weep when the surviving Sun  
Shall smile on your decay—Oh, ask not me  
To love you till your little race is run ;  
I cannot die as ye must—over me  
Your leaves shall glance—the streams in which ye dwell  
Shall be my paths henceforth, and so, farewell !”

## XXV.

She spoke and wept: the dark and azure well  
Sparkled beneath the shower 'of her bright tears,  
And every little circlet where they fell,  
Flung to the cavern-roof inconstant spheres  
And intertangled lines of light :—a knell  
Of sobbing voices came upon her ears  
From those departing Forms, o'er the serene  
Of the white streams and of the forest green.

## XXVI.

All day the wizard lady sat aloof  
Spelling out scrolls of dread antiquity  
Under the cavern's fountain-lighted roof ;  
Or broidering the pictured poesy  
Of some high tale upon her growing woof,  
Which the sweet splendour of her smiles could dye  
In hues outshining heaven—and ever she  
Added some grace to the wrought poesy.

## XXVII.

While on her hearth lay blazing many a piece  
Of sandal wood, rare gums and cinnamon;  
Men scarcely know how beautiful fire is,  
Each flame of it is as a precious stone  
Dissolved in ever moving light, and this  
Belongs to each and all who gaze upon.  
The Witch beheld it not, for in her hand  
She held a woof that dimmed the burning brand.

## XXVIII.

This lady never slept, but lay in trance  
All night within the fountain—as in sleep.  
Its emerald crags glowed in her beauty's glance:  
Through the green splendour of the water deep  
She saw the constellations reel and dance  
Like fire-flies—and withal did ever keep  
The tenour of her contemplations calm,  
With open eyes, closed feet and folded palm.

## XXIX.

And when the whirlwinds and the clouds descended  
From the white pinnacles of that cold hill,  
She past at dewfall to a space extended,  
Where in a lawn of flowering asphodel  
Amid a wood of pines and cedars blended,  
There yawned an inextinguishable well  
Of crimson fire, full even to the brim  
And overflowing all the margin trim.

## XXX.

Within the which she lay when the fierce war  
Of wintry winds shook that innocuous liquor  
In many a mimic moon and bearded star,  
O'er woods and lawns—the serpent heard it flicker  
In sleep, and dreaming still, he crept afar—  
And when the windless snow descended thicker  
Than autumn leaves, she watched it as it came  
Melt on the surface of the level flame.

## XXXI.

She had a Boat which some say Vulcan wrought  
For Venus, as the chariot of her star ;  
But it was found too feeble to be fraught  
With all the ardours in that sphere which are,  
And so she sold it, and Apollo bought,  
And gave it to this daughter : from a car  
Changed to the fairest and the lightest boat  
Which ever upon mortal stream did float.

## XXXII.

And others say, that when but three hours old,  
The first-born Love out of his cradle leapt,  
And clove dun Chaos with his wings of gold,  
And like an horticultural adept,  
Stole a strange seed, and wrapt it up in mould,  
And sowed it in his mother's star, and kept  
Watering it all the summer with sweet dew,  
And with his wings fanning it as it grew.

## XXXIII.

The plant grew strong and green—the snowy flower  
Fell, and the long and gourd-like fruit began  
To turn the light and dew by inward power  
To its own substance; woven tracery ran  
Of light firm texture, ribbed and branching, o'er  
The solid rind, like a leaf's veined fan,  
Of which Love scooped this boat, and with soft motion  
Piloted it round the circumfluous ocean.

## XXXIV.

This boat she moored upon her fount, and lit  
A living spirit within all its frame,  
Breathing the soul of swiftness into it.  
Couched on the fountain like a panther tame,  
One of the twain at Evan's feet that sit;  
Or as on Vesta's sceptre a swift flame,  
Or on blind Homer's heart a winged thought,—  
In joyous expectation lay the boat.

## XXXV.

Then by strange art she kneaded fire and snow  
Together, tempering the repugnant mass  
With liquid love—all things together grow  
Through which the harmony of love can pass;  
And a fair Shape out of her hands did flow  
A living Image, which did far surpass  
In beauty that bright shape of vital stone  
Which drew the heart out of Pygmalion.

## XXXVI.

A sexless thing it was, and in its growth  
It seemed to have developed no defect  
Of either sex, yet all the grace of both,—  
In gentleness and strength its limbs were decked ;  
The bosom swelled lightly with its full youth,  
The countenance was such as might select  
Some artist that his skill should never die,  
Imaging forth such perfect purity.

## XXXVII.

From its smooth shoulders hung two rapid wings,  
Fit to have borne it to the seventh sphere,  
Tipt with the speed of liquid lightnings,  
Dyed in the ardours of the atmosphere :  
She led her creature to the boiling springs  
Where the light boat was moored,—and said—“ Sit here !”  
And pointed to the prow, and took *her* seat  
Beside the rudder with opposing feet.

## XXXVIII.

And down the streams which clove those mountains vast  
Around their inland islets, and amid  
The panther-peopled forests, whose shade cast  
Darkness and odours, and a pleasure hid  
In melancholy gloom, the pinnace past ;  
By many a star-surrounded pyramid  
Of icy crag cleaving the purple sky,  
And caverns yawning round unfathomably.

## XXXIX.

The silver noon into that winding dell,  
With slanted gleam athwart the forest tops,  
Tempered like golden evening, feebly fell ;  
A green and glowing light, like that which drops  
From folded lilies in which glowworms dwell,  
When earth over her face night's mantle wraps ;  
Between the severed mountains lay on high  
Over the stream, a narrow rift of sky.

## XL.

And ever as she went, the Image lay  
With folded wings and unawakened eyes ;  
And o'er its gentle countenance did play  
The busy dreams, as thick as summer flies,  
Chasing the rapid smiles that would not stay,  
And drinking the warm tears, and the sweet sighs  
Inhaling, which, with busy murmur vain,  
They had aroused from that full heart and brain.

## XLI.

And ever down the prone vale, like a cloud  
Upon a stream of wind, the pinnacle went :  
Now lingering on the pools, in which abode  
The calm and darkness of the deep content  
In which they paused ; now o'er the shallow road  
Of white and dancing waters all besprent  
With sand and polished pebbles :—mortal boat  
In such a shallow rapid could not float.

## XLII.

And down the earthquaking cataracts which shiver  
Their snow-like waters into golden air,  
Or under chasms unfathomable ever  
Sepulchre them, till in their rage they tear  
A subterranean portal for the river,  
It fled—the circling sunbows did upbear  
Its fall down the hoar precipice of spray,  
Lighting it far upon its lampless way.

## XLIII.

And when the wizard lady would ascend  
The labyrinths of some many winding vale,  
Which to the inmost mountain upward tend—  
She called “Hermaphroditus!” and the pale  
And heavy hue which slumber could extend  
Over its lips and eyes, as on the gale  
A rapid shadow from a slope of grass,  
Into the darkness of the stream did pass.

## XLIV.

And it unfurled its heaven-coloured pinions,  
With stars of fire spotting the stream below;  
And from above into the Sun's dominions  
Flinging a glory, like the golden glow  
In which spring clothes her emerald-winged minions,  
All interwoven with fine feathery snow  
And moonlight splendour of intensest rime,  
With which frost paints the pines in winter time.

## XLV.

And then it winnowed the Elysian air  
 Which ever hung about that lady bright,  
 With its ethereal vans—and speeding there,  
 Like a star up the torrent of the night,  
 Or a swift eagle in the morning glare  
 Breasting the whirlwind with impetuous flight;  
 The pinnacle, oared by those enchanted wings,  
 Clove the fierce streams towards their upper springs.

## XLVI.

The water flashed like sunlight, by the prow.  
 Of a noon-wandering meteor flung to Heaven;  
 The still air seemed as if its waves did flow  
 In tempest down the mountains,—loosely driven  
 The lady's radiant hair streamed to and fro:  
 Beneath, the billows having vainly striven  
 Indignant and impetuous, roared to feel  
 The swift and steady motion of the keel.

## XLVII.

Or, when the weary moon was in the wane,  
 Or in the noon of interlunar night,  
 The lady-witch in visions could not chain  
 Her spirit; but sailed forth under the light  
 Of shooting stars, and bade extend amain  
 His storm-outspeeding wings, th' Hermaphrodite;  
 She to the Austral waters took her way,  
 Beyond the fabulous Thamondocona.

## XLVIII.

Where, like a meadow which no scythe has shaven,  
Which rain could never bend, or whirl-blast shake,  
With the Antarctic constellations haven,  
Canopus and his crew, lay th' Austral lake—  
There she would build herself a windless haven  
Out of the clouds whose moving turrets make  
The bastions of the storm, when through the sky  
The spirits of the tempest thundered by.

## XLIX.

A haven, beneath whose translucent floor  
The tremulous stars sparkled unfathomably,  
And around which, the solid vapours hoar,  
Based on the level waters, to the sky  
Lifted their dreadful crags; and like a shore  
Of wintry mountains, inaccessibly  
Hemmed in with rifts and precipices grey,  
And hanging crags, many a cove and bay.

## L.

And whilst the outer lake beneath the lash  
Of the winds' scourge, foamed like a wounded thing;  
And the incessant hail with stony clash  
Ploughed up the waters, and the flagging wing  
Of the roused cormorant in the lightning flash  
Looked like the wreck of some wind-wandering  
Fragment of inky thundersmoke—this haven  
Was as a gem to copy Heaven engraven.

## LI.

On which that lady played her many pranks,  
 Circling the image of a shooting star,  
 Even as a tyger on Hydaspes' banks  
 Outspeeds the Antelopes which speediest are,  
 In her light boat; and many quips and cranks  
 She played upon the water; till the car  
 Of the late moon, like a sick matron wan,  
 To journey from the misty east began.

## LII.

And then she called out of the hollow turrets  
 Of those high clouds, white, golden and vermilion,  
 The armies of her ministering spirits—  
 In mighty legions million after million  
 They came, each troop emblazoning its merits  
 On meteor flags; and many a proud pavilion,  
 Of the intertexture of the atmosphere,  
 They pitched upon the plain of the calm mere.

## LIII.

They framed the imperial tent of their great Queen  
 Of woven exhalations, underlaid  
 With lambent lightning-fire, as may be seen  
 A dome of thin and open ivory inlaid  
 With crimson silk—cressets from the serene  
 Hung there, and on the water for her tread,  
 A tapestry of fleece-like mist was strewn,  
 Dyed in the beams of the ascending moon.

## LIV.

And on a throne o'erlaid with starlight, caught  
Upon those wandering isles of æry dew,  
Which highest shoals of mountain shipwreck not,  
She sate, and heard all that had happened new  
Between the earth and moon since they had brought  
The last intelligence—and now she grew  
Pale as that moon, lost in the watery night—  
And now she wept, and now she laughed outright.

## LV.

These were tame pleasures.—She would often climb  
The steepest ladder of the crudded rack  
Up to some beaked cape of cloud sublime,  
And like Arion on the dolphin's back  
Ride singing through the shoreless air. Oft time  
Following the serpent lightning's winding track,  
She ran upon the platforms of the wind,  
And laughed to hear the fire-balls roar behind.

## LVI.

And sometimes to those streams of upper air,  
Which whirl the earth in its diurnal round,  
She would ascend, and win the spirits there  
To let her join their chorus. Mortals found  
That on those days the sky was calm and fair,  
And mystic snatches of harmonious sound  
Wandered upon the earth where'er she past,  
And happy thoughts of hope, too sweet to last.

## LVII.

But her choice sport was, in the hours of sleep,  
 To glide adown old Nilus, when he threads  
 Egypt and Æthiopia, from the steep  
 Of utmost Axumè, until he spreads,  
 Like a calm flock of silver-fleeced sheep,  
 His waters on the plain: and crested heads  
 Of cities and proud temples gleam amid  
 And many a vapour-belted pyramid.

## LVIII.

By Mæris and the Mareotid lakes,  
 Strewn with faint blooms like bridal chamber floors;  
 Where naked boys bridling tame water-snakes,  
 Or charioteering ghastly alligators,  
 Had left on the sweet waters mighty wakes  
 Of those huge forms:—within the brazen doors  
 Of the great Labyrinth slept both boy and beast,  
 Tired with the pomp of their Osirian feast.

## LIX.

And where within the surface of the river  
 The shadows of the massy temples lie,  
 And never are erased—but tremble ever  
 Like things which every cloud can doom to die,  
 Through lotus-pav'n canals, and wheresoever  
 The works of man pierced that serenest sky  
 With tombs, and towers, and fanes, 'twas her delight  
 To wander in the shadow of the night.

## LX.

With motion like the spirit of that wind  
 Whose soft step deepens slumber, her light feet  
 Past through the peopled haunts of human kind,  
 Scattering sweet visions from her presence sweet,  
 Through fane and palace-court and labyrinth mined  
 With many a dark and subterranean street  
 Under the Nile; through chambers high and deep  
 She past, observing mortals in their sleep.

## LXI.

A pleasure sweet doubtless it was to see  
 Mortals subdued in all the shapes of sleep.  
 Here lay two sister-twins in infancy;  
 There, a lone youth who in his dreams did weep;  
 Within, two lovers linked innocently  
 In their loose locks which over both did creep  
 Like ivy from one stem;—and there lay calm,  
 Old age with snow-bright hair and folded palm.

## LXII.

But other troubled forms of sleep she saw,  
 Not to be mirrored in a holy song,  
 Distortions foul of supernatural awe,  
 And pale imaginings of visioned wrong,  
 And all the code of custom's lawless law  
 Written upon the brows of old and young:  
 "This," said the wizard maiden, "is the strife,  
 Which stirs the liquid surface of man's life."

## LXIII.

And little did the sight disturb her soul—

We, the weak mariners of that wide lake

Where'er its shores extend or billows roll,

Our course unpiloted and starless make

O'er its wild surface to an unknown goal—

But she in the calm depths her way could take,

Where in bright bowers immortal forms abide,

Beneath the weltering of the restless tide.

## LXIV.

And she saw princes couched under the glow

Of sunlike gems ; and round each temple-court

In dormitories ranged, row after row,

She saw the priests asleep,—all of one sort,

For all were educated to be so.—

The peasants in their huts, and in the port

The sailors she saw cradled on the waves,

And the dead lulled within their dreamless graves.

## LXV.

And all the forms in which those spirits lay,

Were to her sight like the diaphanous

Veils, in which those sweet ladies oft array

Their delicate limbs, who would conceal from us

Only their scorn of all concealment : they

Move in the light of their own beauty thus.

But these, and all now lay with sleep upon them,

And little thought a Witch was looking on them.

## LXVI.

She all those human figures breathing there  
 Beheld as living spirits—to her eyes  
 The naked beauty of the soul lay bare,  
 And often through a rude and worn disguise  
 She saw the inner form most bright and fair—  
 And then,—she had a charm of strange device,  
 Which murmured on mute lips with tender tone,  
 Could make that spirit mingle with her own.

## LXVII.

Alas, Aurora! what wouldst thou have given  
 For such a charm, when Tithon became grey?  
 Or how much, Venus, of thy silver Heaven  
 Wouldst thou have yielded, ere Proserpina  
 Had half (oh! why not all?) the debt forgiven  
 Which dear Adonis had been doomed to pay,  
 To any witch who would have taught you it?  
 The Heliad doth not know its value yet.

## LXVIII.

'Tis said in after times her spirit free  
 Knew what love was, and felt itself alone—  
 But holy Dian could not chaster be  
 Before she stooped to kiss Endymion,  
 Than now this lady—like a sexless bee  
 Tasting all blossoms, and confined to none—  
 Among those mortal forms, the wizard-maiden  
 Passed with an eye serene and heart unladen.

## LXIX.

To those she saw most beautiful, she gave  
Strange panacea in a chrystal bowl.  
They drank in their deep sleep of that sweet wave,  
And lived thenceforth as if some controul  
Mightier than life, were in them; and the grave  
Of such, when death oppressed the weary soul,  
Was as a green and overarching bower  
Lit by the gems of many a starry flower.

## LXX.

For on the night that they were buried, she  
Restored the embalmers ruining, and shook  
The light out of the funeral lamps, to be  
A mimic day within that deathly nook;  
And she unwound the woven imagery  
Of second childhood's swaddling bands, and took  
The coffin, its last cradle, from its niche,  
And threw it with contempt into a ditch.

## LXXI.

And there the body lay, age after age,  
Mute, breathing, beating, warm, and undecaying  
Like one asleep in a green hermitage,  
With gentle sleep about its eyelids playing,  
And living in its dreams beyond the rage  
Of death or life; while they were still arraying  
In liveries ever new, the rapid, blind  
And fleeting generations of mankind.

## LXXII.

And she would write strange dreams upon the brain  
 Of those who were less beautiful, and make  
 All harsh and crooked purposes more vain  
 Than in the desert is the serpent's wake  
 Which the sand covers,—all his evil gain  
 The miser in such dreams would rise and shake  
 Into a beggar's lap;—the lying scribe  
 Would his own lies betray without a bribe.

## LXXIII.

The priests would write an explanation full,  
 Translating hieroglyphics into Greek,  
 How the god Apis, really was a bull,  
 And nothing more; and bid the herald stick  
 The same against the temple doors, and pull  
 The old cant down; they licensed all to speak  
 Whate'er they thought of hawks, and cats, and geese,  
 By pastoral letters to each diocese.

## LXXIV.

The king would dress an ape up in his crown  
 And robes, and seat him on his glorious seat,  
 And on the right hand of the sunlike throne  
 Would place a gaudy mock-bird to repeat  
 The chattering of the monkey.—Every one  
 Of the prone courtiers crawled to kiss the feet  
 Of their great Emperor when the morning came;  
 And kissed—alas, how many kiss the same!

## LXXV.

The soldiers dreamed that they were blacksmiths, and  
 Walked out of quarters in somnambulism,  
 Round the red anvils you might see them stand  
 Like Cyclopes in Vulcan's sooty abysm,  
 Beating their swords to ploughshares;—in a band  
 The jailors sent those of the liberal schism  
 Free through the streets of Memphis; much, I wis,  
 To the annoyance of king Amasis.

## LXXVI.

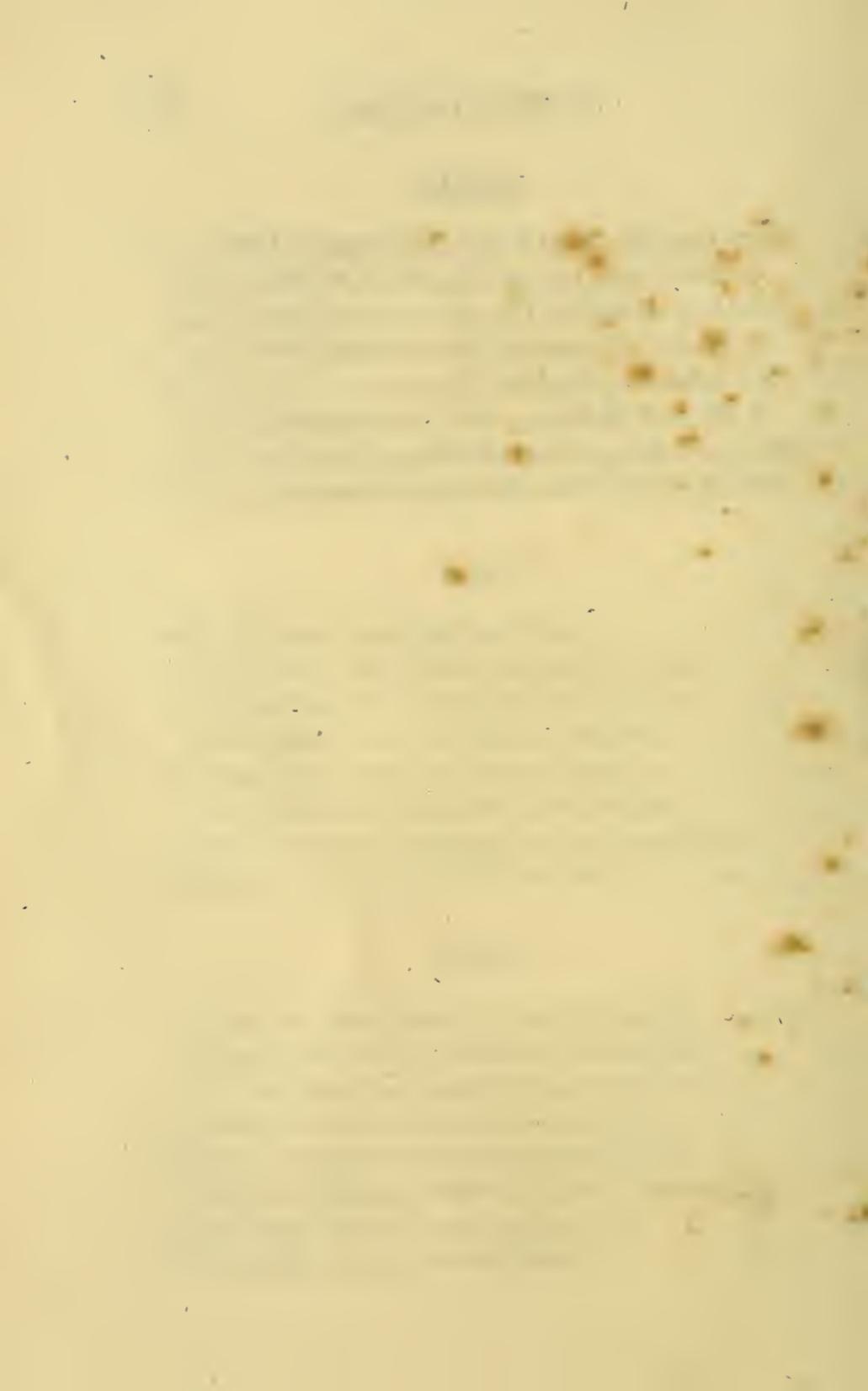
And timid lovers who had been so coy,  
 They hardly knew whether they loved or not,  
 Would rise out of their rest, and take sweet joy,  
 To the fulfilment of their inmost thought;  
 And when next day the maiden and the boy  
 Met one another, both, like sinners caught,  
 Blushed at the thing which each believed was done  
 Only in fancy—till the tenth moon shone;

## LXXVII.

And then the Witch would let them take no ill:  
 Of many thousand schemes which lovers find  
 The Witch found one,—and so they took their fill  
 Of happiness in marriage warm and kind.  
 Friends who by practice of some envious skill,  
 Were torn apart, a wide wound, mind from mind!  
 She did unite again with visions clear  
 Of deep affection and of truth sincere.

## LXXVIII.

These were the pranks she played among the cities  
Of mortal men, and what she did to sprites  
And Gods, entangling them in her sweet ditties  
To do her will, and shew their subtle slights,  
I will declare another time ; for it is  
A tale more fit for the weird winter nights—  
Than for these garish summer days, when we  
Scarcely believe much more than we can see.



LETTER TO \_\_\_\_\_



## LETTER TO \_\_\_\_\_

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*Leghorn, July 1, 1820.*

THE spider spreads her webs, whether she be  
In poet's tower, cellar, or barn, or tree ;  
The silkworm in the dark green mulberry leaves  
His winding sheet and cradle ever weaves ;  
So I, a thing whom moralists call worm,  
Sit spinning still round this decaying form,  
From the fine threads of rare and subtle thought—  
No net of words in garish colours wrought  
To catch the idle buzzers of the day—  
But a soft cell, where when that fades away,  
Memory may clothe in wings my living name  
And feed it with the asphodels of fame,  
Which in those hearts which most remember me  
Grow, making love an immortality.

Whoever should behold me now, I wist,  
Would think I were a mighty mechanist,  
Bent with sublime Archimedean art  
To breathe a soul into the iron heart  
Of some machine portentous, or strange gin,  
Which by the force of figured spells might win

Its way over the sea, and sport therein ;  
 For round the walls are hung dread engines, such  
 As Vulcan never wrought for Jove to clutch  
 Ixion or the Titan :—or the quick  
 Wit of that man of God, St. Dominic,  
 To convince Atheist, Turk, or Heretic ;  
 Or those in philosophic councils met,  
 Who thought to pay some interest for the debt  
 They owed \* \* \* \* \*  
 By giving a faint foretaste of damnation  
 To Shakespear, Sidney, Spenser and the rest  
 Who made our land an island of the blest,  
 When lamp-like Spain, who now relumes her fire  
 On Freedom's hearth, grew dim with Empire :—  
 With thumbscrews, wheels, with tooth and spike and jag,  
 Which fishes found under the utmost crag  
 Of Cornwall and the storm-encompassed isles,  
 Where to the sky the rude sea seldom smiles  
 Unless in treacherous wrath, as on the morn  
 When the exulting elements in scorn  
 Satiated with destroyed destruction, lay  
 Sleeping in beauty on their mangled prey,  
 As panthers sleep :—and other strange and dread  
 Magical forms the brick floor overspread——  
 Proteus transformed to metal did not make  
 More figures, or more strange ; nor did he take  
 Such shapes of unintelligible brass,  
 Or heap himself in such a horrid mass  
 Of tin and iron not to be understood,  
 And forms of unimaginable wood,  
 To puzzle Tubal Cain and all his brood :  
 Great screws, and cones ; and wheels, and grooved blocks,

The elements of what will stand the shocks  
Of wave and wind and time.—Upon the table  
More knacks and quips there be than I am able  
To catalogize in this verse of mine :—  
A pretty bowl of wood—not full of wine,  
But quicksilver; that dew which the gnomes drink  
When at their subterranean toil they swink,  
Pledging the demons of the earthquake, who  
Reply to them in lava-cry, halloo!  
And call out to the cities o'er their head,—  
Roofs, towns and shrines,—the dying and the dead  
Crash through the chinks of earth—and then all quaff  
Another rouse, and hold their sides and laugh.  
This quicksilver no gnome has drunk—within  
The walnut bowl it lies, veined and thin,  
In colour like the wake of light that stains  
The Tuscan deep, when from the moist moon rains  
The inmost shower of it's white fire—the breeze  
Is still—blue heaven smiles over the pale seas.  
And in this bowl of quicksilver—for I  
Yield to the impulse of an infancy  
Outlasting manhood—I have made to float  
A rude idealism of a paper boat—  
A hollow screw with cogs—Henry will know  
The thing I mean and laugh at me,—if so  
He fears not I should do more mischief.—Next  
Lie bills and calculations much perplexed,  
With steam-boats, frigates, and machinery quaint  
Traced over them in blue and yellow paint.  
Then comes a range of mathematical  
Instruments, for plans nautical and statical,  
A heap of rosin, a green broken glass

With ink in it;—a china cup that was  
 What it will never be again, I think,  
 A thing from which sweet lips were wont to drink  
 The liquor doctors rail at—and which I  
 Will quaff in spite of them—and when we die  
 We'll toss up who died first of drinking tea,  
 And cry out,—heads or tails? where'er we be.  
 Near that a dusty paint box, some old hooks,  
 An half-burnt match, an ivory block, three books,  
 Where conic sections, spherics, logarithms,  
 To great Laplace, from Saunderson and Sims,  
 Lie heaped in their harmonious disarray  
 Of figures,—disentangle them who may.  
 Baron de Tott's memoirs beside them lie,  
 And some odd volumes of old chemistry.  
 Near them a most inexplicable thing,  
 With least in the middle—I'm conjecturing  
 How to make Henry understand;—but—no,  
 I'll leave, as Spenser says, with many mo,  
 This secret in the pregnant womb of time,  
 Too vast a matter for so weak a rhyme.

And here like some weird Archimage sit I,  
 Plotting dark spells, and devilish enginery,  
 The self-impelling steam-wheels of the mind  
 Which pump up oaths from clergymen, and grind  
 The gentle spirit of our meek reviews  
 Into a powdery foam of salt abuse,  
 Ruffling the ocean of their self content;—  
 I sit—and smile or sigh as is my bent,  
 But not for them—Libeccio rushes round  
 With an inconstant and an idle sound,

I heed him more than them—the thunder-smoke  
Is gathering on the mountains, like a cloak  
Folded athwart their shoulders broad and bare ;  
The ripe corn under the undulating air  
Undulates like an ocean ;—and the vines  
Are trembling wide in all their trelliced lines—  
The murmur of the awakening sea doth fill  
The empty pauses of the blast ;—the hill  
Looks hoary through the white electric rain,  
And from the glens beyond, in sullen strain  
The interrupted thunder howls ; above  
One chasm of heaven smiles, like the age of love  
On the unquiet world ;—while such things are,  
How could one worth your friendship heed the war  
Of worms ? The shriek of the world's carrion jays,  
Their censure, or their wonder, or their praise ?

You are not here ! the quaint witch Memory sees  
In vacant chairs, your absent images,  
And points where once you sat, and now should be  
But are not.—I demand if ever we  
Shall meet as then we met ;—and she replies,  
Veiling in awe her second-sighted eyes ;  
“ I know the past alone—but summon home  
“ My sister Hope, she speaks of all to come.”  
But I, an old diviner, who know well  
Every false verse of that sweet oracle,  
Turned to the sad enchantress once again,  
And sought a respite from my gentle pain,  
In acting every passage o'er and o'er  
Of our communion.—How on the sea shore  
We watched the ocean and the sky together,

Under the roof of blue Italian weather ;  
How I ran home through last year's thunder-storm,  
And felt the transverse lightning linger warm  
Upon my cheek :—and how we often made  
Treats for each other, where good will outweighed  
The frugal luxury of our country cheer,  
As it well might, were it less firm and clear  
Than ours must ever be ;—and how we spun  
A shroud of talk to hide us from the sun  
Of this familiar life, which seems to be  
But is not,—or is but quaint mockery  
Of all we would believe ; or sadly blame  
The jarring and inexplicable frame  
Of this wrong world :—and then anatomize  
The purposes and thoughts of men whose eyes  
Were closed in distant years ;—or widely guess  
The issue of the earth's great business,  
When we shall be as we no longer are ;  
Like babbling gossips safe, who hear the war  
Of winds, and sigh, but tremble not ; or how  
You listened to some interrupted flow  
Of visionary rhyme ;—in joy and pain  
Struck from the inmost fountains of my brain,  
With little skill perhaps ;—or how we sought  
Those deepest wells of passion or of thought  
Wrought by wise poets in the waste of years,  
Staining the sacred waters with our tears ;  
Quenching a thirst ever to be renewed !  
Or how I, wisest lady ! then indued  
The language of a land which now is free,  
And winged with thoughts of truth and majesty,  
Flits round the tyrant's sceptre like a cloud,

And bursts the peopled prisons, and cries aloud,  
 “ My name is Legion ! ” — that majestic tongue  
 Which Calderon over the desert flung  
 Of ages and of nations ; and which found  
 An echo in our hearts, and with the sound  
 Startled oblivion ; — thou wert then to me  
 As is a nurse — when inarticulately  
 A child would talk as its grown parents do.  
 If living winds the rapid clouds pursue,  
 If hawks chase doves through the aerial way,  
 Huntsmen the innocent deer, and beasts their prey,  
 Why should not we rouse with the spirit’s blast  
 Out of the forest of the pathless past  
 These recollected pleasures ?

You are now

In London, that great sea, whose ebb and flow  
 At once is deaf and loud, and on the shore  
 Vomits its wrecks, and still howls on for more.  
 Yet in its depth what treasures ! You will see  
 \* \* \* \* \*

You will see C — ; he who sits obscure  
 In the exceeding lustre and the pure  
 Intense irradiation of a mind,  
 Which, with its own internal lustre blind,  
 Flags wearily through darkness and despair —  
 A cloud-encircled meteor of the air,  
 A hooded eagle among blinking owls.  
 You will see H — t ; one of those happy souls  
 Which are the salt of the earth, and without whom  
 This world would smell like what it is — a tomb ;  
 Who is, what others seem ; — his room no doubt

Is still adorned by many a cast from Shout,  
With graceful flowers, tastefully placed about ;  
And coronals of bay from ribbons hung,  
And brighter wreaths in neat disorder flung,  
The gifts of the most learn'd among some dozens  
Of female friends, sisters-in-law and cousins.  
And there is he with his eternal puns,  
Which beat the dullest brain for smiles, like duns  
Thundering for money at a poet's door ;  
Alas ! it is no use to say, " I'm poor !"  
Or oft in graver mood, when he will look  
Things wiser than were ever said in book,  
Except in Shakespear's wisest tenderness.  
You will see H—, and I cannot express  
His virtues, though I know that they are great,  
Because he locks, then barricades, the gate  
Within which they inhabit ;—of his wit  
And wisdom, you'll cry out when you are bit.  
He is a pearl within an oyster shell,  
One of the richest of the deep. And there  
Is English P— with his mountain Fair  
Turned into a Flamingo,—that shy bird  
That gleams i'the Indian air. Have you not heard  
When a man marries, dies, or turns Hindoo,  
His best friends hear no more of him ? but you  
Will see him and will like him too, I hope,  
With the milk-white Snowdonian Antelope  
Matched with this cameleopard ; his fine wit  
Makes such a wound, the knife is lost in it ;  
A strain too learned for a shallow age,  
Too wise for selfish bigots ;—let his page  
Which charms the chosen spirits of the age,

Fold itself up for a serener clime  
Of years to come, and find its recompense  
In that just expectation. Wit and sense,  
Virtue and human knowledge, all that might  
Make this dull world a business of delight,  
Are all combined in H. S.—And these,  
With some exceptions, which I need not tease  
Your patience by descanting on, are all  
You and I know in London.

I recal

My thoughts and bid you look upon the night.  
As water does a sponge, so the moonlight  
Fills the void, hollow, universal air.  
What see you?—Unpavilioned heaven is fair,  
Whether the moon, into her chamber gone,  
Leaves midnight to the golden stars, or wan  
Climbs with diminished beams the azure steep;  
Or whether clouds sail o'er the inverse deep,  
Piloted by the many wandering blast,  
And the rare stars rush through them, dim and fast.  
All this is beautiful in every land.  
But what see you beside? A shabby stand  
Of hackney-coaches—a brick house or wall,  
Fencing some lonely court, white with the scrawl  
Of our unhappy politics;—or worse—  
A wretched woman reeling by, whose curse  
Mixed with the watchman's, partner of her trade,  
You must accept in place of serenade—

I see a chaos of green leaves and fruit  
Built round dark caverns; even to the root

Of the living stems who feed them ; in whose bowers  
 There sleep in their dark dew the folded flowers ;  
 Beyond, the surface of the unsickled corn  
 Trembles not in the slumbering air, and borne  
 In circles quaint, and ever changing dance,  
 Like winged stars the fire-flies flash and glance  
 Pale in the open moonshine ; but each one  
 Under the dark trees seems a little sun,  
 A meteor tamed ; a fixed star gone astray  
 From the silver regions of the milky way.  
 Afar the Contadino's song is heard,  
 Rude, but made sweet by distance ;—and a bird  
 Which cannot be a nightingale, and yet  
 I know none else that sings so sweet as it  
 At this late hour ;—and then all is still :—  
 Now Italy or London, which you will !

Next winter you must pass with me ; I'll have  
 My house by that time turned into a grave  
 Of dead despondence and low-thoughted care,  
 And all the dreams which our tormentors are.  
 Oh that H—— ——— and ——— were there,  
 With every thing belonging to them fair !—  
 We will have books ; Spanish, Italian, Greek,

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

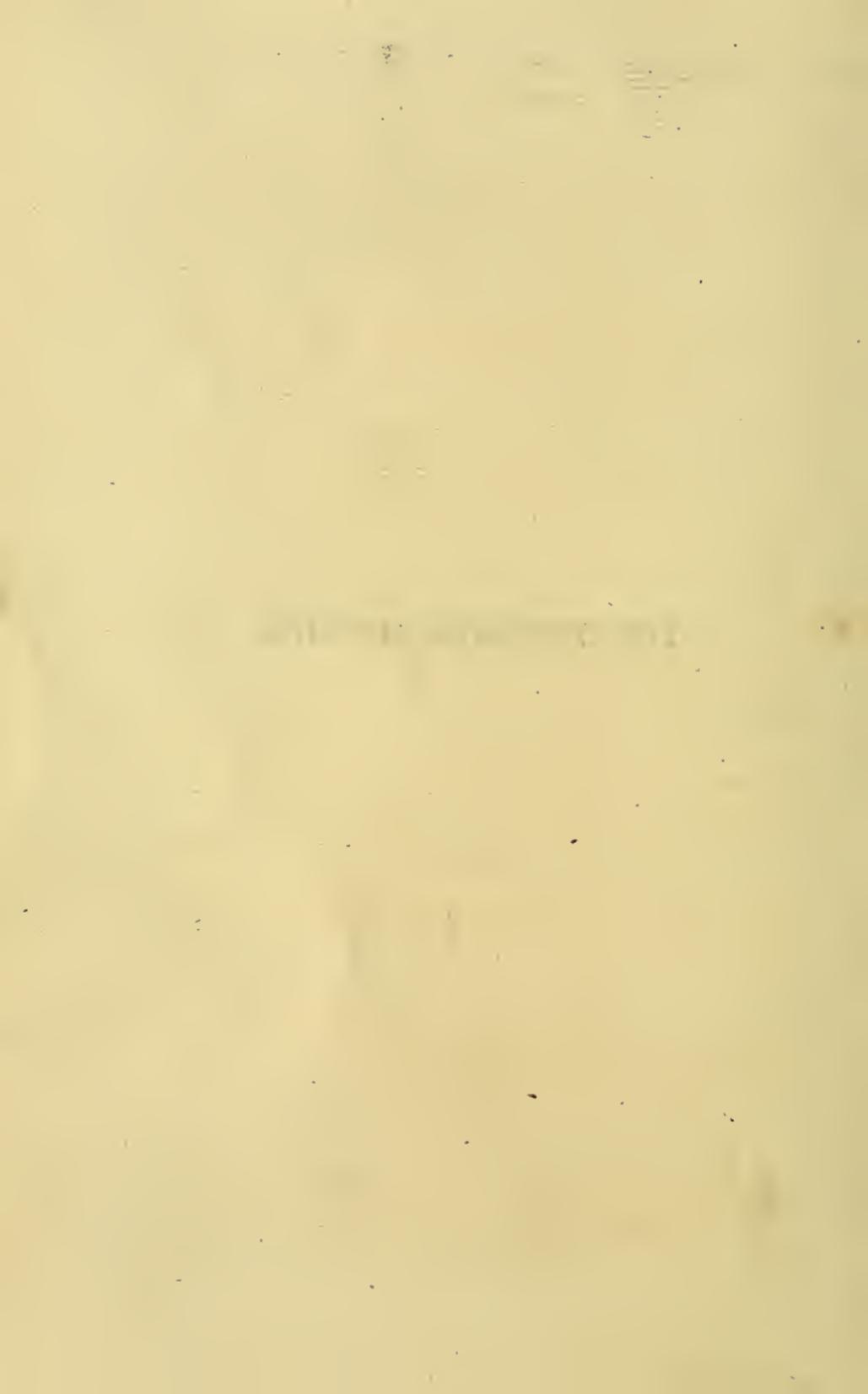
Though we eat little flesh and drink no wine,  
 Yet let's be merry : we'll have tea and toast ;  
 Custards for supper, and an endless host  
 Of syllabubs and jellies and mince-pies,  
 And other such lady-like luxuries,—

Feasting on which we will philosophise.  
And we'll have fires out of the Grand Duke's wood,  
To thaw the six weeks winter in our blood.  
And then we'll talk;—what shall we talk about?  
Oh! there are themes enough for many a bout  
Of thought-entangled descant;—as to nerves  
With cones and parallelograms and curves,  
I've sworn to strangle them if once they dare  
To bother me,—when you are with me there.  
And they shall never more sip laudanum  
From Helicon or Himeros;\*—we'll come  
And in despite of \* \* \* and of the devil,  
Will make our friendly philosophic revel  
Outlast the leafless time;—till buds and flowers  
Warn the obscure, inevitable hours  
Sweet meeting by sad parting to renew;—  
“ To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.”

\* Ἴμερος, from which the river Himera was named, is, with some slight shade of difference, a synonyme of Love.



**THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE.**



## THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE.

---

SWIFT as a spirit hastening to his task  
Of glory and of good, the Sun sprang forth  
Rejoicing in his splendour, and the mask

Of darkness fell from the awakened Earth—  
The smokeless altars of the mountain snows  
Flamed above crimson clouds, and at the birth

Of light, the Ocean's orison arose,  
To which the birds tempered their matin lay.  
All flowers in field or forest which unclose

Their trembling eyelids to the kiss of day,  
Swinging their censers in the element,  
With orient incense lit by the new ray

Burned slow and inconsumably, and sent  
Their odorous sighs up to the smiling air;  
And, in succession due, did continent,

Isle, ocean, and all things that in them wear  
The form and character of mortal mould,  
Rise as the sun their father rose, to bear

Their portion of the toil, which he of old  
Took as his own and then imposed on them :  
But I, whom thoughts which must remain untold

Had kept as wakeful as the stars that gem  
The cone of night, now they were laid asleep  
Stretched my faint limbs beneath the hoary stem

Which an old chesnut flung athwart the steep  
Of a green Apennine: before me fled  
The night ; behind me rose the day ; the deep

Was at my feet, and Heaven above my head,  
When a strange trance over my fancy grew  
Which was not slumber, for the shade it spread

Was so transparent, that the scene came through  
As clear as when a veil of light is drawn  
O'er evening hills they glimmer ; and I knew

That I had felt the freshness of that dawn,  
Bathed in the same cold dew my brow and hair,  
And sate as thus upon that slope of lawn

Under the self same bough, and heard as there  
The birds, the fountains and the ocean hold  
Sweet talk in music through the enamoured air,  
And then a vision on my brain was rolled.

---

As in that trance of wondrous thought I lay,  
This was the tenour of my waking dream :—  
Methought I sate beside a public way

Thick strewn with summer dust, and a great stream  
Of people there was hurrying to and fro,  
Numerous as gnats upon the evening gleam,

All hastening onward, yet none seemed to know  
Whither he went, or whence he came, or why  
He made one of the multitude, and so

Was borne amid the crowd, as through the sky  
One of the million leaves of summer's bier ;  
Old age and youth, manhood and infancy

Mixed in one mighty torrent did appear,  
Some flying from the thing they feared, and some  
Seeking the object of another's fear ;

And others as with steps towards the tomb,  
Pored on the trodden worms that crawled beneath,  
And others mournfully within the gloom

Of their own shadow walked and called it death ;  
And some fled from it as it were a ghost,  
Half fainting in the affliction of vain breath :

But more with motions, which each other crost,  
Pursued or spurned the shadows the clouds threw,  
Or birds within the noon-day ether lost,

Upon that path where flowers never grew,  
And weary with vain toil and faint for thirst,  
Heard not the fountains, whose melodious dew

Out of their mossy cells for ever burst ;  
Nor felt the breeze which from the forest told  
Of grassy paths and wood, lawn-interspersed,

With over-arching elms and caverns cold,  
And violet banks where sweet dreams brood, but they  
Pursued their serious folly as of old.

And as I gazed, methought that in the way  
The throng grew wilder, as the woods of June  
When the south wind shakes the extinguished day,

And a cold glare, intenser than the noon,  
But icy cold, obscured with [blinding] light  
The sun, as he the stars. Like the young moon

When on the sunlit limits of the night  
Her white shell trembles amid crimson air,  
And whilst the sleeping tempest gathers might,

Doth, as the herald of its coming, bear  
The ghost of its dead mother, whose dim frown  
Bends in dark ether from her infant's chair,—

So came a chariot on the silent storm  
Of its own rushing splendour, and a Shape  
So sate within, as one whom years deform,

Beneath a dusky hood and double cape,  
Crouching within the shadow of a tomb,  
And o'er what seemed the head a cloud-like crape.





Outspeed the chariot, and without repose  
Mix with each other in tempestuous measure  
To savage music, wilder as it grows,

They, tortured by their agonizing pleasure,  
Convulsed and on the rapid whirlwinds spun  
Of that fierce spirit, whose unholy leisure

Was soothed by mischief since the world begun,  
Throw back their heads and loose their streaming hair ;  
And in their dance round her who dims the sun,

Maidens and youths fling their wild arms in air  
As their feet twinkle ; they recede, and now  
Bending within each other's atmosphere

Kindle invisibly—and as they glow,  
Like moths by light attracted and repelled,  
Oft to their bright destruction come and go,

Till like two clouds into one vale impelled  
That shake the mountains when their lightnings mingle  
And die in rain—the fiery band which held

Their natures, snaps—the shock still may tingle ;  
One falls and then another in the path  
Senseless—nor is the desolation single,

Yet ere I can say *where*—the chariot hath  
Past over them—nor other trace I find  
But as of foam after the ocean's wrath

Is spent upon the desert shore ;—behind,  
 Old men and women foully disarrayed,  
 Shake their grey hairs in the insulting wind,

To seek, to [        ], to strain with limbs decayed,  
 Limping to reach the light which leaves them still  
 Farther behind and deeper in the shade.

But not the less with impotence of will  
 They wheel, though ghastly shadows interpose  
 Round them and round each other; and fulfil

Their work, and in the dust from whence they rose  
 Sink, and corruption veils them as they lie,  
 And past in these performs what [                    ] in those.

Struck to the heart by this sad pageantry,  
 Half to myself I said—And what is this?  
 Whose shape is that within the car? . And why—

I would have added—is all here amiss?—  
 But a voice answered—“ Life ! ”—I turned, and knew  
 (Oh Heaven, have mercy on such wretchedness !)

That what I thought was an old root which grew  
 To strange distortion out of the hill side,  
 Was indeed one of those deluded crew,

And that the grass, which methought hung so wide  
 And white, was but his thin discoloured hair,  
 And that the holes it vainly sought to hide,

Were or had been eyes :—" If thou canst, forbear  
To join the dance, which I had well foreborne!"  
Said the grim Feature of my thought: " Aware,

" I will unfold that which to this deep scorn  
Led me and my companions, and relate  
The progress of the pageant since the morn;

" If thirst of knowledge shall not then abate,  
Follow it thou even to the night, but I  
Am weary."—Then like one who with the weight

Of his own words is staggered, wearily  
He paused; and ere he could resume, I cried:  
" First, who art thou?"—" Before thy memory,

" I feared, loved, hated, suffered, did and died,  
And if the spark with which Heaven lit my spirit  
Had been with purer sentiment supplied,

" Corruption would not now thus much inherit  
Of what was once Rousseau,—nor this disguise  
Stained that which ought to have disdained to wear it;

" If I have been extinguished, yet there rise  
A thousand beacons from the spark I bore"—  
" And who are those chained to the car?"—" The wise,

" The great, the unforgotten,—they who wore  
Mitres and helms and crowns, or wreaths of light,  
Signs of thought's empire over thought—their lore

“ Taught them not this, to know themselves ; their might  
Could not repress the mystery within,  
And for the morn of truth they feigned, deep night

“ Caught them ere evening.”—“ Who is he with chin  
Upon his breast, and hands crost on his chain?”—  
“ The Child of a fierce hour ; he sought to win

“ The world, and lost all that it did contain  
Of greatness, in its hope destroyed ; and more  
Of fame and peace than virtue’s self can gain

“ Without the opportunity which bore  
Him on its eagle pinions to the peak  
From which a thousand climbers have before

“ Fall’n, as Napoleon fell.”—I felt my cheek  
Alter, to see the shadow pass away  
Whose grasp had left the giant world so weak,

That every pigmy kicked it as it lay ;  
And much I grieved to think how power and will  
In opposition rule our mortal day,

And why God made irreconcilable  
Good and the means of good ; and for despair  
I half disdained mine eyes’ desire to fill

With the spent vision of the times that were  
And scarce have ceased to be.—“ Dost thou behold,”  
Said my guide, “ those spoilers spoiled, Voltaire,

“ Frederic, and Paul, Catherine, and Leopold,  
And hoary anarchs, demagogues, and sage—  
—— name the world thinks always old,

“ For in the battle, life and they did wage,  
She remained conqueror. I was overcome  
By my own heart alone, which neither age,

“ Nor tears, nor infamy, nor now the tomb  
Could temper to its object.”—“ Let them pass,”  
I cried, “ the world and its mysterious doom

“ Is not so much more glorious than it was,  
That I desire to worship those who drew  
New figures on its false and fragile glass

“ As the old faded.”—“ Figures ever new  
Rise on the bubble, paint them as you may;  
We have but thrown, as those before us threw,

“ Our shadows on it as it past away.  
But mark how chained to the triumphal chair  
The mighty phantoms of an elder day;

“ All that is mortal of great Plato there  
Expiates the joy and woe his master knew not;  
The star that ruled his doom was far too fair,

“ And life, where long that flower of Heaven grew not,  
Conquered that heart by love, which gold, or pain,  
Or age, or sloth, or slavery could subdue not.



[There is a chasm here in the MS. which it is impossible to fill up. It appears from the context, that other shapes pass, and that Rousseau still stood beside the dreamer, as]—

———— he pointed to a company,  
Midst whom I quickly recognised the heirs  
Of Cæsar's crime, from him to Constantine;  
The anarch chiefs, whose force and murderous snares

Had founded many a sceptre-bearing line,  
And spread the plague of gold and blood abroad:  
And Gregory and John, and men divine,

Who rose like shadows between man and God;  
Till that eclipse, still hanging over heaven,  
Was worshipped by the world o'er which they strode,

For the true sun it quenched—" Their power was given  
But to destroy," replied the leader:—" I  
Am one of those who have created, even

" If it be but a world of agony."—

" Whence comest thou? and whither goest thou?  
How did thy course begin?" I said, " and why?

" Mine eyes are sick of this perpetual flow  
Of people, and my heart sick of one sad thought—  
Speak!"—" Whence I am, I partly seem to know,

" And how and by what paths I have been brought  
To this dread pass, methinks even thou mayst guess;—  
Why this should be, my mind can compass not;

“ Whither the conqueror hurries me, still less ;—  
But follow thou, and from spectator turn  
Actor or victim in this wretchedness,

“ And what thou wouldst be taught I then may learn  
From thee. Now listen :—In the April prime,  
When all the forest tips began to burn

“ With kindling green, touched by the azure clime  
Of the young year’s dawn, I was laid asleep  
Under a mountain, which from unknown time

“ Had yawned into a cavern, high and deep ;  
And from it came a gentle rivulet,  
Whose water, like clear air, in its calm sweep

“ Bent the soft grass, and kept forever wet  
The stems of the sweet flowers, and filled the grove  
With sounds, which whoso hears must needs forget

“ All pleasure and all pain, all hate and love,  
Which they had known before that hour of rest ;  
A sleeping mother then would dream not of

“ Her only child who died upon her breast  
At eventide—a king would mourn no more  
The crown of which his brows were dispossesst

“ When the sun lingered o’er his ocean floor,  
To gild his rival’s new prosperity.  
Thou wouldst forget thus vainly to deplore

“ Ills, which if ills can find no cure from thee,  
The thought of which no other sleep will quell,  
Nor other music blot from memory,

“ So sweet and deep is the oblivious spell;  
And whether life had been before that sleep  
The heaven which I imagine, or a hell

“ Like this harsh world in which I wake to weep,  
I know not. I arose, and for a space  
The scene of woods and waters seemed to keep,

“ Though it was now broad day, a gentle trace  
Of light diviner than the common sun  
Sheds on the common earth, and all the place

“ Was filled with magic sounds woven into one  
Oblivious melody, confusing sense  
Amid the gliding waves and shadows dun;

“ And, as I looked, the bright omnipresence  
Of morning through the orient cavern flowed,  
And the sun's image radiantly intense

“ Burned on the waters of the well that glowed  
Like gold, and threaded all the forest's maze  
With winding paths of emerald fire; there stood

“ Amid the sun, as he amid the blaze  
Of his own glory, on the vibrating  
Floor of the fountain, paved with flashing rays,

“ A Shape, all light, which with one hand did fling  
Dew on the earth, as if she were the dawn,  
And the invisible rain did ever sing

“ A silver music on the mossy lawn ;  
And still before me on the dusky grass,  
Iris her many-coloured scarf had drawn :

“ In her right hand she bore a crystal glass,  
Mantling with bright Nepenthe ; the fierce splendour  
Fell from her as she moved under the mass

“ Out of the deep cavern, with palms so tender,  
Their tread broke not the mirror of its billow ;  
She glided along the river, and did bend her

“ Head under the dark boughs, till like a willow,  
Her fair hair swept the bosom of the stream  
That whispered with delight to be its pillow.

“ As one enamoured is upborne in dream  
O'er lily-paven lakes mid silver mist,  
To wondrous music, so this shape might seem

“ Partly to tread the waves with feet which kissed  
The dancing foam ; partly to glide along  
The air which roughened the moist amethyst,

“ Or the faint morning beams that fell among  
The trees, or the soft shadows of the trees ;  
And her feet, ever to the ceaseless song

“ Of leaves, and winds, and waves, and birds, and bees,  
And falling drops, moved to a measure new  
Yet sweet, as on the summer evening breeze,

“ Up from the lake a shape of golden dew  
Between two rocks, athwart the rising moon,  
Dances i' the wind, where never eagle flew ;

“ And still her feet, no less than the sweet tune  
To which they moved, seemed as they moved, to blot  
The thoughts of him who gazed on them ; and soon

“ All that was, seemed as if it had been not ;  
And all the gazer's mind was strewn beneath  
Her feet like embers ; and she, thought by thought,

“ Trampled its sparks into the dust of death ;  
As day upon the threshold of the east  
Treads out the lamps of night, until the breath

“ Of darkness re-illumine even the least  
Of heaven's living eyes—like day she came,  
Making the night a dream ; and ere she ceased

“ To move, as one between desire and shame  
Suspended, I said—If, as it doth seem,  
Thou comest from the realm without a name,

“ Into this valley of perpetual dream,  
Shew whence I came, and where I am, and why—  
Pass not away upon the passing stream.

“ Arise and quench thy thirst, was her reply.  
And as a shut lily, stricken by the wand  
Of dewy morning’s vital alchemy,

“ I rose; and, bending at her sweet command,  
Touched with faint lips the cup she raised,  
And suddenly my brain became as sand

“ Where the first wave had more than half erased  
The track of deer on desert Labrador;  
Whilst the wolf, from which they fled amazed,

“ Leaves his stamp visibly upon the shore,  
Until the second bursts;—so on my sight  
Burst a new vision, never seen before,

“ And the fair shape waned in the coming light,  
As veil by veil the silent splendour drops  
From Lucifer, amid the chrysolite

“ Of sun-rise, ere it tinge the mountain tops;  
And as the presence of that fairest planet,  
Although unseen, is felt by one who hopes

“ That his day’s path may end as he began it,  
In that star’s smile, whose light is like the scent  
Of a jonquil when evening breezes fan it,

“ Or the soft note in which his dear lament  
The Brescian shepherd breathes, or the caress  
That turned his weary slumber to content;\*

\* The favorite song, “ *Stanco di pascolar le peccorelle,*” is a Brescian national air.

“ So knew I in that light’s severe excess  
The presence of that shape which on the stream  
Moved, as I moved along the wilderness,

“ More dimly than a day-appearing dream,  
The ghost of a forgotten form of sleep;  
A light of heaven, whose half-extinguished beam

“ Through the sick day in which we wake to weep,  
Glimmers, for ever sought, for ever lost;  
So did that shape its obscure tenour keep

“ Beside my path, as silent as a ghost;  
But the new Vision, and the cold bright car,  
With solemn speed and stunning music, crost

“ The forest, and as if from some dread war  
Triumphantly returning, the loud million  
Fiercely extolled the fortune of her star.

“ A moving arch of victory, the vermilion  
And green and azure plumes of Iris had  
Built high over her wind-winged pavilion,

“ And underneath ethereal glory clad  
The wilderness, and far before her flew  
The tempest of the splendour, which forbade

“ Shadow to fall from leaf and stone; the crew  
Seemed in that light, like atomies to dance  
Within a sunbeam;—some upon the new

“ Embroidery of flowers, that did enhance  
The grassy vesture of the desert, played,  
Forgetful of the chariot’s swift advance ;

“ Others stood gazing, till within the shade  
Of the great mountain its light left them dim ;  
Others outspeeded it ; and others made

“ Circles around it, like the clouds that swim  
Round the high moon in a bright sea of air ;  
And more did follow, with exulting hymn,

“ The chariot and the captives fettered there :—  
But all like bubbles on an eddying flood  
Fell into the same track at last, and were

“ Borne onward.—I among the multitude  
Was swept—me, sweetest flowers delayed not long ;  
Me, not the shadow nor the solitude ;

“ Me, not that falling stream’s Lethean song ;  
Me, not the phantom of that early form,  
Which moved upon its motion—but among

“ The thickest billows of that living storm  
I plunged, and bared my bosom to the clime  
Of that cold light, whose airs too soon deform.

“ Before the chariot had begun to climb  
The opposing steep of that mysterious dell,  
Behold a wonder worthy of the rhyme

“ Of him who from the lowest depths of hell,  
Through every paradise and through all glory,  
Love led serene, and who returned to tell

“ The words of hate and care ; the wondrous story  
How all things are transfigured except Love ;  
For deaf as is a sea, which wrath makes hoary,

“ The world can hear not the sweet notes that move  
The sphere whose light is melody to lovers—  
A wonder worthy of his rhyme—the grove

“ Grew dense with shadows to its inmost covers,  
The earth was grey with phantoms, and the air  
Was peopled with dim forms, as when there hovers

“ A flock of vampire-bats before the glare  
Of the tropic sun, bringing, ere evening,  
Strange night upon some Indian vale ;—thus were

“ Phantoms diffused around ; and some did fling  
Shadows of shadows, yet unlike themselves,  
Behind them ; some like eaglets on the wing

“ Were lost in the white day ; others like elves  
Danced in a thousand unimagined shapes  
Upon the sunny streams and grassy shelves ;

“ And others sate chattering like restless apes  
On vulgar hands, \* \* \* \* \*  
Some made a cradle of the ermined capes

“ Of kingly mantles ; some across the tire  
Of pontiffs rode, like demons ; others played  
Under the crown which girt with empire

“ A baby’s or an ideot’s brow, and made  
Their nests in it. The old anatomies  
Sate hatching their bare broods under the shade

“ Of demon wings, and laughed from their dead eyes  
To reassume the delegated power,  
Array’d in which those worms did monarchize,

“ Who make this earth their charnel. Others more  
Humble, like falcons, sate upon the fist  
Of common men, and round their heads did soar ;

“ Or like small gnats and flies, as thick as mist  
On evening marshes, thronged about the brow  
Of lawyers, statesmen, priest and theorist ;—

“ And others, like discoloured flakes of snow  
On fairest bosoms and the sunniest hair,  
Fell, and were melted by the youthful glow

“ Which they extinguished ; and, like tears, they were  
A veil to those from whose faint lids they rained  
In drops of sorrow. I became aware

“ Of whence those forms proceeded which thus stained  
The track in which we moved. After brief space,  
From every form the beauty slowly waned ;

“ From every firmest limb and fairest face  
The strength and freshness fell like dust, and left  
The action and the shape without the grace

“ Of life. The marble brow of youth was cleft  
With care; and in those eyes where once hope shone,  
Desire, like a lioness bereft

“ Of her last cub, glared ere it died; each one  
Of that great crowd sent forth incessantly  
These shadows, numerous as the dead leaves blown

“ In autumn evening from a poplar tree.  
Each like himself and like each other were  
At first; but some distorted seemed to be

“ Obscure clouds, moulded by the casual air;  
And of this stuff the car's creative ray  
Wrapt all the busy phantoms that were there,

“ As the sun shapes the clouds; thus on the way  
Mask after mask fell from the countenance  
And form of all; and long before the day

“ Was old, the joy which waked like heaven's glance  
The sleepers in the oblivious valley, died;  
And some grew weary of the ghastly dance,

“ And fell, as I have fallen, by the way side;—  
Those soonest from whose forms most shadows past,  
And least of strength and beauty did abide.

“ Then, what is life? I cried.”—



# FRAGMENTS

FROM AN UNFINISHED DRAMA.



## FRAGMENTS

FROM AN UNFINISHED DRAMA.

---

HE came like a dream in the dawn of life,  
He fled like a shadow before its noon ;  
He is gone, and my peace is turned to strife,  
And I wander and wane like the weary moon.  
O sweet Echo wake,  
And for my sake  
Make answer the while my heart shall break !

But heart has a music which Echo's lips,  
Though tender and true, yet can answer not,  
And the shadow that moves in the soul's eclipse  
Can return not the kiss by his now forgot ;  
Sweet lips ! he who hath  
On my desolate path  
Cast the darkness of absence worse than death !

---

*Indian.* And if my grief should still be dearer to me  
Than all the pleasure in the world beside,  
Why would you lighten it ?—

*Lady.* I offer only  
That which I seek, some human sympathy  
In this mysterious island.

*The Indian.* Oh! my friend,  
My sister, my beloved! What do I say?  
My brain is dizzy and I scarce know whether  
I speak to thee or her. Peace, perturbed heart!  
I am to thee only as thou to mine,  
The passing wind which heals the brow at noon,  
And may strike cold into the breast at night,  
Yet cannot linger where it soothes the most,  
Or long soothe could it linger. But you said  
You also loved?

*Lady.* Loved! Oh, I love. Methinks  
This word of love is fit for all the world,  
And that for gentle hearts another name  
Would speak of gentler thoughts than the world owns.  
I have loved.

*The Indian.* And thou lovest not? if so  
Young as thou art thou canst afford to weep.

*Lady.* Oh! would that I could claim exemption  
From all the bitterness of that sweet name.  
I loved, I love, and when I love no more  
Let joys and grief perish, and leave despair  
To ring the knell of youth. He stood beside me,  
The embodied vision of the brightest dream,  
Which like a dawn heralds the day of life;  
The shadow of his presence made my world  
A paradise. All familiar things he touched,  
All common words he spoke, became to me  
Like forms and sounds of a diviner world.

He was as is the sun in his fierce youth,  
As terrible and lovely as a tempest;  
He came, and went, and left me what I am.  
Alas! Why must I think how oft we two  
Have sate together near the river springs,  
Under the green pavilion which the willow  
Spreads on the floor of the unbroken fountain,  
Strewn by the nurslings that linger there,  
Over that islet paved with flowers and moss,  
While the musk-rose leaves, like flakes of crimson snow,  
Showered on us, and the dove mourned in the pine,  
Sad prophetic of sorrows not our own.

*Indian.* Your breath is like soft music, your words are  
The echoes of a voice which on my heart  
Sleeps like a melody of early days.  
But as you said—

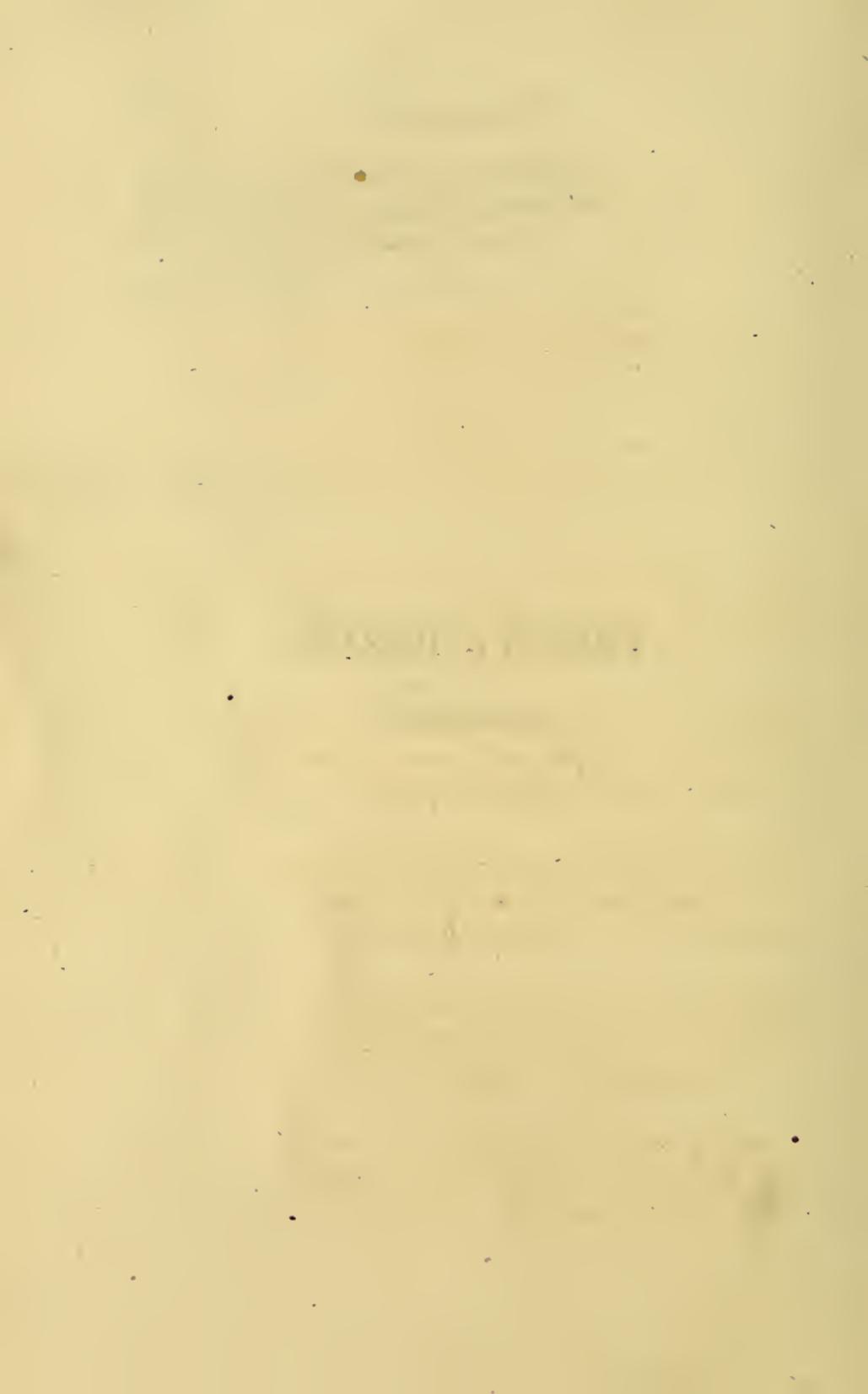
*Lady.* He was so awful, yet  
So beautiful in mystery and terror,  
Calming me as the loveliness of heaven  
Soothes the unquiet sea :—and yet not so,  
For he seemed stormy, and would often seem  
A quenchless sun masked in portentous clouds;  
For such his thoughts, and even his actions were;  
But he was not of them, nor they of him,  
But as they hid his splendour from the earth.  
Some said he was a man of blood and peril,  
And steeped in bitter infamy to the lips.  
More need was there I should be innocent,  
More need that I should be most true and kind,  
And much more need that there should be found one

To share remorse, and scorn and solitude,  
And all the ills that wait on those who do  
The tasks of ruin in the world of life.  
He fled and I have followed him.

*February, 1822.*

**PRINCE ATHANASE:**

**A FRAGMENT.**



## PRINCE ATHANASE:

### A FRAGMENT.

---

THERE was a youth, who, as with toil and travel,  
Had grown quite weak and grey before his time;  
Nor any could the restless griefs unravel

Which burned within him, withering up his prime  
And goading him, like fiends, from land to land.  
Not his the load of any secret crime,

For nought of ill his heart could understand,  
But pity and wild sorrow for the same;—  
Not his the thirst for glory or command

Baffled with blast of hope-consuming shame;  
Nor evil joys which fire the vulgar breast  
And quench in speedy smoke its feeblè flame,

Had left within his soul their dark unrest:  
Nor what religion fables of the grave  
Feared he,—Philosophy's accepted guest.

For none than he a purer heart could have,  
Or that loved good more for itself alone ;  
Of nought in heaven or earth was he the slave.

What sorrow deep, and shadowy, and unknown,  
Sent him, a hopeless wanderer, through mankind ?—  
If with a human sadness he did groan,

He had a gentle yet aspiring mind ;  
Just, innocent, with varied learning fed,  
And such a glorious consolation find

In others' joy, when all their own is dead :  
He loved, and laboured for his kind in grief,  
And yet, unlike all others, it is said,

That from such toil he never found relief ;  
Although a child of fortune and of power,  
Of an ancestral name the orphan chief.

His soul had wedded wisdom, and her dower  
Is love and justice, clothed in which he sate  
Apart from men, as in a lonely tower,

Pitying the tumult of their dark estate—  
Yet even in youth did he not e'er abuse  
The strength of wealth or thought, to consecrate

Those false opinions which the harsh rich use  
To blind the world they furnish for their pride ;  
Nor did he hold from any man his dues,

But like a steward in honest dealings tried,  
With those who toiled and wept, the poor and wise  
His riches and his cares he did divide.

Fearless he was, and scorning all disguise,  
What he dared do or think, though men might start,  
He spoke with mild yet unaverted eyes ;

Liberal he was of soul, and frank of heart,  
And to his many friends—all loved him well—  
Whate'er he knew or felt he would impart,

If words he found those inmost thoughts to tell ;  
If not, he smiled or wept ; and his weak foes  
He neither spurned nor hated, though with fell

And mortal hate their thousand voices rose,  
They past like aimless arrows from his ear—  
Nor did his heart or mind its portal close

To those, or them, or any whom life's sphere  
May comprehend within its wide array.  
What sadness made that vernal spirit sere ?

He knew not. Though his life, day after day,  
Was failing like an unreplenished stream,  
Though in his eyes a cloud and burthen lay,

Through which his soul, like Vespers' serene beam  
Piercing the chasms of ever rising clouds,  
Shone, softly burning ; though his lips did seem

Like reeds which quiver in impetuous floods ;  
And through his sleep, and o'er each waking hour,  
Thoughts after thoughts, unresting multitudes,

Were driven within him, by some secret power,  
Which bade them blaze, and live, and roll afar,  
Like lights and sounds, from haunted tower to tower

O'er castled mountains borne, when tempest's war  
Is levied by the night-contending winds,  
And the pale dalesmen watch with eager ear ;—

Though such were in his spirit, as the fiends  
Which wake and feed on everliving woe,—  
What was this grief, which ne'er in other minds

A mirror found,—he knew not—none could know ;  
But on who'er might question him he turned  
The light of his frank eyes, as if to show,

He knew not of the grief within that burned,  
But asked forbearance with a mournful look ;  
Or spoke in words from which none ever learned

The cause of his disquietude ; or shook  
With spasms of silent passion ; or turned pale :  
So that his friends soon rarely undertook

To stir his secret pain without avail ;—  
For all who knew and loved him then perceived  
That there was drawn an adamantine veil

Between his heart and mind,—both unrelieved  
Wrought in his brain and bosom separate strife.  
Some said that he was mad, others believed.

That memories of an antenatal life  
Made this, where now he dwelt, a penal hell;  
And others said that such mysterious grief

From God's displeasure, like a darkness, fell  
On souls like his which owned no higher law  
Than love; love calm, stedfast, invincible

By mortal fear or supernatural awe;  
And others,—“ 'Tis the shadow of a dream  
Which the veiled eye of memory never saw

“ But through the soul's abyss, like some dark stream  
Through shattered mines and caverns underground  
Rolls, shaking its foundations; and no beam

“ Of joy may rise, but it is quenched and drowned  
In the dim whirlpools of this dream obscure,  
Soon its exhausted waters will have found

“ A lair of rest beneath thy spirit pure,  
O Athanase!—in one so good and great,  
Evil or tumult cannot long endure.”

So spake they: idly of another's state  
Babbling vain words and fond philosophy;  
This was their consolation; such debate

Men held with one another ; nor did he  
Like one who labours with a human woe  
Decline this talk ; as if its theme might be

Another, not himself, he to and fro  
Questioned and canvassed it with subtlest wit,  
And none but those who loved him best could know

That which he knew not, how it galled and bit  
His weary mind, this converse vain and cold ;  
For like an eyeless night-mare grief did sit

Upon his being ; a snake which fold by fold  
Pressed out the life of life, a clinging fiend  
Which clenched him if he stirred with deadlier hold ;—  
And so his grief remained—let it remain—untold.\*

\* The Author was pursuing a fuller development of the ideal character of Athanase, when it struck him that in an attempt at extreme refinement and analysis, his conceptions might be betrayed into the assuming a morbid character. The reader will judge whether he is a loser or gainer by this difference.—*Author's Note.*

*December, 1817.*

**ODE TO NAPLES.**



## ODE TO NAPLES.\*

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### EPODE. I. α.

I STOOD within the city disinterred; †  
And heard the autumnal leaves like light footfalls  
Of spirits passing through the streets; and heard  
The Mountain's slumberous voice at intervals  
Thrill through those roofless halls;  
The oracular thunder penetrating shook  
The listening soul in my suspended blood;  
I felt that Earth out of her deep heart spoke—  
I felt, but heard not:—through white columns glowed  
The isle-sustaining Ocean-flood,  
A plane of light between two Heavens of azure:  
Around me gleamed many a bright sepulchre  
Of whose pure beauty, Time, as if his pleasure  
Were to spare Death, had never made erasure;  
But every living lineament was clear  
As in the sculptor's thought; and there  
The wreathes of stony myrtle, ivy and pine,

\* The Author has connected many recollections of his visit to Pompeii and Baia with the enthusiasm excited by the intelligence of the proclamation of a Constitutional Government at Naples. This has given a tinge of picturesque and descriptive imagery to the introductory Epodes which depict these scenes, and some of the majestic feelings permanently connected with the scene of this animating event.—*Author's Note.*

† Pompeii.

Like winter leaves o'ergrown by moulded snow,  
 Seemed only not to move and grow  
 Because the crystal silence of the air  
 Weighed on their life; even as the Power divine  
 Which then lulled all things, brooded upon mine.

## EPODE II. α.

Then gentle winds arose  
 With many a mingled close  
 Of wild Æolian sound and mountain odour keen;  
 And where the Baian ocean  
 Welters with airlike motion,  
 Within, above, around its bowers of starry green,  
 Moving the sea flowers in those purple caves  
 Even as the ever stormless atmosphere  
 Floats o'er the Elysian realm,  
 It bore me like an Angel, o'er the waves  
 Of sunlight, whose swift pinnacle of dewy air  
 No storm can overwhelm;  
 I sailed, where ever flows  
 Under the calm Serene  
 A spirit of deep emotion  
 From the unknown graves  
 Of the dead kings of Melody.\*  
 Shadowy Aornos darkened o'er the helm  
 The horizontal æther; heaven stript bare  
 Its depths over Elysium, where the prow  
 Made the invisible water white as snow;  
 From that Typhæan mount, Inarime  
 There streamed a sunlike vapour, like the standard  
 Of some ethereal host;  
 Whilst from all the coast,

\* Homer and Virgil.

Louder and louder, gathering round, there wandered  
 Over the oracular woods and divine sea  
 Propheesyings which grew articulate—  
 They seize me—I must speak them—be they fate!

STROPHE  $\alpha$ . I.

Naples! thou Heart of men which ever pantest  
 Naked, beneath the lidless eye of heaven!  
 Elysian City which to calm enchantest  
 The mutinous air and sea : they round thee, even  
 As sleep round Love, are driven!  
 Metropolis of a ruined Paradise  
 Long lost, late won, and yet but half regained!  
 Bright Altar of the bloodless sacrifice,  
 Which armed Victory offers up unstained  
 To Love, the flower-enchained!  
 Thou which wert once, and then didst cease to be,  
 Now art, and henceforth ever shalt be, free,  
 If Hope, and Truth, and Justice can avail,  
 Hail; hail, all hail!

STROPHE  $\beta$ . 2.

Thou youngest giant birth  
 Which from the groaning earth  
 Leap'st, clothed in armour of impenetrable scale!  
 Last, of the Intercessors!  
 Who 'gainst the Crowned Transgressors  
 Pleadest before God's love! Arrayed in Wisdom's mail,  
 Wave thy lightning lance in mirth  
 Nor let thy high heart fail,

Though from their hundred gates the leagued Oppressors,  
 With hurried legions move!  
 Hail, hail, all hail!

ANTISTROPHE  $\alpha$ .

What though Cimmerian Anarchs dare blaspheme  
 Freedom and thee? thy shield is as a mirror  
 To make their blind slaves see, and with fierce gleam  
 To turn his hungry sword upon the wearer,  
 A new Acteon's error  
 Shall their's have been—devoured by their own hounds!  
 Be thou like the imperial Basilisk  
 Killing thy foe with unapparent wounds!  
 Gaze on oppression, till at that dread risk  
 Aghast she pass from the Earth's disk,  
 Fear not, but gaze—for freemen mightier grow,  
 And slaves more feeble, gazing on their foe;  
 If Hope and Truth and Justice may avail,  
 Thou shalt be great—All hail!

ANTISTROPHE  $\beta$ . 2.

From Freedom's form divine,  
 From Nature's inmost shrine,  
 Strip every impious gawd, rend Error veil by veil:  
 O'er Ruin desolate,  
 O'er Falsehood's fallen state  
 Sit thou sublime, unawed; be the Destroyer pale!  
 And equal laws be thine,  
 And winged words let sail,  
 Freight with truth even from the throne of God:

That wealth, surviving fate,  
Be thine.—All hail!

ANTISTROPHE  $\alpha$ .  $\gamma$ .

Didst thou not start to hear Spain's thrilling pæan  
From land to land re-echoed solemnly,  
Till silence became music? From the *Æean*\*  
To the cold Alps, eternal Italy  
Starts to hear thine! The Sea  
Which paves the desert streets of Venice laughs  
In light and music; widowed Genoa wan  
By moonlight spells ancestral epitaphs,  
Murmuring, where is Doria? fair Milan,  
Within whose veins long ran  
The vipers† palsyng venom, lifts her heel  
To bruise his head: The signal and the seal  
(If Hope and Truth and Justice can avail)  
Art Thou of all these hopes.—O hail!

ANTISTROPHE  $\beta$ .  $\gamma$ .

Florence! beneath the sun,  
Of cities fairest one,  
Blushes within her bower for Freedom's expectation:  
From eyes of quenchless hope  
Rome tears the priestly cope,  
As ruling once by power, so now by admiration,  
An athlete stript to run

\* *Ææa*, the island of Circe.

† The viper was the armorial device of the Visconti, tyrants of Milan.

From a remoter station  
 For the high prize lost on Philippi's shore :—  
 As then Hope, Truth, and Justice did avail,  
 So now may Fraud and Wrong! O hail!

## EPODE I. β.

Hear ye the march as of the Earth-born Forms  
 Arrayed against the everliving Gods?  
 The crash and darkness of a thousand storms  
 Bursting their inaccessible abodes  
 Of crags and thunder-clouds?  
 See ye the banners blazoned to the day,  
 Inwrought with emblems of barbaric pride?  
 Dissonant threats kill Silence far away,  
 The serene Heaven which wraps our Eden wide  
 With iron light is dyed,  
 The Anarchs of the North lead forth their legions  
 Like Chaos o'er creation, uncreating;  
 An hundred tribes nourished on strange religions  
 And lawless slaveries,—down the aerial regions  
 Of the white Alps, desolating,  
 Famished wolves that bide no waiting,  
 Blotting the glowing footsteps of old glory,  
 Trampling our columned cities into dust,  
 Their dull and savage lust  
 On Beauty's corse to sickness satiating—  
 They come! The fields they tread look black and hoary  
 With fire—from their red feet the streams run gory!

EPODE II.  $\beta$ .

Great Spirit, deepest Love!  
 Which rulest and dost move  
 All things which live and are, within the Italian shore;  
 Who spreadest heaven around it,  
 Whose woods, rocks, waves, surround it;  
 Who sittest in thy star, o'er Ocean's western floor,  
 Spirit of beauty! at whose soft command  
 The sunbeams and the showers distil its foison  
 From the Earth's bosom chill;  
 O bid those beams be each a blinding brand  
 Of lightning! bid those showers be dews of poison!  
 Bid the Earth's plenty kill!  
 Bid thy bright Heaven above,  
 Whilst light and darkness bound it,  
 Be their tomb who planned  
 To make it ours and thine!  
 Or, with thine harmonizing ardours fill  
 And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone horizon  
 Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave with fire—  
 Be man's high hope and unextinct desire,  
 The instrument to work thy will divine!  
 Then clouds from sunbeams, antelopes from leopards,  
 And frowns and fears from Thee,  
 Would not more swiftly flee  
 Than Celtic wolves from the Ausonian shepherds.—  
 Whatever, Spirit, from thy starry shrine  
 Thou yieldest or withholdest, Oh let be  
 This city of thy worship ever free!



**MARIANNE'S DREAM.**



## MARIANNE'S DREAM.

---

A PALE dream came to a Lady fair,  
And said, a boon, a boon, I pray!  
I know the secrets of the air,  
And things are lost in the glare of day,  
Which I can make the sleeping see,  
If they will put their trust in me.

And thou shalt know of things unknown,  
If thou wilt let me rest between  
The veiny lids, whose fringe is thrown  
Over thine eyes so dark and sheen :  
And half in hope, and half in fright,  
The Lady closed her eyes so bright.

At first all deadly shapes were driven  
Tumultuously across her sleep,  
And o'er the vast cope of bending heaven  
All ghastly visaged clouds did sweep;  
And the Lady ever looked to spy  
If the gold sun shone forth on high.

And as towards the east she turned,  
She saw aloft in the morning air,  
Which now with hues of sunrise burned  
A great black Anchor rising there ;  
And wherever the Lady turned her eyes,  
It hung before her in the skies.

The sky was blue as the summer sea,  
The depths were cloudless over head,  
The air was calm as it could be,  
There was no sight or sound of dread,  
But that black Anchor floating still  
Over the piny eastern hill.

The Lady grew sick with a weight of fear,  
To see that Anchor ever hanging,  
And veiled her eyes ; she then did hear  
The sound as of a dim low clanging,  
And looked abroad if she might know  
Was it aught else, or but the flow  
Of the blood in her own veins ; to and fro.

There was a mist in the sunless air,  
Which shook as it were with an earthquake's shock,  
But the very weeds that blossomed there  
Were moveless, and each mighty rock  
Stood on its basis stedfastly ;  
The Anchor was seen no more on high.

But piled around, with summits hid  
In lines of cloud at intervals,  
Stood many a mountain pyramid  
Among whose everlasting walls  
Two mighty cities shone, and ever  
Through the red mist their domes did quiver.

On two dread mountains, from whose crest,  
Might seem, the eagle, for her brood,  
Would ne'er have hung her dizzy nest,  
Those tower-encircled cities stood.  
A vision strange such towers to see,  
Sculptured and wrought so gorgeously,  
Where human art could never be.

And columns framed of marble white,  
And giant fanes, dome over dome  
Piled, and triumphant gates, all bright  
With workmanship, which could not come  
From touch of mortal instrument,  
Shot o'er the vales, or lustre lent  
From its own shapes magnificent.

But still the Lady heard that clang  
Filling the wide air far away;  
And still the mist whose light did hang  
Among the mountains shook away,  
So that the Lady's heart beat fast,  
As half in joy, and half aghast,  
On those high domes her look she cast.

Sudden, from out that city sprung  
A light that made the earth grow red;  
Two flames that each with quivering tongue  
Licked its high domes, and over head  
Among those mighty towers and fanes  
Dropped fire, as a volcano rains  
Its sulphurous ruin on the plains.

And hark! a rush as if the deep  
Had burst its bonds; she looked behind  
And saw over the western steep  
A raging flood descend, and wind  
Through that wide vale; she felt no fear,  
But said within herself, 'tis clear  
These towers are Nature's own, and she  
To save them has sent forth the sea.

And now those raging billows came  
Where that fair Lady sate, and she  
Was borne towards the showering flame  
By the wild waves heaped tumultuously,  
And on a little plank, the flow  
Of the whirlpool bore her to and fro.

The waves were fiercely vomited  
From every tower and every dome,  
And dreary light did widely shed  
O'er that vast flood's suspended foam,  
Beneath the smoke which hung its night  
On the stained cope of heaven's light.

The plank whereon that Lady sate  
Was driven through the chasms, about and about,  
Between the peaks so desolate  
Of the drowning mountain, in and out,  
As the thistle-beard on a whirlwind sails—  
While the flood was filling those hollow vales.

At last her plank an eddy crost,  
And bore her to the city's wall,  
Which now the flood had reached almost;  
It might the stoutest heart appal  
To hear the fire roar and hiss  
Through the domes of those mighty palaces.

The eddy whirled her round and round  
Before a gorgeous gate, which stood  
Piercing the clouds of smoke which bound  
Its aery arch with light like blood;  
She looked on that gate of marble clear,  
With wonder that extinguished fear.

For it was filled with sculptures rarest,  
Of forms most beautiful and strange,  
Like nothing human, but the fairest  
Of winged shapes, whose legions range  
Throughout the sleep of those that are,  
Like this same Lady, good and fair.

And as she looked, still lovelier grew  
Those marble forms;—the sculptor sure  
Was a strong spirit, and the hue

Of his own mind did there endure  
After the touch, whose power had braided  
Such grace, was in some sad change faded.

She looked, the flames were dim, the flood  
Grew tranquil as a woodland river  
Winding through hills in solitude ;  
Those marble shapes then seemed to quiver,  
And their fair limbs to float in motion,  
Like weeds unfolding in the ocean.

And their lips moved ; one seemed to speak,  
When suddenly the mountain crackt,  
And through the chasm the flood did break  
With an earth-uplifting cataract :  
The statues gave a joyous scream,  
And on its wings the pale thin dream  
Lifted the Lady from the stream.

The dizzy flight of that phantom pale  
Waked the fair Lady from her sleep,  
And she arose, while from the veil  
Of her dark eyes the dream did creep,  
And she walked about as one who knew  
That sleep has sights as clear and true  
As any waking eyes can view.

**MONT BLANC.**

**LINES WRITTEN IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.**



# MONT BLANC.

LINES WRITTEN IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

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## I.

THE everlasting universe of things  
Flows through the mind, and rolls its rapid waves,  
Now dark—now glittering—now reflecting gloom—  
Now lending splendour, where from secret springs  
The source of human thought its tribute brings  
Of waters,—with a sound but half its own,  
Such as a feeble brook will oft assume  
In the wild woods, among the mountains lone,  
Where waterfalls around it leap for ever,  
Where woods and winds contend, and a vast river  
Over its rocks ceaselessly bursts and raves.

## II.

Thus thou, Ravine of Arve—dark, deep Ravine—  
Thou many-coloured, many-voiced vale,  
Over whose pines and crags and caverns sail  
Fast cloud, shadows, and sunbeams: awful scene,  
Where Power in likeness of the Arve comes down  
From the ice gulphs that gird his secret throne,

Bursting through these dark mountains like the flame  
Of lightning thro' the tempest ;—thou dost lie,  
Thy giant brood of pines around thee clinging,  
Children of elder time, in whose devotion  
The chainless winds still come and ever came  
To drink their odours, and their mighty swinging  
To hear—an old and solemn harmony :  
Thine earthly rainbows stretched across the sweep  
Of the ethereal waterfall, whose veil  
Robes some unsculptured image; the strange sleep  
Which, when the voices of the desert fail,  
Wraps all in its own deep eternity ;—  
Thy caverns echoing to the Arve's commotion  
A loud, lone sound, no other sound can tame ;  
Thou art pervaded with that ceaseless motion,  
Thou art the path of that unresting sound—  
Dizzy Ravine ! and when I gaze on thee  
I seem as in a trance sublime and strange  
To muse on my own separate phantasy,  
My own, my human mind, which passively  
Now renders and receives fast influencings,  
Holding an unremitting interchange  
With the clear universe of things around ;  
One legion of wild thoughts, whose wandering wings  
Now float above thy darkness, and now rest  
Where that or thou art no unbidden guest,  
In the still cave of the witch Poesy,  
Seeking among the shadows that pass by  
Ghosts of all things that are, some shade of thee,  
Some phantom, some faint image ; till the breast  
From which they fled recalls them, thou art there !

## III.

Some say that gleams of a remoter world  
Visit the soul in sleep,—that death is slumber,  
And that its shapes the busy thoughts outnumber  
Of those who wake and live.—I look on high ;  
Has some unknown omnipotence unfurled  
The veil of life and death? or do I lie  
In dream, and does the mightier world of sleep  
Spread far around and inaccessibly  
Its circles? For the very spirit fails,  
Driven like a homeless cloud from steep to steep  
That vanishes among the viewless gales!  
Far, far above, piercing the infinite sky,  
Mont Blanc appears,—still, snowy, and serene—  
Its subject mountains their unearthly forms  
Pile around it, ice and rock; broad vales between  
Of frozen floods, unfathomable deeps,  
Blue as the overhanging heaven, that spread  
And wind among the accumulated steeps;  
A desert peopled by the storms alone,  
Save when the eagle brings some hunter's bone,  
And the wolf tracts her there—how hideously  
Its shapes are heaped around! rude, bare, and high,  
Ghastly, and scarred, and riven.—Is this the scene  
Where the old Earthquake-dæmon taught her young  
Ruin? Were these their toys? or did a sea  
Of fire envelope once this silent snow?  
None can reply—all seems eternal now.  
The wilderness has a mysterious tongue  
Which teaches awful doubt, or faith so mild,

So solemn, so serene, that man may be  
 But for such faith with nature reconciled ;  
 Thou hast a voice, great Mountain, to repeal  
 Large codes of fraud and woe ; not understood  
 By all, but which the wise, and great, and good  
 Interpret, or make felt, or deeply feel.

## IV.

The fields, the lakes, the forests, and the streams,  
 Ocean, and all the living things that dwell  
 Within the dædal earth ; lightning, and rain,  
 Earthquake, and fiery flood, and hurricane,  
 The torpor of the year when feeble dreams  
 Visit the hidden buds, or dreamless sleep  
 Holds every future leaf and flower ;—the bound  
 With which from that detested trance they leap ;  
 The works and ways of man, their death and birth,  
 And that of him and all that his may be ;  
 All things that move and breathe with toil and sound  
 Are born and die, revolve, subside and swell.  
 Power dwells apart in its tranquillity  
 Remote, serene, and inaccessible :  
 And *this*, the naked countenance of earth,  
 On which I gaze, even these primæval mountains,  
 Teach the advertent mind. The glaciers creep  
 Like snakes that watch their prey, from their far fountains,  
 Slow rolling on ; there, many a precipice  
 Frost and the Sun in scorn of mortal power  
 Have piled—dome, pyramid, and pinnacle,  
 A city of death, distinct with many a tower  
 And wall impregnable of beaming ice.

Yet not a city, but a flood of ruin  
Is there, that from the boundaries of the sky  
Rolls its perpetual stream; vast pines are strewing  
Its destined path, or in the mangled soil  
Branchless and shattered stand; the rocks, drawn down  
From yon remotest waste, have overthrown  
The limits of the dead and living world,  
Never to be reclaimed. The dwelling-place  
Of insects, beasts, and birds becomes its spoil;  
Their food and their retreat for ever gone,  
So much of life and joy is lost. The race  
Of man flies far in dread; his work and dwelling  
Vanish, like smoke before the tempest's stream,  
And their place is not known. Below, vast caves  
Shine in the rushing torrent's restless gleam,  
Which from those secret chasms in tumult welling  
Meet in the vale, and one majestic River,  
The breath and blood of distant lands, for ever  
Rolls its loud waters to the ocean waves,  
Breathes its swift vapours to the circling air.

## V.

Mont Blanc yet gleams on high:—the power is there,  
The still and solemn power of many sights  
And many sounds, and much of life and death.  
In the calm darkness of the moonless nights,  
In the lone glare of day, the snows descend  
Upon that Mountain; none beholds them there,  
Nor when the flakes burn in the sinking sun,  
Or the star-beams dart through them:—Winds contend  
Silently there, and heap the snow with breath

Rapid and strong, but silently! Its home  
The voiceless lightning in these solitudes  
Keeps innocently, and like vapour broods  
Over the snow. The secret strength of things  
Which governs thought, and to the infinite dome  
Of heaven is as a law, inhabits thee!  
And what were thou, and earth, and stars, and sea,  
If to the human mind's imaginings  
Silence and solitude were vacancy?

*Switzerland, June 23, 1816.*

**MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.**



## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

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### ON THE MEDUSA OF LEONARDO DA VINCI, IN THE FLORENTINE GALLERY.

It lieth, gazing on the midnight sky,  
    Upon the cloudy mountain peak supine;  
Below, far lands are seen tremblingly;  
    Its horror and its beauty are divine.  
Upon its lips and eyelids seem to lie  
    Loveliness like a shadow, from which shrine,  
Fiery and lurid, struggling underneath,  
The agonies of anguish and of death.

Yet it is less the horror than the grace  
    Which turns the gazer's spirit into stone;  
Whereon the lineaments of that dead face  
    Are graven, till the characters be grown  
Into itself, and thought no more can trace;  
    'Tis the melodious hue of beauty thrown  
Athwart the darkness and the glare of pain,  
Which humanize and harmonize the strain.

And from its head as from one body grow,  
 As [     ] grass out of a watery rock,  
 Hairs which are vipers, and they curl and flow  
 And their long tangles in each other lock,  
 And with unending involutions shew  
 Their mailed radiance, as it were to mock.  
 The torture and the death within, and saw  
 The solid air with many a ragged jaw.

And from a stone beside a poisonous eft  
 Peeps idly into those Gorgonian eyes;  
 Whilst in the air a ghastly bat, bereft  
 Of sense, has flitted with a mad surprise  
 Out of the cave this hideous light had cleft,  
 And he comes hastening like a moth that hies  
 After a taper; and the midnight sky  
 Flares, a light more dread than obscurity.

'Tis the tempestuous loveliness of terror;  
 For from the serpents gleams a brazen glare  
 Kindled by that inextricable error,  
 Which makes a thrilling vapour of the air  
 Become a [           ] and evershifting mirror  
 Of all the beauty and the terror there—  
 A woman's countenance, with serpent locks,  
 Gazing in death on heaven from those wet rocks.

*Florence, 1819.*

## SONG.

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,  
Spirit of Delight!  
Wherefore hast thou left me now  
Many a day and night?  
Many a weary night and day  
'Tis since thou art fled away.

How shall ever one like me  
Win thee back again?  
With the joyous and the free  
Thou wilt scoff at pain.  
Spirit false! thou hast forgot  
All but those who need thee not.

As a lizard with the shade  
Of a trembling leaf,  
Thou with sorrow art dismayed;  
Even the sighs of grief  
Reproach thee, that thou art not near,  
And reproach thou wilt not hear.

Let me set my mournful ditty  
To a merry measure,  
Thou wilt never come for pity,  
Thou wilt come for pleasure,  
Pity then will cut away  
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

I love all that thou lovest,  
    Spirit of Delight!  
The fresh Earth in new leaves drest,  
    And the starry night;  
Autumn evening, and the morn  
When the golden mists are born.

I love snow, and all the forms  
    Of the radiant frost;  
I love waves, and winds, and storms,  
    Every thing almost  
Which is Nature's, and may be  
Untainted by man's misery.

I love tranquil solitude,  
    And such society  
As is quiet, wise and good;  
    Between thee and me  
What difference? but thou dost possess  
The things I seek, not love them less.

I love Love—though he has wings,  
    And like light can flee,  
But above all other things,  
    Spirit, I love thee—  
Thou art love and life! O come,  
Make once more my heart thy home.

## TO CONSTANTIA,

## SINGING.

Thus to be lost and thus to sink and die,  
 Perchance were death indeed!—Constantia, turn!  
 In thy dark eyes a power like light doth lie,  
 Even though the sounds which were thy voice, which burn  
 Between thy lips, are laid to sleep;  
 Within thy breath, and on thy hair, like odour it is yet,  
 And from thy touch like fire doth leap.  
 Even while I write, my burning cheeks are wet,  
 Alas, that the torn heart can bleed, but not forget!

A breathless awe, like the swift change  
 Unseen, but felt in youthful slumbers,  
 Wild, sweet, but uncommunicably strange,  
 Thou breathest now in fast ascending numbers.  
 The cope of heaven seems rent and cloven  
 By the enchantment of thy strain,  
 And on my shoulders wings are woven,  
 To follow its sublime career,  
 Beyond the mighty moons that wane  
 Upon the verge of nature's utmost sphere,  
 'Till the world's shadowy walls are past and disappear.

Her voice is hovering o'er my soul—it lingers  
 O'ershadowing it with soft and lulling wings,  
 The blood and life within those snowy fingers  
 Teach witchcraft to the instrumental strings.

My brain is wild, my breath comes quick—  
The blood is listening in my frame,  
And thronging shadows, fast and thick,  
Fall on my overflowing eyes ;  
My heart is quivering like a flame ;  
As morning dew, that in the sunbeam dies,  
I am dissolved in these consuming extacies.

I have no life, Constantia, now, but thee,  
Whilst, like the world-surrounding air, thy song  
Flows on, and fills all things with melody.—  
Now is thy voice a tempest swift and strong,  
On which, like one in trance upborne,  
Secure o'er rocks and waves I sweep,  
Rejoicing like a cloud of morn.  
Now 'tis the breath of summer night,  
Which when the starry waters sleep,  
Round western isles, with incense-blossoms bright,  
Lingering, suspends my soul in its voluptuous flight.

## THE FUGITIVES.

## I.

THE waters are flashing,  
 The white hail is dashing,  
 The lightnings are glancing,  
 The hoar-spray is dancing—  
 Away!

The whirlwind is rolling;  
 The thunder is tolling,  
 The forest is swinging,  
 The minster bells ringing—  
 Come away!

The Earth is like Ocean,  
 Wreck-strewn and in motion :  
 Bird, beast, man and worm  
 Have crept out of the storm—  
 Come away!

## II.

“ Our boat has one sail,  
 And the helmsman is pale ;—  
 A bold pilot I trow,  
 Who should follow us now,”—  
 Shouted He—

And she cried : “ Ply the oar!  
 Put off gaily from shore!”—  
 As she spoke, bolts of death  
 Mixed with hail, specked their path  
                   O'er the sea.

And from isle, tower and rock,  
 The blue beacon cloud broke,  
 And though dumb in the blast,  
 The red cannon flashed fast  
                   From the lee.

## III.

“ And, fear'st thou, and fear'st thou?  
 And, see'st thou, and hear'st thou?  
 And, drive we not free  
 O'er the terrible sea,  
                   I and thou?”

One boat-cloak did cover  
 The loved and the lover—  
 Their blood beats one measure,  
 They murmur proud pleasure  
                   Soft and low ;—

While around the lashed Ocean,  
 Like mountains in motion;  
 Is withdrawn and uplifted,  
 Sunk, shattered and shifted  
                   To and fro.

## IV.

In the court of the fortress  
Beside the pale portress,  
Like a blood-hound well beaten,  
The bridegroom stands, eaten  
By shame;

On the topmost watch-turret,  
As a death-boding spirit,  
Stands the grey tyrant father,  
To his voice the mad weather  
Seems tame;

And with curses as wild  
As ere clung to child,  
He devotes to the blast  
The best, loveliest and last  
Of his name!

## A LAMENT.

SWIFTER far than summer's flight,  
 Swifter far than youth's delight,  
 Swifter far than happy night,

    Art thou come and gone:  
 As the earth when leaves are dead,  
 As the night when sleep is sped,  
 As the heart when joy is fled,  
     I am left lone, alone.

The swallow Summer comes again,  
 The owlet Night resumes her reign,  
 But the wild swan Youth is fain  
     To fly with thee, false as thou.  
 My heart each day desires the morrow,  
 Sleep itself is turned to sorrow,  
 Vainly would my winter borrow  
     Sunny leaves from any bough.

Lilies for a bridal bed,  
 Roses for a matron's head,  
 Violets for a maiden dead,  
     Pansies let my flowers be:  
 On the living grave I bear,  
 Scatter them without a tear,  
 Let no friend, however dear,  
     Waste one hope, one fear for me.

## THE PINE FOREST

OF THE CASCINE, NEAR PISA,

DEAREST, best and brightest,  
Come away,  
To the woods and to the fields!  
Dearer than this fairest day,  
Which like thee to those in sorrow,  
Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow  
To the rough year just awake  
In its cradle in the brake.

The eldest of the hours of spring,  
Into the winter wandering,  
Looks upon the leafless wood;  
And the banks all bare and rude  
Found it seems this halcyon morn,  
In February's bosom born,  
Bending from heaven, in azure mirth,  
Kissed the cold forehead of the earth,  
And smiled upon the silent sea,  
And bade the frozen streams be free;  
And waked to music all the fountains,  
And breathed upon the rigid mountains,  
And made the wintry world appear  
Like one on whom thou smilest, dear.

Radiant Sister of the Day,  
Awake! arise! and come away!  
To the wild woods and the plains,  
To the pools where winter rains  
Image all the roof of leaves,  
Where the Pine its garland weaves,  
Sapless, grey, and ivy dun  
Round stones that never kiss the sun,  
To the sandhills of the sea,  
Where the earliest violets be.

Now the last day of many days,  
All beautiful and bright as thou,  
The loveliest and the last, is dead,  
Rise Memory, and write its praise,  
And do thy wonted work and trace  
The epitaph of glory fled:  
For the Earth hath changed its face,  
A frown is on the Heaven's brow.

We wandered to the Pine Forest  
That skirts the Ocean's foam,  
The lightest wind was in its nest,  
The tempest in its home.

The whispering waves were half asleep,  
The clouds were gone to play,  
And on the woods, and on the deep,  
The smile of Heaven lay.

It seemed as if the day were one  
Sent from beyond the skies,  
Which shed to earth above the sun  
A light of Paradise.

We paused amid the Pines that stood  
The giants of the waste,  
Tortured by storms to shapes as rude,  
With stems like serpents interlaced.

How calm it was—the silence there  
By such a chain was bound,  
That even the busy woodpecker  
Made stiller by her sound

The inviolable quietness;  
The breath of peace we drew,  
With its soft motion made not less  
The calm that round us grew.

It seemed that from the remotest seat  
Of the white mountain's waste,  
To the bright flower beneath our feet,  
A magic circle traced;—

A spirit interfused around,  
A thinking silent life,  
To momentary peace it bound  
Our mortal Nature's strife.—

For still it seemed the centre of  
The magic circle there,  
Was one whose being filled with love  
The breathless atmosphere.

Were not the crocusses that grew  
Under that ilex tree,  
As beautiful in scent and hue  
As ever fed the bee?

We stood beside the pools that lie  
Under the forest bough,  
And each seemed like a sky  
Gulphed in a world below;—

A purple firmament of light,  
Which in the dark earth lay,  
More boundless than the depth of night,  
And clearer than the day—

In which the massy forests grew,  
As in the upper air,  
More perfect both in shape and hue  
Than any waving there.

Like one beloved, the scene had lent  
To the dark water's breast  
Its every leaf and lineament  
With that clear truth expressed.

There lay far glades and neighbouring lawn,  
And through the dark green crowd  
The white sun twinkling like the dawn  
Under a speckled cloud.

Sweet views, which in our world above  
Can never well be seen,  
Were imaged by the water's love  
Of that fair forest green.

And all was interfused beneath  
    Within an Elysium air,  
An atmosphere without a breath,  
    A silence sleeping there.

Until a wandering wind crept by,  
    Like an unwelcome thought,  
Which from my mind's too faithful eye  
    Blots thy bright image out.

For thou art good and dear and kind,  
    The forest ever green,  
But less of peace in S——'s mind,  
    Than calm in waters seen.

*February 2, 1822.*

## TO NIGHT.

Swiftly walk over the western wave,  
    Spirit of Night!  
Out of the misty eastern cave,  
Where, all the long and lone daylight,  
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,  
Which make thee terrible and dear,—  
    Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle grey,  
    Star-inwrought!  
Blind with thine hair the eyes of day,  
Kiss her until she be wearied out,  
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,  
Touching all with thine opiate wand—  
    Come, long sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,  
    I sighed for thee;  
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,  
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,  
And the weary Day turned to his rest,  
Lingering like an unloved guest,  
    I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,  
    Wouldst thou me?  
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,  
    Murmured like a noon-tide bee,  
Shall I nestle near thy side?  
Wouldst thou me?—And I replied,  
    No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead,  
    Soon, too soon—  
Sleep will come when thou art fled;  
Of neither would I ask the boon  
I ask of thee, beloved Night—  
Swift be thine approaching flight,  
    Come soon, soon!

## EVENING.

PONTE A MARE, PISA.

THE sun is set; the swallows are asleep;  
The bats are flitting fast in the grey air;  
The slow soft toads out of damp corners creep,  
And evening's breath, wandering here and there  
Over the quivering surface of the stream,  
Wakes not one ripple from its silent dream.

There is no dew on the dry grass to-night,  
Nor damp within the shadow of the trees;  
The wind is intermitting, dry, and light;  
And in the inconstant motion of the breeze  
The dust and straws are driven up and down,  
And whirled about the pavement of the town.

Within the surface of the fleeting river  
The wrinkled image of the city lay,  
Immoveably unquiet, and for ever  
It trembles, but it never fades away;  
Go to the [ ]  
You, being changed, will find it then as now.

The chasm in which the sun has sunk is shut  
By darkest barriers of enormous cloud,  
Like mountain over mountain huddled—but  
Growing and moving upwards in a crowd,  
And over it a space of watery blue,  
Which the keen evening star is shining through.

## ARETHUSA.

ARETHUSA arose  
From her couch of snows  
In the Acroceraunian mountains,—  
From cloud and from crag,  
With many a jag,  
Shepherding her bright fountains.  
She leapt down the rocks  
With her rainbow locks  
Streaming among the streams;—  
Her steps paved with green  
The downward ravine  
Which slopes to the western gleams :  
And gliding and springing,  
She went, ever singing,  
In murmurs as soft as sleep ;  
The Earth seemed to love her,  
And Heaven smiled above her,  
As she lingered towards the deep.

Then Alpheus bold,  
On his glacier cold,  
With his trident the mountains strook ;  
And opened a chasm  
In the rocks ;—with the spasm  
All Erymanthus shook.

And the black south wind  
 It concealed behind  
 The urns of the silent snow,  
 And earthquake and thunder  
 Did rend in sunder  
 The bars of the springs below :  
 The beard and the hair  
 Of the river God were  
 Seen through the torrent's sweep,  
 As he followed the light  
 Of the fleet nymph's flight  
 To the brink of the Dorian deep.

" Oh, save me ! Oh, guide me !  
 And bid the deep hide me,  
 For he grasps me now by the hair !"  
 The loud Ocean heard,  
 To its blue depth stirred,  
 And divided at her prayer ;  
 And under the water  
 The Earth's white daughter  
 Fled like a sunny beam,  
 Behind her descended,  
 Her billows unblended  
 With the brackish Dorian stream :—  
 Like a gloomy stain  
 On the emerald main  
 Alpheus rushed behind,—  
 As an eagle pursuing  
 A dove to its ruin  
 Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

Under the bowers  
 Where the Ocean Powers  
 Sit on their pearly thrones,  
 Through the coral woods  
 Of the weltering floods,  
 Over heaps of unvalued stones :  
 Through the dim beams  
 Which amid the streams  
 Weave a net-work of coloured light ;  
 And under the caves,  
 Where the shadowy waves  
 Are as green as the forest's night :—  
 Outspeeding the shark,  
 And the sword-fish dark,  
 Under the ocean foam,  
 And up through the rifts  
 Of the mountain cliffs  
 They passed to their Dorian home.

And now from their fountains  
 In Enna's mountains,  
 Down one vale where the morning basks,  
 Like friends once parted  
 Grown single-hearted,  
 They ply their watery tasks.  
 At sun-rise they leap  
 From their cradles steep  
 In the cave of the shelving hill ;  
 At noon-tide they flow  
 Through the woods below  
 And the meadows of Asphodel ;

And at night they sleep  
In the rocking deep  
Beneath the Ortygian shore;—  
Like spirits that lie  
In the azure sky  
When they love but live no more.

*Pisa, 1820.*

## THE QUESTION.

I DREAMED that, as I wandered by the way,  
Bare winter suddenly was changed to spring,  
And gentle odours led my steps astray,  
Mixed with a sound of waters murmuring  
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay  
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling  
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,  
But kissed it and then fled, as thou mightest in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,  
Daisies, those pearly Arcturi of the earth,  
The constellated flower that never sets ;  
Faint oxlips ; tender bluebells, at whose birth  
The sod scarce heaved ; and that tall flower that wets  
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears,  
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,  
Green cow-bind and the moonlight-coloured May,  
And cherry blossoms, and white cups, whose wine  
Was the bright dew yet drained not by the day ;  
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,  
With its dark buds and leaves, wandering astray ;  
And flowers azure, black and streaked with gold,  
Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge  
There grew broad flag flowers, purple pranked with white,  
And starry river buds among the sedge,  
And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,  
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge  
With moonlight beams of their own watery light;  
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green  
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers  
I made a nosegay, bound in such a way  
That the same hues, which in their natural bowers  
Were mingled or opposed, the like array  
Kept these imprisoned children of the Hours  
Within my hand,—and then, elate and gay,  
I hastened to the spot whence I had come,  
That I might there present it!—Oh! to whom?

## LINES TO AN INDIAN AIR.

I ARISE from dreams of thee  
In the first sweet sleep of night,  
When the winds are breathing low,  
And the stars are shining bright :  
I arise from dreams of thee,  
And a spirit in my feet  
Has led me—who knows how ?  
To thy chamber window, sweet !

The wandering airs they faint  
On the dark, the silent stream—  
The champak odours fail  
Like sweet thoughts in a dream ;  
The nightingale's complaint,  
It dies upon her heart,  
As I must on thine,  
Beloved as thou art !

O lift me from the grass !  
I die, I faint, I fail !  
Let thy love in kisses rain  
On my lips and eyelids pale.  
My cheek is cold and white, alas !  
My heart beats loud and fast,  
Oh ! press it close to thine again,  
Where it will break at last.

## STANZAS

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES.

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,  
The waves are dancing fast and bright,  
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear  
The purple noon's transparent light  
Around its unexpanded buds;  
Like many a voice of one delight,  
The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,  
The City's voice itself is soft, like Solitude's.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor  
With green and purple seaweeds strown;  
I see the waves upon the shore,  
Like light dissolved in star-showers, thrown:  
I sit upon the sands alone,  
The lightning of the noon-tide ocean  
Is flashing round me, and a tone  
Arises from its measured motion,  
How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,  
Nor peace within nor calm around,  
Nor that content surpassing wealth.  
The sage in meditation found,

And walked with inward glory crowned—  
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.  
Others I see whom these surround—  
Smiling they live and call life pleasure;—  
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild,  
Even as the winds and waters are ;  
I could lie down like a tired child,  
And weep away the life of care  
Which I have borne and yet must bear,  
Till death like sleep might steal on me,  
And I might feel in the warm air  
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea  
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

Some might lament that I were cold,  
As I, when this sweet day is gone,  
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,  
Insults with this untimely moan ;  
They might lament—for I am one  
Whom men love not,—and yet regret,  
Unlike this day, which, when the sun  
Shall on its stainless glory set,  
Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.

*December, 1818.*



## HYMN OF APOLLO.

THE sleepless Hours who watch me as I lie,  
Curtained with star-enwoven tapestries,  
From the broad moonlight of the sky,  
Fanning the busy dreams from my dim eyes,—  
Waken me when their Mother, the grey Dawn,  
Tells them that dreams and that the moon is gone.

Then I arise, and climbing Heaven's blue dome,  
I walk over the mountains and the waves,  
Leaving my robe upon the ocean foam ;  
My footsteps pave the clouds with fire ; the caves  
Are filled with my bright presence, and the air  
Leaves the green earth to my embraces bare.

The sunbeams are my shafts, with which I kill  
Deceit, that loves the night and fears the day ;  
All men who do or even imagine ill  
Fly me, and from the glory of my ray  
Good minds and open actions take new might,  
Until diminished by the reign of night.

I feed the clouds, the rainbows and the flowers  
With their ethereal colours ; the Moon's globe  
And the pure stars in their eternal bowers  
Are cinctured with my power as with a robe ;  
Whatever lamps on Earth or Heaven may shine,  
Are portions of one power, which is mine.

I stand at noon upon the peak of Heaven,  
Then with unwilling steps I wander down  
Into the clouds of the Atlantic even ;

For grief that I depart they weep and frown :  
What look is more delightful than the smile  
With which I soothe them from the western isle ?

I am the eye with which the Universe  
Beholds itself and knows itself divine ;  
All harmony of instrument or verse,  
All prophesy, all medicine are mine,  
All light of art or nature ;—to my song,  
Victory and praise in their own right belong.

## HYMN OF PAN.

FROM the forests and highlands  
    We come, we come ;  
From the river-girt islands,  
    Where loud waves are dumb .  
        Listening to my sweet pipings.  
The wind in the reeds and the rushes,  
    The bees on the bells of thyme,  
The birds on the myrtle bushes,  
    The cicale above in the lime,  
And the lizards below in the grass,  
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus\* was,  
        Listening to my sweet pipings.

Liquid Peneus was flowing,  
    And all dark Tempe lay  
In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing  
    The light of the dying day,  
        Speeded by my sweet pipings.  
The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,  
    And the Nymphs of the woods and waves,  
To the edge of the moist river-lawns,  
    And the brink of the dewy caves,  
And all that did then attend and follow  
Were silent with love, as you now, Apollo,  
        With envy of my sweet pipings.

\* This and the former poem were written at the request of a friend, to be inserted in a drama on the subject of Midas. Apollo and Pan contended before Tmolus for the prize in music.

I sang of the dancing stars,  
    I sang of the dædal Earth,  
And of Heaven—and the giant wars,  
    And Love, and Death, and Birth,—  
        And then I changed my pipings,—  
Singing how down the vale of Menalus  
    I pursued a maiden and clasped a reed :  
Gods and men, we are all deluded thus !  
    It breaks in our bosom and then we bleed :  
All wept, as I think both ye now would,  
If envy or age had not frozen your blood,  
        At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.

## THE BOAT

## ON THE SERCHIO.

OUR boat is asleep in Serchio's stream,  
Its sails are folded like thoughts in a dream,  
The helm sways idly, hither and thither ;  
Dominic, the boat-man, has brought the mast,  
And the oars and the sails ; but 'tis sleeping fast,  
Like a beast, unconscious of its tether.

The stars burnt out in the pale blue air,  
And the thin white moon lay withering there,  
To tower, and cavern, and rift and tree,  
The owl and the bat fled drowsily.  
Day had kindled the dewy woods,  
And the rocks above and the stream below,  
And the vapours in their multitudes,  
And the Apennine's shroud of summer snow,  
And clothed with light of aery gold  
The mists in their eastern caves uprolled.

Day had awakened all things that be,  
The lark and the thrush and the swallow free,  
And the milkmaid's song and the mower's scythe,  
And the matin-bell and the mountain bee :  
Fire-flies were quenched on the dewy corn,  
Glow-worms went out on the river's brim,  
Like lamps which a student forgets to trim :

The beetle forgot to wind his horn,  
 The crickets were still in the meadow and hill :  
 Like a flock of rooks at a farmer's gun  
 Night's dreams and terrors, every one,  
 Fled from the brains which are their prey,  
 From the lamp's death to the morning ray :

All rose to do the task He set to each,  
 Who shaped us to his ends and not our own ;  
 The million rose to learn, and one to teach  
 What none yet ever knew or can be known ;

And many rose

Whose woe was such that fear became desire ;—  
 Melchior and Lionel were not among those ;  
 They from the throng of men had stepped aside,  
 And made their home under the green hill side.  
 It was that hill, whose intervening brow  
 Screens Lucca from the Pisan's envious eye,  
 Which the circumfluous plain waving below,  
 Like a wide lake of green fertility,  
 With streams and fields and marshes bare,  
 Divides from the far Apennines—which lie  
 Islanded in the immeasurable air.

“ What think you, as she lies in her green cove,  
 Our little sleeping boat is dreaming of ?  
 If morning dreams are true, why I should guess  
 That she was dreaming of our idleness,  
 And of the miles of watery way.  
 We should have led her by this time of day ? ”—

————“ Never mind,” said Lionel,  
 “ Give care to the winds, they can bear it well  
 About yon poplar tops ; and see  
 The white clouds are driving merrily,  
 And the stars we miss this morn will light  
 More willingly our return to-night.—  
 List, my dear fellow, the breeze blows fair ;  
 How it scatters Dominic’s long black hair,  
 Singing of us, and our lazy motions,  
 If I can guess a boat’s emotions.—”

The chain is loosed, the sails are spread,  
 The living breath is fresh behind,  
 As with dews and sunrise fed,  
 Comes the laughing morning wind ;—  
 The sails are full, the boat makes head  
 Against the Serchio’s torrent fierce,  
 Then flags with intermitting course,  
 And hangs upon the wave, [            ]  
 Which fervid from its mountain source  
 Shallow, smooth and strong doth come,—  
 Swift as fire, tempestuously  
 It sweeps into the affrighted sea ;  
 In morning’s smile its eddies coil,  
 Its billows sparkle, toss and boil,  
 Torturing all its quiet light  
 Into columns fierce and bright.

The Serchio, twisting forth  
 Between the marble barriers which it clove  
 At Ripafratta, leads through the dread chasm  
 The wave that died the death which lovers love,

Living in what it sought ; as if this spasm  
Had not yet past, the toppling mountains cling,  
But the clear stream in full enthusiasm  
Pours itself on the plain, until wandering,  
Down one clear path of effluence chrystalline  
Sends its clear waves, that they may fling  
At Arno's feet tribute of corn and wine,  
Then, through the pestilential desarts wild  
Of tangled marsh and woods of stunted fir,  
It rushes to the Ocean.

*July, 1821.*

## THE ZUCCA.\*

## I.

SUMMER was dead and Autumn was expiring,  
And infant Winter laughed upon the land  
All cloudlessly and cold;—when I, desiring  
More in this world than any understand,  
Wept o'er the beauty, which like sea retiring,  
Had left the earth bare as the wave-worn sand  
Of my poor heart, and o'er the grass and flowers  
Pale for the falsehood of the flattering hours.

## II.

Summer was dead, but I yet lived to weep  
The instability of all but weeping;  
And on the earth lulled in her winter sleep  
I woke, and envied her as she was sleeping.  
Too happy Earth! over thy face shall creep  
The wakening vernal airs, until thou, leaping  
From unremembered dreams, shalt [ ] see  
No death divide thy immortality.

## III.

I loved—O no, I mean not one of ye,  
Or any earthly one, though ye are dear  
As human heart to human heart may be;—  
I loved, I know not what—but this low sphere

\* Pumpkin.

And all that it contains, contains not thee,  
Thou, whom seen no where, I feel everywhere,  
Dim object of my soul's idolatry.  
Veiled art thou like—

## IV.

By Heaven and Earth, from all whose shapes thou flowest,  
Neither to be contained, delayed, or hidden,  
Making divine the loftiest and the lowest,  
When for a moment thou art not forbidden  
To live within the life which thou bestowest ;  
And leaving noblest things vacant and chidden,  
Cold as a corpse after the spirit's flight,  
Blank as the sun after the birth of night.

## V.

In winds, and trees, and streams, and all things common,  
In music and the sweet unconscious tone  
Of animals, and voices which are human,  
Meant to express some feelings of their own ;  
In the soft motions and rare smile of woman,  
In flowers and leaves, and in the fresh grass shewn,  
Or dying in the autumn, I the most  
Adore thee present or lament thee lost.

## VI.

And thus I went, lamenting when I saw  
A plant upon the river's margin lie,  
Like one who loved beyond his Nature's law,  
And in despair had cast him down to die ;

Its leaves which had outlived the frost, the thaw  
 Had blighted as a heart which hatred's eye  
 Can blast not, but which pity kills; the dew  
 Lay on its spotted leaves like tears too true.

## VII.

The Heavens had wept upon it, but the Earth  
 Had crushed it on her unmaternal breast.

\* \* \* \* \*

## VIII.

I bore it to my chamber, and I planted  
 It in a vase full of the lightest mould;  
 The winter beams which out of Heaven slanted  
 Fell through the window panes, disrobed of cold,  
 Upon its leaves and flowers; the star which panted  
 In evening for the Day, whose car has rolled  
 Over the horizon's wave, with looks of light  
 Smiled on it from the threshold of the night.

## IX.

The mitigated influences of air  
 And light revived the plant, and from it grew  
 Strong leaves and tendrils, and its flowers fair,  
 Full as a cup with the vine's burning dew,  
 O'erflowed with golden colours; an atmosphere  
 Of vital warmth infolded it anew,  
 And every impulse sent to every part  
 The unbeheld pulsations of its heart.

## X.

Well might the plant grow beautiful and strong,  
 Even if the sun and air had smiled not on it;  
 For one wept o'er it all the winter long  
 Tears pure as Heaven's rain, which fell upon it  
 Hour after hour; for sounds of softest song  
 Mixed with the stringed melodies that won it  
 To leave the gentle lips on which it slept,  
 Had loosed the heart of him who sat and wept.

## XI.

Had loosed his heart, and shook the leaves and flowers  
 On which he wept, the while the savage storm  
 Waked by the darkest of December's hours  
 Was raving round the chamber hushed and warm;  
 The birds were shivering in their leafless bowers,  
 The fish were frozen in the pools, the form  
 Of every summer plant was dead [ . . . ]  
 Whilst this \* \* \*

*January, 1822.*

## THE TWO SPIRITS.

AN ALLEGORY.

## FIRST SPIRIT.

OH thou, who plumed with strong desire  
 Would float above the earth, beware!  
 A Shadow tracks thy flight of fire—  
     Night is coming!  
 Bright are the regions of the air,  
 And among the winds and beams  
 It were delight to wander there—  
     Night is coming!

## SECOND SPIRIT.

The deathless stars are bright above;  
 If I would cross the shade of night,  
 Within my heart is the lamp of love,  
     And that is day!  
 And the moon will smile with gentle light  
 On my golden plumes where'er they move;  
 'The meteors will linger round my flight  
     And make night day.

## FIRST SPIRIT.

But if the whirlwinds of darkness waken  
 Hail and lightning and stormy rain;  
 See the bounds of the air are shaken—  
     Night is coming!



## A FRAGMENT.

THEY were two cousins, almost like to twins,  
Except that from the catalogue of sins  
Nature had razed their love—which could not be  
But by dissevering their nativity.  
And so they grew together, like two flowers  
Upon one stem, which the same beams and showers  
Lull or awaken in their purple prime,  
Which the same hand will gather—the same clime  
Shake with decay. This fair day smiles to see  
All those who love,—and who ever loved like thee,  
Fiordispina? Scarcely Cosimo,  
Within whose bosom and whose brain now glow  
The ardours of a vision which obscure  
The very idol of its portraiture ;  
He faints, dissolved into a sense of love ;  
But thou art as a planet sphered above,  
But thou art Love itself—ruling the motion  
Of his subjected spirit—such emotion  
Must end in sin or sorrow, if sweet May  
Had not brought forth this morn—your wedding day.

## A BRIDAL SONG.

THE golden gates of sleep unbar  
Where strength and beauty met together,  
Kindle their image like a star  
In a sea of glassy weather.  
Night, with all thy stars look down,—  
Darkness, weep thy holiest dew,—  
Never smiled the inconstant moon  
On a pair so true.  
Let eyes not see their own delight;—  
Haste, swift Hour, and thy flight  
Oft renew.

Fairies, sprites, and angels keep her!  
Holy stars, permit no wrong!  
And return to wake the sleeper,  
Dawn,—ere it be long.  
Oh joy! oh fear! what will be done  
In the absence of the sun!  
Come along!

## THE SUNSET.

THERE late was One within whose subtle being,  
As light and wind within some delicate cloud  
That fades amid the blue noon's burning sky,  
Genius and youth contended. None may know  
The sweetness of the joy which made his breath  
Fail, like the trances of the summer air,  
When, with the Lady of his love, who then  
First knew the unreserve of mingled being,  
He walked along the pathway of a field  
Which to the east a hoar wood shadowed o'er,  
But to the west was open to the sky.  
There now the sun had sunk; but lines of gold  
Hung on the ashen clouds, and on the points  
Of the far level grass and nodding flowers  
And the old dandelion's hoary beard,  
And, mingled with the shades of twilight, lay  
On the brown massy woods—and in the east  
The broad and burning moon lingeringly rose  
Between the black trunks of the crowded trees,  
While the faint stars were gathering overhead.—  
“Is it not strange, Isabel,” said the youth,  
“I never saw the sun? We will walk here  
To-morrow; thou shalt look on it with me.”

That night the youth and lady mingled lay  
In love and sleep—but when the morning came  
The lady found her lover dead and cold.

Let none believe that God in mercy gave  
That stroke. The lady died not, nor grew wild,  
But year by year lived on—in truth I think  
Her gentleness and patience and sad smiles,  
And that she did not die, but lived to tend  
Her aged father, were a kind of madness,  
If madness 'tis to be unlike the world.  
For but to see her were to read the tale  
Woven by some subtlest bard, to make hard hearts  
Dissolve away in wisdom-working grief;—  
Her eyelashes were worn away with tears,  
Her lips and cheeks were like things dead—so pale;  
Her hands were thin, and through their wandering veins  
And weak articulations might be seen  
Day's ruddy light. The tomb of thy dead self  
Which one vexed ghost inhabits, night and day,  
Is all, lost child, that now remains of thee!

“ Inheritor of more than earth can give,  
Passionless, calm and silence unreprieved,  
Whether the dead find, oh, not sleep! but rest,  
And are the uncomplaining things they seem,  
Or live, or drop in the deep sea of Love;  
Oh, that like thine, mine epitaph were—Peace!”  
This was the only moan she ever made.

## SONG,

## ON A FADED VIOLET.

THE odour from the flower is gone,  
Which like thy kisses breathed on me ;  
The colour from the flower is flown,  
Which glowed of thee, and only thee !

A shrivelled, lifeless, vacant form,  
It lies on my abandoned breast,  
And mocks the heart which yet is warm  
With cold and silent rest.

I weep—my tears revive it not !  
I sigh—it breathes no more on me ;  
Its mute and uncomplaining lot  
Is such as mine should be.

## LINES TO A CRITIC.

HONEY from silk-worms who can gather,  
Or silk from the yellow bee?  
The grass may grow in winter weather  
As soon as hate in me.

Hate men who cant, and men who pray,  
And men who rail like thee;  
An equal passion to repay  
They are not coy like me.

Or seek some slave of power and gold,  
To be thy dear heart's mate;  
Thy love will move that bigot cold,  
Sooner than me, thy hate.

A passion like the one I prove  
Cannot divided be;  
I hate thy want of truth and love—  
How should I then hate thee?

*December, 1817.*

## GOOD NIGHT.

Good night? ah! no; the hour is ill  
Which severs those it should unite;  
Let us remain together still,  
Then it will be *good* night.

How can I call the lone night good,  
Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?  
Be it not said, thought, understood,  
Then it will be *good* night.

To hearts which near each other move  
From evening close to morning light,  
The night is good; because, my love,  
They never *say* good night.

## TO-MORROW.

WHERE art thou, beloved, To-morrow?  
Whom young and old and strong and weak,  
Rich and poor, through joy and sorrow,  
Thy sweet smiles we ever seek,—  
In thy place—ah! well-a-day!  
We find the thing we fled—To-day.

## DEATH.

THEY die—the dead return not—Misery  
Sits near an open grave and calls them over,  
A Youth with hoary hair and haggard eye—  
They are the names of kindred, friend, and lover,  
Which he so feebly called—they all are gone!  
Fond wretch, all dead, those vacant names alone,  
This most familiar scene, my pain—  
These tombs alone remain.

Misery, my sweetest friend—oh! weep no more!  
Thou wilt not be consoled—I wonder not!  
For I have seen thee from thy dwelling's door  
Watch the calm sunset with them, and this spot  
Was even as bright and calm, but transitory,  
And now thy hopes are gone, thy hair is hoary;  
This most familiar scene, my pain—  
These tombs alone remain.

## A LAMENT.

OH, world! oh, life! oh, time!  
On whose last steps I climb  
Trembling at that where I had stood before;  
When will return the glory of your prime?  
No more—O, never more!

Out of the day and night  
A joy has taken flight;  
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar,  
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight  
No more—O, never more!

## LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY.

THE fountains mingle with the river,  
And the rivers with the ocean,  
The winds of heaven mix for ever  
With a sweet emotion ;  
Nothing in the world is single ;  
All things by a law divine  
In one another's being mingle—  
Why not I with thine ?

See the mountains kiss high heaven,  
And the waves clasp one another ;  
No sister flower would be forgiven  
If it disdained its brother :  
And the sunlight clasps the earth,  
And the moonbeams kiss the sea,  
What are all these kissings worth,  
If thou kiss not me ?

*January, 1820.*

## TO E\*\*\* V\*\*\*

MADONNA, wherefore hast thou sent to me  
Sweet basil and mignonette?  
Embleming love and health, which never yet  
In the same wreath might be.  
Alas, and they are wet!  
Is it with thy kisses or thy tears?  
For never rain or dew  
Such fragrance drew  
From plant or flower—the very doubt endears  
My sadness ever new,  
The sighs I breathe, the tears I shed for thee.

*March, 1821.*

TO ———

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden,  
Thou needest not fear mine;  
My spirit is too deeply laden  
Ever to burthen thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion,  
Thou needest not fear mine;  
Innocent is the heart's devotion  
With which I worship thine.

## LINES.

WHEN the lamp is shattered  
The light in the dust lies dead—

When the cloud is scattered  
The rainbow's glory is shed.

When the lute is broken,  
Sweet tones are remembered not;

When the lips have spoken,  
Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendour  
Survive not the lamp and the lute,  
The heart's echoes render  
No song when the spirit is mute :—  
No song but sad dirges,  
Like the wind through a ruined cell,  
Or the mournful surges  
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled  
Love first leaves the well-built nest,  
The weak one is singled  
To endure what it once possest.

O, Love! who bewailest  
The frailty of all things here,  
Why choose you the frailest  
For your cradle, your home and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee  
As the storms rock the ravens on high :  
Bright reason will mock thee,  
Like the sun from a wintry sky.  
From thy nest every rafter  
Will rot, and thine eagle home.  
Leave the naked to laughter,  
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

## TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

(With what truth I may say—  
Roma! Roma! Roma!  
Non è più come era prima!)

My lost William, thou in whom  
Some bright spirit lived, and did  
That decaying robe consume  
Which its lustre faintly hid,  
Here its ashes find a tomb,  
But beneath this pyramid  
Thou art not—if a thing divine  
Like thee can die, thy funeral shrine  
Is thy mother's grief and mine.

Where art thou, my gentle child?  
Let me think thy spirit feeds,  
Within its life intense and mild,  
The love of living leaves and weeds,  
Among these tombs and ruins wild;—  
Let me think that through low seeds  
Of the sweet flowers and sunny grass,  
Into their hues and scents may pass  
A portion——

## AN ALLEGORY.

A PORTAL as of shadowy adamant  
Stands yawning on the highway of the life  
Which we all tread, a cavern huge and gaunt ;  
Around it rages an unceasing strife  
Of shadows, like the restless clouds that haunt  
The gap of some cleft mountain, lifted high  
Into the whirlwinds of the upper sky.

And many passed it by with careless tread,  
Not knowing that a shadowy [         ] ]  
Tracks every traveller even to where the dead  
Wait peacefully for their companion new ;  
But others, by more curious humour led,  
Pause to examine,—these are very few,  
And they learn little there, except to know  
That shadows follow them where'er they go.

## MUTABILITY.

THE flower that smiles to-day  
    To-morrow dies ;  
All that we wish to stay,  
    Tempt and then flies ;  
What is this world's delight ?  
Lightning that mocks the night,  
Brief even as bright.

Virtue, how frail it is !  
    Friendship too rare !  
Love, how it sells poor bliss  
    For proud despair !  
But we, though soon they fall,  
Survive their joy and all  
Which ours we call.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,  
    Whilst flowers are gay,  
Whilst eyes that change ere night  
    Make glad the day ;  
Whilst yet the calm hours creep,  
Dream thou—and from thy sleep  
Then wake to weep.

## FROM THE ARABIC.

## AN IMITATION.

My faint spirit was sitting in the light  
Of thy looks, my love ;  
It panted for thee like the hind at noon  
For the brooks, my love.  
Thy barb whose hoofs outspeed the tempest's flight  
Bore thee far from me ;  
My heart, for my weak feet were weary soon,  
Did companion thee.

Ah ! fleeter far than fleetest storm or steed,  
Or the death they bear,  
The heart which tender thought clothes like a dove  
With the wings of care ;  
In the battle, in the darkness, in the need,  
Shall mine cling to thee,  
Nor claim one smile for all the comfort, love,  
It may bring to thee.

TO \_\_\_\_\_

ONE word is too often profaned  
For me to profane it,  
One feeling too falsely disdained  
For thee to disdain it.  
One hope is too like despair  
For prudence to smother,  
And Pity from thee more dear,  
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love,  
But wilt thou accept not  
The worship the heart lifts above  
And the Heavens reject not,  
The desire of the moth for the star,  
Of the night for the morrow,  
The devotion to something afar  
From the sphere of our sorrow?

## MUSIC.

I PANT for the music which is divine,  
 My heart in its thirst is a dying flower ;  
 Pour forth the sound like enchanted wine,  
 Loosen the notes in a silver shower ;  
 Like a herbless plain, for the gentle rain,  
 I gasp, I faint, till they wake again.

Let me drink of the spirit of that sweet sound,  
 More, O more,—I am thirsting yet,  
 It loosens the serpent which care has bound  
 Upon my heart to stifle it ;  
 The dissolving strain, through every vein,  
 Passes into my heart and brain.

As the scent of a violet withered up,  
 Which grew by the brink of a silver lake ;  
 When the hot noon has drained its dewy cup,  
 And mist there was none its thirst to slake—  
 And the violet lay dead while the odour flew  
 On the wings of the wind o'er the waters blue—

As one who drinks from a charmed cup  
 Of foaming, and sparkling and murmuring wine  
 Whom, a mighty Enchantress filling up,  
 Invites to love with her kiss divine.

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

## LINES.

THE cold earth slept below ;  
Above the cold sky shone ;  
And all around,  
With a chilling sound,  
From caves of ice and fields of snow,  
The breath of night like death did flow  
Beneath the sinking moon.

The wintry hedge was black,  
The green grass was not seen,  
The birds did rest  
On the bare thorn's breast,  
Whose roots, beside the pathway track,  
Had bound their folds o'er many a crack  
Which the frost had made between.

Thine eyes glowed in the glare  
Of the moon's dying light ;  
As a fen-fire's beam,  
On a sluggish stream,  
Gleams dimly—so the moon shone there,  
And it yellowed the strings of thy tangled hair  
That shook in the wind of night.

The moon made thy lips pale, beloved ;  
The wind made thy bosom chill ;  
The night did shed  
On thy dear head  
Its frozen dew, and thou didst lie  
Where the bitter breath of the naked sky  
Might visit thee at will.

*November, 1815.*

## DEATH.

DEATH is here and death is there,  
Death is busy every where,  
All around, within, beneath,  
Above is death—and we are death.

Death has set his mark and seal  
On all we are and all we feel,  
On all we know and all we fear,

\* \* \* \*

First our pleasures die—and then  
Our hopes, and then our fears—and when  
These are dead, the debt is due,  
Dust claims dust—and we die too.

All things that we love and cherish,  
Like ourselves must fade and perish,  
Such is our rude mortal lot,  
Love itself would, did they not.

TO —————

WHEN passion's trance is overpast,  
If tenderness and truth could last  
Or live, whilst all wild feelings keep  
Some mortal slumber, dark and deep,  
I should not weep, I should not weep!

It were enough to feel, to see  
Thy soft eyes gazing tenderly,  
And dream the rest—and burn and be  
The secret food of fires unseen,  
Couldst thou but be as thou hast been.

After the slumber of the year  
The woodland violets re-appear,  
All things revive in field or grove,  
And sky and sea, but two, which move,  
And for all others, life and love.

## PASSAGE OF THE APENNINES.

LISTEN, listen, Mary mine,  
To the whisper of the Apennine,  
It bursts on the roof like the thunder's roar,  
Or like the sea on a northern shore,  
Heard in its raging ebb and flow  
By the captives pent in the cave below.  
The Apennine in the light of day  
Is a mighty mountain dim and grey,  
Which between the earth and sky doth lay;  
But when night comes, a chaos dread  
On the dim starlight then is spread,  
And the Apennine walks abroad with the storm.

*May 4th, 1818.*

## TO MARY —————

OH! Mary dear, that you were here  
With your brown eyes bright and clear,  
And your sweet voice, like a bird  
Singing love to its lone mate  
In the ivy bower disconsolate;  
Voice the sweetest ever heard!  
And your brow more \* \* \*  
Than the \* \* \* sky  
Of this azure Italy.  
Mary dear, come to me soon,  
I am not well whilst thou art far;  
As sunset to the sphered moon,  
As twilight to the western star,  
Thou, beloved, art to me.

Oh! Mary dear, that you were here;  
The Castle echo whispers "Here!"

*Este, September 1818.*

## THE PAST.

WILT thou forget the happy hours  
Which we buried in Love's sweet bowers,  
Heaping over their corpses cold  
Blossoms and leaves, instead of mould?  
Blossoms which were the joys that fell,  
And leaves, the hopes that yet remain.

Forget the dead, the past?. O yet  
There are ghosts that may take revenge for it,  
Memories that make the heart a tomb,  
Regrets which glide through the spirit's gloom,  
And with ghastly whispers tell  
That joy, once lost, is pain.

## SONG OF A SPIRIT.

WITHIN the silent centre of the earth  
My mansion is ; where I lived insphered  
From the beginning, and around my sleep  
Have woven all the wondrous imagery  
Of this dim spot, which mortals call the world ;  
Infinite depths of unknown elements  
Massed into one impenetrable mask ;  
Sheets of immeasurable fire, and veins  
Of gold and stone, and adamant iron.  
And as a veil in which I walk through Heaven  
I have wrought mountains, seas, and waves, and clouds,  
And lastly light, whose interfusion dawns  
In the dark space of interstellar air.

## LIBERTY.

THE fiery mountains answer each other ;  
Their thunderings are echoed from zone to zone ;  
The empestuous oceans awake one another,  
And the ice-rocks are shaken round winter's zone  
    When the clarion of the Typhoon is blown.

From a single cloud the lightning flashes,  
Whilst a thousand isles are illumined around,  
Earthquake is trampling one city to ashes,  
An hundred are shuddering and tottering ; the sound  
    Is bellowing underground.

But keener thy gaze than the lightning's glare,  
And swifter thy step than the earthquake's tramp ;  
Thou deafenest the rage of the ocean ; thy stare  
Makes blind the volcanos ; the sun's bright lamp  
    To thine is a fen-fire damp.

From billow and mountain and exhalation  
The sunlight is darted through vapour and blast ;  
From spirit to spirit, from nation to nation,  
From city to hamlet thy dawning is cast,—  
And tyrants and slaves are like shadows of night  
    In the van of the morning light.

TO ———

MINE eyes were dim with tears unshed ;  
 Yes, I was firm—thus did not thou ;—  
 My baffled looks did fear yet dread  
 To meet thy looks—I could not know  
 How anxiously they sought to shine  
 With soothing pity upon mine.

To sit and curb the soul's mute rage  
 Which preys upon itself alone ;  
 To curse the life which is the cage  
 Of fettered grief that dares not groan,  
 Hiding from many a careless eye  
 The scorned load of agony.

Whilst thou alone, then not regarded,  
 The [            ] thou alone should be,  
 To spend years thus, and be rewarded,  
 As thou, sweet love, requited me  
 When none were near—Oh! I did wake  
 From torture for that moment's sake.

Upon my heart thy accents sweet  
 Of peace and pity, fell like dew  
 On flowers half dead ;—thy lips did meet  
 Mine tremblingly ; thy dark eyes threw  
 Thy soft persuasion on my brain,  
 Charming away its dream of pain.

We are not happy, sweet; our state  
Is strange and full of doubt and fear;  
More need of words that ills abate;—  
Reserve or censure come not near  
Our sacred friendship, lest there be  
No solace left for thou and me.

Gentle and good and mild thou art,  
Nor I can live if thou appear  
Aught but thyself, or turn thine heart  
Away from me, or stoop to wear  
The mask of scorn, although it be  
To hide the love thou feel for me.

## THE ISLE.

THERE was a little lawny islet  
By anemone and violet,  
    Like mosaic, paven :  
And its roof was flowers and leaves  
Which the summer's breath enweaves,  
Where nor sun nor showers nor breeze  
Pierce the pines and tallest trees,  
    Each a gem engraven.  
Girt by many an azure wave  
With which the clouds and mountains pave  
    A lake's blue chasm.

'TO ——

MUSIC, when soft voices die,  
Vibrates in the memory—  
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,  
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,  
Are heaped for the beloved's bed ;  
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,  
Love itself shall slumber on.

## TIME.

UNFATHOMABLE Sea! whose waves are years,  
Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe  
Are brackish with the salt of human tears!  
Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow  
Claspest the limits of mortality!  
And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,  
Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore,  
Traucherous in calm, and terrible in storm,  
Who shall put forth on thee,  
Unfathomable Sea?

## LINES.

THAT time is dead forever, child,  
Drowned, frozen, dead forever!  
    We look on the past  
    And stare aghast  
At the spectres wailing, pale and ghastr,  
Of hopes which thou and I beguiled  
    To death on life's dark river.

The stream we gazed on then, rolled by;  
Its waves are unreturning;  
    But we yet stand  
    In a lone land,  
Like tombs to mark the memory  
Of hopes and fears, which fade and flee  
In the light of life's dim morning.

*November 5th, 1817.*

## A SONG.

A widow bird sate mourning for her love.  
Upon a wintry bough ;  
The frozen wind kept on above,  
The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare,  
No flower upon the ground,  
And little motion in the air  
Except the mill-wheel's sound.

## THE WORLD'S WANDERERS.

TELL me, thou star, whose wings of light  
Speed thee in thy fiery flight,  
In what cavern of the night  
    Will thy pinions close now?

Tell me, moon, thou pale and grey  
Pilgrim of heaven's homeless way,  
In what depth of night or day  
    Seekest thou repose now?

Weary wind, who wanderest  
Like the world's rejected guest,  
Hast thou still some secret nest  
    On the tree or billow?

## A DIRGE.

ROUGH wind, that moanest loud  
Grief too sad for song ;  
Wild wind, when sullen cloud  
Knells all the night long ;  
Sad storm, whose tears are vain,  
Bare woods, whose branches stain,  
Deep caves and dreary main,  
Wail, for the world's wrong !

## LINES.

FAR, far away, O ye  
Halcyons of memory,  
Seek some far calmer nest  
Than this abandoned breast;—  
No news of your false spring  
To my heart's winter bring,  
Once having gone, in vain  
Ye come again.

Vultures, who build your bowers  
High in the Future's towers,  
Withered hopes on hopes are spread,  
Dying joys choked by the dead,  
Will serve your beaks for prey  
Many a day.

## DIRGE FOR THE YEAR.

ORPHAN hours, the year is dead,  
Come and sigh, come and weep!  
Merry hours, smile instead,  
For the year is but asleep.  
See, it smiles as it is sleeping,  
Mocking your untimely weeping.

As an earthquake rocks a corpse  
In its coffin in the clay,  
So White Winter, that rough nurse,  
Rocks the death-cold year to-day;  
Solemn hours! wait aloud  
For your mother in her shroud.

As the wild air stirs and sways  
The tree-sung cradle of a child;  
So the breath of these rude days  
Rocks the year:—be calm and mild,  
Trembling hours, she will arise  
With new love within her eyes.

January grey is here,  
Like a sexton by her grave;  
February bears the bier,  
March with grief doth howl and rave  
And April weeps—but, O, ye hours,  
Follow with May's fairest flowers.

*January 1st, 1821.*

## SONNET I.

YE hasten to the dead! What seek ye there,  
Ye restless thoughts and busy purposes  
Of the idle brain, which the world's livery wear?  
Oh thou quick Heart which pantest to possess  
All that anticipation feigneth fair!  
Thou vainly curious mind which wouldest guess  
Whence thou didst come, and whither thou may'st go,  
And that which never yet was known would know—  
Oh, whither hasten ye that thus ye press  
With such swift feet life's green and pleasant path,  
Seeking alike from happiness and woe  
A refuge in the cavern of grey death?  
Oh heart, and mind, and thoughts! What thing do you  
Hope to inherit in the grave below?

## SONNET II.

## POLITICAL GREATNESS.

NOR happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,  
Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in arms or arts,  
Shepherd those herds whom tyranny makes tame;  
Verse echoes not one beating of their hearts,  
History is but the shadow of their shame,  
Art veils her glass, or from the pageant starts  
As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,  
Staining that Heaven with obscene imagery  
Of their own likeness. What are numbers knit  
By force or custom? Man who man would be,  
Must rule the empire of himself; in it  
Must be supreme, establishing his throne  
On vanquished will, quelling the anarchy  
Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.

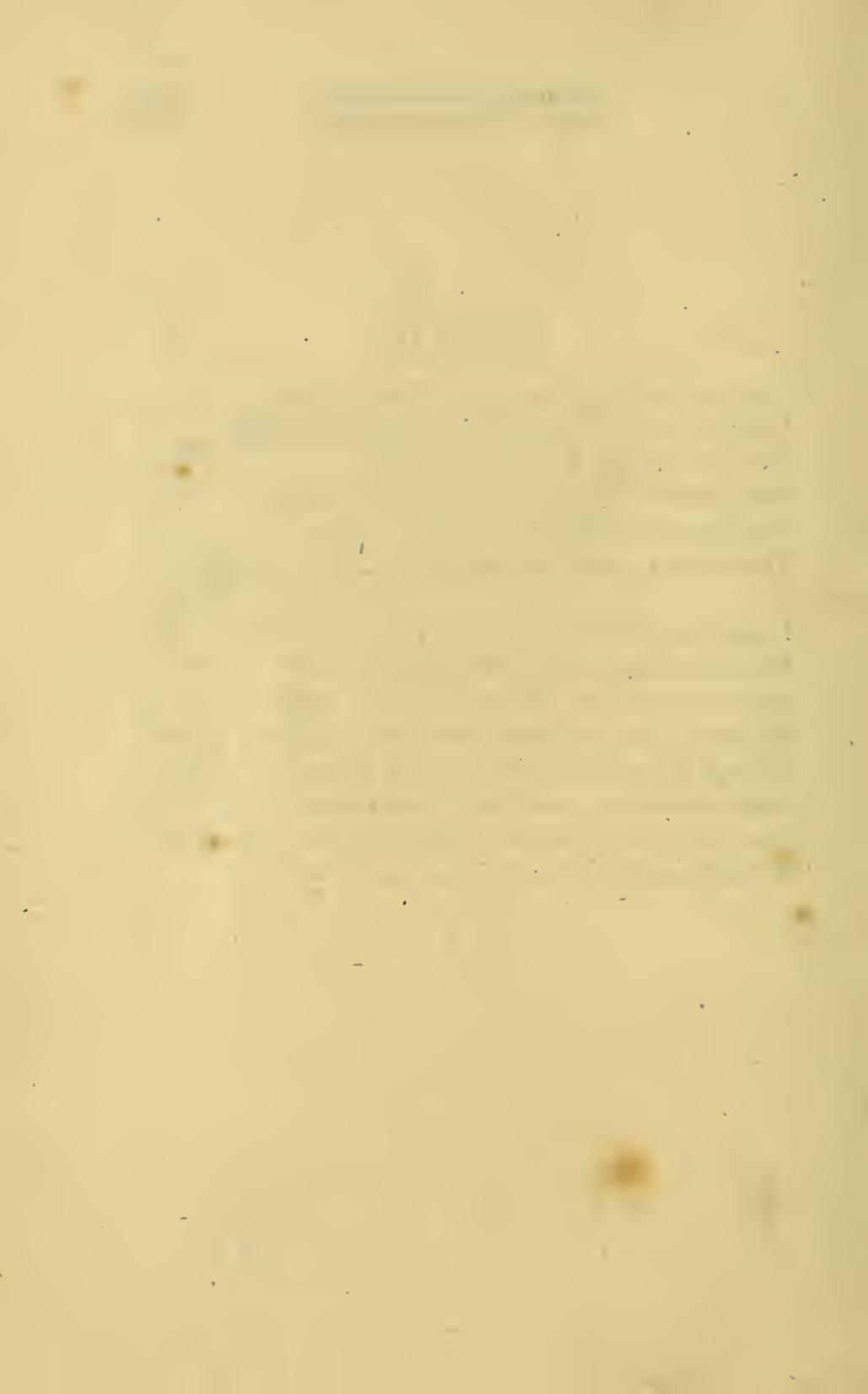
## SONNET III.

ALAS! good friend, what profit can you see  
In hating such an hateless thing as me?  
There is no sport in hate where all the rage  
Is on one side. In vain would you assuage  
Your frowns upon an unresisting smile,  
In which not even contempt lurks, to beguile  
Your heart, by some faint sympathy of hate.  
O conquer what you cannot satiate!  
For to your passion I am far more coy  
Than ever yet was coldest maid or boy  
In winter noon. Of your antipathy  
If I am the Narcissus, you are free  
To pine into a sound with hating me.

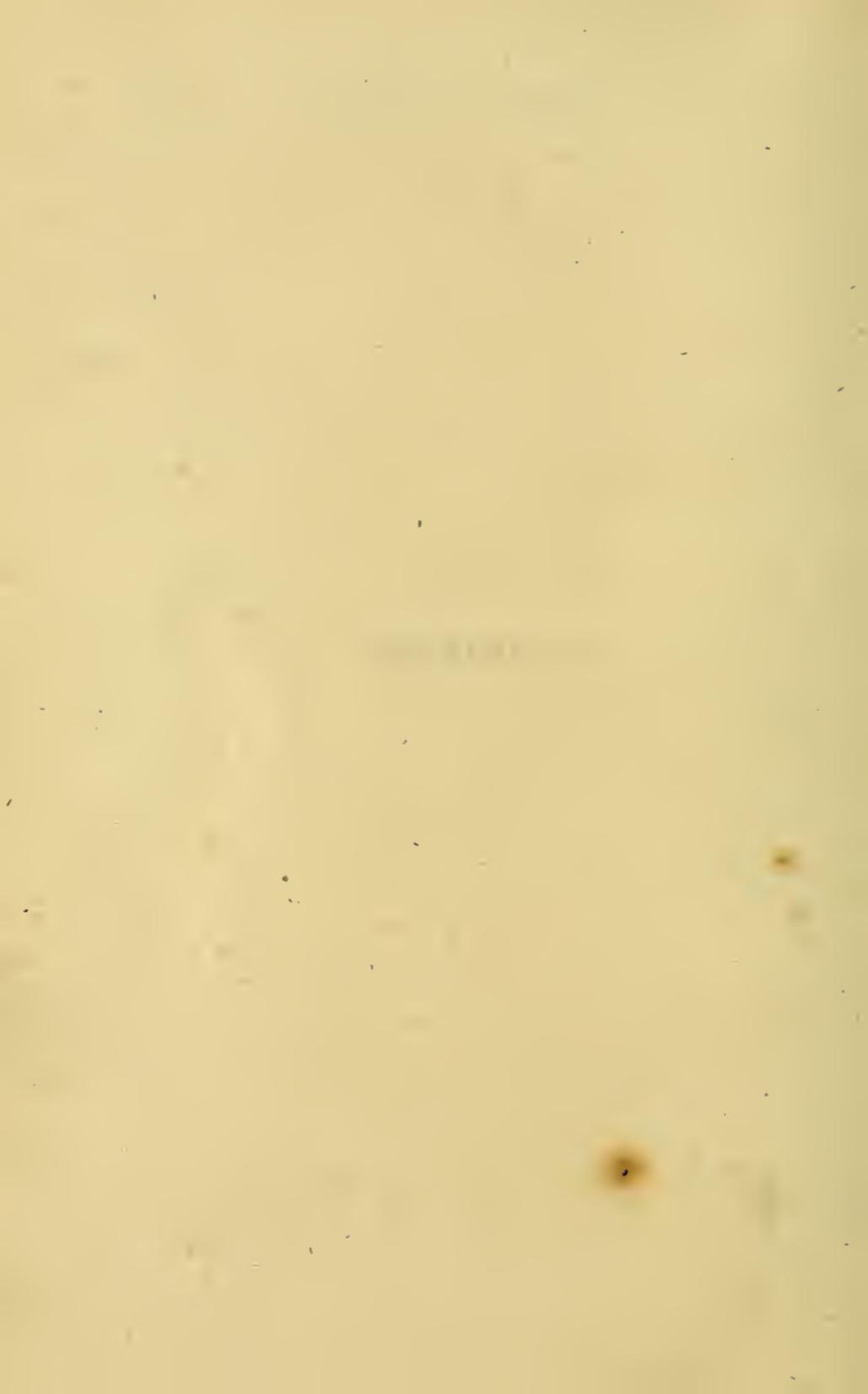
## SONNET IV.

LIFT not the painted veil which those who live  
Call Life: though unreal shapes be pictured there,  
And it but mimic all we would believe  
With colours idly spread :—behind, lurk Fear  
And Hope, twin destinies; who ever weave  
The shadows, which the world calls substance, there.

I knew one who lifted it—he sought,  
For his lost heart was tender, things to love  
But found them not, alas! nor was there aught  
The world contains, the which he could approve.  
Through the unheeding many he did move,  
A splendour among shadows, a bright blot  
Upon this gloomy scene, a Spirit that strove  
For truth, and like the Preacher found it not.



**FRAGMENTS.**



## GINEVRA.\*

---

WILD, pale, and wonder-stricken, even as one  
Who staggers forth into the air and sun  
From the dark chamber of a mortal fever,  
Bewildered, and incapable, and ever  
Fancying strange comments in her dizzy brain  
Of usual shapes, till the familiar train  
Of objects and of persons passed like things  
Strange as a dreamer's mad imaginings,  
Ginevra from the nuptial altar went ;  
The vows to which her lips had sworn assent  
Rung in her brain still with a jarring din,  
Deafening the lost intelligence within.

And so she moved under the bridal veil,  
Which made the paleness of her cheek more pale,  
And deepened the faint crimson of her mouth,  
And darkened her dark locks, as moonlight doth,—  
And of the gold and jewels glittering there  
She scarce felt conscious,—but the weary glare  
Lay like a chaos of unwelcome light,

\* This fragment is part of a poem which Mr. Shelley intended to write, founded on a story to be found in the first volume of a book entitled "L'Osservatore Fiorentino."

Vexing the sense with gorgeous undelight.  
A moonbeam in the shadow of a cloud  
Was less heavenly fair—her face was bowed,  
And as she passed, the diamonds in her hair  
Were mirrored in the polished marble stair  
Which led from the cathedral to the street ;  
And ever as she went her light fair feet  
Erased these images.

The bride-maidens who round her thronging came,  
Some with a sense of self-rebuke and shame,  
Envyng the unenviable ; and others  
Making the joy which should have been another's  
Their own by gentle sympathy ; and some  
Sighing to think of an unhappy home :  
Some few admiring what can ever lure  
Maidens to leave the heaven serene and pure  
Of parents' smiles for life's great cheat ; a thing  
Better to taste sweet in imagining.

But they are all dispersed—and, lo ! she stands  
Looking in idle grief on her white hands,  
Alone within the garden now her own ;  
And through the sunny air, with jangling tone,  
The music of the merry marriage bells,  
Killing the azure silence, sinks and swells ;—  
Absorbed like one within a dream who dreams  
That he is dreaming, until slumber seems  
A mockery of itself—when suddenly  
Antonio stood before her, pale as she.  
With agony, with sorrow, and with pride,  
He lifted his wan eyes upon the bride,

And said—"Is this thy faith?" and then as one  
Whose sleeping face is stricken by the sun  
With light like a harsh voice, which bids him rise  
And look upon his day of life with eyes  
Which weep in vain that they can dream no more,  
Ginevrà saw her lover, and forbore  
To shriek or faint, and checked the stifling blood  
Rushing upon her heart, and unsubdued  
Said—"Friend, if earthly violence or ill,  
Suspicion, doubt, or the tyrannic will  
Of parents, chance, or custom, time or change,  
Or circumstance, or terror, or revenge,  
Or wildered looks, or words, or evil speech,  
With all their stings [     ] can impeach  
Our love,—we love not:—if the grave which hides  
The victim from the tyrant, and divides  
The cheek that whitens from the eyes that dart  
Imperious inquisition to the heart  
That is another's, could dissever ours,  
We love not."—"What do not the silent hours  
Beckon thee to Gherardi's bridal bed?  
Is not that ring"—a pledge, he would have said,  
Of broken vows, but she with patient look  
The golden circle from her finger took,  
And said—"Accept this token of my faith,  
The pledge of vows to be absolved by death;  
And I am dead or shall be soon—my knell  
Will mix it's music with that merry bell,  
Does it not sound as if they sweetly said  
'We toll a corpse out of the marriage bed?'  
The flowers upon my bridal chamber strewn  
Will serve unfaded for my bier—so soon

That even the dying violet will not die  
 Before Ginevra." The strong fantasy  
 Had made her accents weaker and more weak,  
 And quenched the crimson life upon her cheek,  
 And glazed her eyes, and spread an atmosphere  
 Round her, which chilled the burning noon with fear,  
 Making her but an image of the thought,  
 Which, like a prophet or a shadow, brought  
 News of the terrors of the coming time.  
 Like an accuser branded with the crime  
 He would have cast on a beloved friend,  
 Whose dying eyes reproach not to the end  
 The pale betrayer—he then with vain repentance  
 Would share, he cannot now avert, the sentence—  
 Antonio stood and would have spoken, when  
 The compound voice of women and of men  
 Was heard approaching; he retired, while she  
 Was led amid the admiring company  
 Back to the palace,—and her maidens soon  
 Changed her attire for the afternoon,  
 And left her at her own request to keep  
 An hour of quiet and rest:—like one asleep  
 With open eyes and folded hands she lay,  
 Pale in the light of the declining day.

Meanwhile the day sinks fast, the sun is set,  
 And in the lighted hall the guests are met;  
 The beautiful looked lovelier in the light  
 Of love, and admiration, and delight  
 Reflected from a thousand hearts and eyes  
 Kindling a momentary Paradise.  
 This crowd is safer than the silent wood,

Where love's own doubts disturb the solitude;  
On frozen hearts the fiery rain of wine  
Falls, and the dew of music more divine  
Tempers the deep emotions of the time  
To spirits cradled in a sunny clime:—  
How many meet, who never yet have met,  
To part too soon, but never to forget.  
How many saw the beauty, power and wit  
Of looks and words which ne'er enchanted yet;  
But life's familiar veil was now withdrawn,  
As the world leaps before an earthquake's dawn,  
And unprophetic of the coming hours,  
The matin winds from the expanded flowers,  
Scatter their hoarded incense, and awaken  
The earth, until the dewy sleep is shaken  
From every living heart which it possesses,  
Through seas and winds, cities and wildernesses,  
As if the future and the past were all  
Treasured i'the instant;—so Gherardi's hall  
Laughed in the mirth of its lord's festival,  
Till some one asked—"Where is the Bride?" And then  
A bride's-maid went,—and ere she came again  
A silence fell upon the guests—a pause  
Of expectation, as when beauty awes  
All hearts with its approach, though unbeheld;  
Then wonder, and then fear that wonder quelled;—  
For whispers passed from mouth to ear which drew  
The colour from the hearer's cheeks, and flew  
Louder and swifter round the company;  
And then Gherardi entered with an eye  
Of ostentatious trouble, and a crowd  
Surrounded him, and some were weeping loud.

They found Ginevra dead ! if it be death,  
To lie without motion, or pulse, or breath,  
With waxen cheeks, and limbs cold, stiff, and white,  
And open eyes, whose fixed and glassy light  
Mocked at the speculation they had owned.  
If it be death, when there is felt around  
A smell of clay, a pale and icy glare,  
And silence, and a sense that lifts the hair  
From the scalp to the ancles, as it were  
Corruption from the spirit passing forth,  
And giving all it shrouded to the earth,  
And leaving as swift lightning in its flight  
Ashes, and smoke, and darkness : in our night  
Of thought we know thus much of death,—no more  
Than the unborn dream of our life before  
Their barks are wrecked on its inhospitable shore.  
The marriage feast and its solemnity  
Was turned to funeral pomp—the company  
With heavy hearts and looks, broke up ; nor they  
Who loved the dead went weeping on their way  
Alone, but sorrow mixed with sad surprize  
Loosened the springs of pity in all eyes,  
On which that form, whose fate they weep in vain,  
Will never, thought they, kindle smiles again.  
The lamps which half extinguished in their haste  
Gleamed few and faint o'er the abandoned feast,  
Shewed as it were within the vaulted room  
A cloud of sorrow hanging, as if gloom  
Had passed out of men's minds into the air.  
Some few yet stood around Gherardi there,  
Friends and relations of the dead,—and he,  
A loveless man, accepted torpidly

The consolation that he wanted not,  
 Awe in the place of grief within him wrought.  
 Their whispers made the solemn silence seem  
 More still—some wept, [            ]  
 Some melted into tears without a sob,  
 And some with hearts that might be heard to throb  
 Leant on the table, and at intervals  
 Shuddered to hear through the deserted halls  
 And corridors the thrilling shrieks which came  
 Upon the breeze of night, that shook the flame  
 Of every torch and taper as it swept  
 From out the chamber where the women kept;—  
 Their tears fell on the dear companion cold  
 Of pleasures now departed; then was knolled  
 The bell of death, and soon the priests arrived,  
 And finding death their penitent had shrived,  
 Returned like ravens from a corpse whereon  
 A vulture has just feasted to the bone.  
 And then the mourning women came.—

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*

THE DIRGE.

Old winter was gone  
 In his weakness back to the mountains hoar,  
     And the spring came down  
 From the planet that hovers upon the shore  
 Where the sea of sunlight encroaches  
 On the limits of wintry night;—  
 If the land, and the air, and the sea  
 Rejoice not when spring approaches,  
 We did not rejoice in thee,  
     Ginevra !

She is still, she is cold  
    On the bridal couch,  
One step to the white death bed,  
    And one to the bier,  
And one to the charnel—and one, O where?  
    The dark arrow fled  
    In the noon.

Ere the sun through heaven once more has rolled,  
The rats in her heart  
Will have made their nest,  
And the worms be alive in her golden hair,  
While the spirit that guides the sun,  
Sits throned in his flaming chair,  
    She shall sleep.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Pisa, 1821.*

# CHARLES THE FIRST.

## FRAGMENTS.

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### ACT I. SCENE I.

*The Pageant to [celebrate] the arrival of the Queen.*

A PURSUIVANT.

PLACE, for the Marshal of the Masque!

FIRST SPEAKER.

What thinkest thou of this quaint masque, which turns,  
Like morning from the shadow of the night,  
The night to day, and London to a place  
Of peace and joy?

SECOND SPEAKER.

And Hell to Heaven,

Eight years are gone,  
And they seem hours, since in this populous street  
I trod on grass made green by summer's rain,  
For the red plague kept state within that palace  
Where now reigns vanity—in nine years more

The roots will be refreshed with civil blood ;  
 And thank the mercy of insulted Heaven  
 That sin and wrongs wound as an orphan's cry,  
 The patience of the great avenger's ear.

THIRD SPEAKER (*a youth*).

Yet, father, tis a happy sight to see,  
 Beautiful, innocent, and unforbidden  
 By God or man ;—'tis like the bright procession  
 Of skiey visions in a solemn dream  
 From which men wake as from a paradise,  
 And draw new strength to tread the thorns of life.  
 If God be good, wherefore should this be evil?  
 And if this be not evil, dost thou not draw  
 Unseasonable poison from the flowers  
 Which bloom so rarely in this barren world?  
 O, kill these bitter thoughts which make the present  
 Dark as the future!—

\* \* \* \* \*

When avarice and tyranny, vigilant fear,  
 And open-eyed conspiracy lie sleeping  
 As on Hell's threshold; and all gentle thoughts  
 Waken to worship him who giveth joys  
 With his own gift.

SECOND SPEAKER.

How young art thou in this old age of time!  
 How green in this grey world! Canst thou not think  
 Of change in that low scene, in which thou art  
 Not a spectator but an actor? [            ]  
 The day that dawns in fire will die in storms,  
 Even though the noon be calm. My travel's done ;  
 Before the whirlwind wakes I shall have found

My inn of lasting rest, but thou must still  
 Be journeying on in this inclement air.

\* \* \* \* \*

FIRST SPEAKER.

That  
 Is the Archbishop.

SECOND SPEAKER.

Rather say the Pope.  
 London will be soon his Rome: he walks  
 As if he trod upon the heads of men.  
 He looks elate, drunken with blood and gold;—  
 Beside him moves the Babylonian woman  
 Invisibly, and with her as with his shadow,  
 Mitred adulterer! he is joined in sin,  
 Which turns Heaven's milk of mercy to revenge.

ANOTHER CITIZEN (*lifting up his eyes*).

Good Lord! rain it down upon him. [        ]  
 Amid her ladies walks the papist queen,  
 As if her nice feet scorned our English earth.  
 There's old Sir Henry Vane, the Earl of Pembroke,  
 Lord Essex, and Lord Keeper Coventry,  
 And others who make base their English breed  
 By vile participation of their honours  
 With papists, atheists, tyrants, and apostates.  
 When lawyers mask 'tis time for honest men  
 To strip the vizer from their purposes.

\* \* \* \* \*

FOURTH SPEAKER (*a poursuivant*)

Give place, give place!—  
 You torch-bearers advance to the great gate,  
 And then attend the Marshal of the Masque  
 Into the Royal presence.



The Capitolian—See how gloriously  
 The mettled horses in the torchlight stir  
 Their gallant riders, while they check their pride,  
 Like shapes of some diviner element!

SECOND SPEAKER.

Aye, there they are—  
 Nobles, and sons of nobles, patentees,  
 Monopolists, and stewards of this poor farm,  
 On whose lean sheep sit the prophetic crows.  
 Here is the pomp that strips the houseless orphan,  
 Here is the pride that breaks the desolate heart.  
 These are the lilies glorious as Solomon,  
 Who toil not, neither do they spin,—unless  
 It be the webs they catch poor rogues withal.  
 Here is the surfeit which to them who earn  
 The niggard wages of the earth, scarce leaves  
 The tithe that will support them till they crawl  
 Back to its cold hard bosom. Here is health  
 Followed by grim disease, glory by shame,  
 Waste by lame famine, wealth by squalid want,  
 And England's sin by England's punishment.  
 And, as the effect pursues the cause foregone,  
 Lo, giving substance to my words, behold  
 At once the sign and the thing signified—  
 A troop of cripples, beggars, and lean outcasts,  
 Horsed upon stumbling shapes, carted with dung,  
 Dragged for a day from cellars and low cabins  
 And rotten hiding-holes to point the moral  
 Of this presentiment, and bring up the rear  
 Of painted pomp with misery!

SPEAKER.

'Tis but

The anti-masque, and serves as discords do  
 In sweetest music. Who would love May flowers  
 If they succeeded not to Winter's flaw;  
 Or day unchanged by night; or joy itself  
 Without the touch of sorrow?

\* \* \* \* \*

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SCENE II.

*A Chamber in Whitehall.*

*Enter the KING, QUEEN, LAUD, WENTWORTH, and  
 ARCHY.*

KING.

Thanks, gentlemen, I heartily accept  
 This token of your service: your gay masque  
 Was performed gallantly.

QUEEN.

And, gentlemen,  
 Call your poor Queen your debtor. Your quaint pageant  
 Rose on me like the figures of past years,  
 Treading their still path back to infancy,  
 More beautiful and mild as they draw nearer  
 The quiet cradle. I could have almost wept  
 To think I was in Paris, where these shows  
 Are well devised—such as I was ere yet

My young heart shared with [            ] the task,  
 The careful weight of this great monarchy.  
 There, gentlemen, between the sovereign's pleasure  
 And that which it regards, no clamour lifts  
 Its proud interposition.

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

KING.

My lord of Canterbury.

ARCHY.

The fool is here.

LAUD.

I crave permission of your Majesty  
 To order that this insolent fellow be  
 Chastised, he mocks the sacred character,  
 Scoffs at the stake, and—

KING.

What, my Archy!

He mocks and mimics all he sees and hears,  
 Yet with a quaint and graceful license—Prithee  
 For this once do not as Prynne would, were he  
 Primate of England.

He lives in his own world; and, like a parrot,  
 Hung in his gilded prison from the window  
 Of a queen's bower over the public way,  
 Blasphemes with a bird's mind:—his words, like arrows  
 Which know no aim beyond the archer's wit,  
 Strike sometimes what eludes philosophy.

QUEEN.

Go, sirrah, and repent of your offence  
 Ten minutes in the rain: be it your penance  
 To bring news how the world goes there. Poor Archy!

He weaves about himself a world of mirth  
Out of this wreck of ours.

LAUD.

I take with patience, as my master did,  
All scoffs permitted from above.

KING.

My Lord,  
Pray overlook these papers. Archy's words  
Had wings, but these have talons.

QUEEN.

And the lion  
That wears them must be tamed. My dearest lord,  
I see the new-born courage in your eye  
Armed to strike dead the spirit of the time.

\* \* \* \* \*

Do thou persist : for, faint but in resolve,  
And it were better thou hadst still remained  
The slave of thine own slaves, who tear like curs  
The fugitive, and flee from the pursuer ;  
And Opportunity, that empty wolf,  
Flies at his throat who falls. Subdue thy actions  
Even to the disposition of thy purpose,  
And be that tempered as the Ebro's steel ;  
And banish weak-eyed Mercy to the weak  
Whence she will greet thee with a gift of peace,  
And not betray thee with a traitor's kiss,  
As when she keeps the company of rebels,  
Who think that she is fear. This do, lest we  
Should fall as from a glorious pinnacle  
In a bright dream, and wake as from a dream  
Out of our worshipped state.

\* \* \* \* \*

## LAUD.

\* \*      And if this suffice not,  
 Unleash the sword and fire, that in their thirst  
 They may lick up that scum of schismatics.  
 I laugh at those weak rebels who, desiring  
 What we possess, still prate of christian peace,  
 As if those dreadful messengers of wrath,  
 Which play the part of God 'twixt right and wrong,  
 Should be let loose against innocent sleep  
 Of templed cities and the smiling fields,  
 For some poor argument of policy  
 Which touches our own profit or our pride,  
 Where it indeed were christian charity  
 To turn the cheek even to the smiter's hand :  
 And when our great Redeemer, when our God  
 Is scorned in his immediate ministers;  
 They talk of peace !  
 Such peace as Canaan found, let Scotland now.

\* \* \* \* \*

## QUEEN.

My beloved lord,  
 Have you not noted that the fool of late  
 Has lost his careless mirth, and that his words  
 Sound like the echoes of our saddest fears?  
 What can it mean? I should be loth to think  
 Some factious slave had tutored him.

## KING.

It partly is,  
 That our minds piece the vacant intervals  
 Of his wild words with their own fashioning;  
 As in the imagery of summer clouds,  
 Or coals in the winter fire, idlers find

The perfect shadows of their teeming thoughts :  
 And partly, that the terrors of the time  
 Are sown by wandering Rumour in all spirits ;  
 And in the lightest and the least, may best  
 Be seen the current of the coming wind.

QUEEN.

Your brain is overwrought with these deep thoughts ;  
 Come, I will sing to you ; let us go try  
 These airs from Italy,—and you shall see  
 A cradled miniature of yourself asleep,  
 Stamped on the heart by never-erring love ;  
 Likier than any Vandyke ever made,  
 A pattern to the unborn age of thee,  
 Over whose sweet beauty I have wept for joy  
 A thousand times, and now should weep for sorrow,  
 Did I not think that after we were dead  
 Our fortunes would spring high in him, and that  
 The cares we waste upon our heavy crown  
 Would make it light and glorious as a wreath  
 Of heaven's beams for his dear innocent brow.

KING.

Dear Henrietta!

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SCENE III.

HAMPDEN, PYM, CROMWELL, *and the younger VANE.*

HAMPDEN.

England, farewell! thou, who hast been my cradle,

Shalt never be my dungeon or my grave!  
 I held what I inherited in thee,  
 As pawn for that inheritance of freedom  
 Which thou hast sold for thy despoiler's smile:—  
 How can I call thee England, or my country?  
 Does the wind hold?

## VANE.

The vanes sit steady  
 Upon the Abbey towers. The silver lightnings  
 Of the evening star, spite of the city's smoke,  
 Tell that the north wind reigns in the upper air.  
 Mark too that flock of fleecy winged clouds  
 Sailing athwart St. Margaret's.

## HAMPDEN.

Hail, fleet herald  
 Of tempest! that wild pilot who shall guide  
 Hearts free as his, to realms as pure as thee,  
 Beyond the shot of tyranny! And thou,  
 Fair star, whose beam lies on the wide Atlantic,  
 Athwart its zones of tempest and of calm,  
 Bright as the path to a beloved home,  
 O light us to the isles of th' evening land!  
 Like floating Edens, cradled in the glimmer  
 Of sunset, through the distant mist of years  
 Tinged by departing Hope, they gleam! Lone regions,  
 Where power's poor dupes and victims, yet have never  
 Propitiated the savage fear of kings  
 With purest blood of noblest hearts; whose dew  
 Is yet unstained with tears of those who wake  
 To weep each day the wrongs on which it dawns;  
 Whose sacred silent air owns yet no echo  
 Of formal blasphemies; nor impious rites

Wrest man's free worship from the God who loves  
 Towards the worm, who envies us his love,  
 Receive thou young [ ] of Paradise,  
 These exiles from the old and sinful world!  
 'This glorious clime, this firmament, whose lights  
 Dart mitigated influence through the veil  
 Of pale blue atmosphere; whose tears keep green  
 The pavement of this moist all-feeding earth,  
 This vaporous horizon; whose dim round  
 Is bastioned by the circumfluous sea,  
 Repelling invasion from the sacred towers,  
 Presses upon me like a dungeon's grate,  
 A low dark roof, a damp and narrow vault:  
 The mighty universe becomes a cell  
 Too narrow for the soul that owns no master.

While the loathliest spot

Of this wide prison, England, is a nest  
 Of cradled peace built on the mountain tops,  
 To which the eagle-spirits of the free,  
 Which range through heaven and earth, and scorn the storm  
 Of time, and gaze upon the light of truth,  
 Return to brood over the [ ] thoughts  
 That cannot die, and may not be repelled.

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# PRINCE ATHANASE.

## PART II.

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### FRAGMENT I.

PRINCE Athanase had one beloved friend,  
An old, old man, with hair of silver white,  
And lips where heavenly smiles would hang and blend

With his wise words ; and eyes whose arrowy light.  
Shone like the reflex of a thousand minds.  
He was the last whom superstition's blight

Had spared in Greece—the blight that cramps and blinds,—  
And in his olive bower at Cœnoë  
Had sate from earliest youth. Like one who finds

A fertile island in the barren sea,  
One mariner who has survived his mates  
Many a drear month in a great ship—so he

With soul-sustaining songs, and sweet debates  
Of ancient lore, there fed his lonely being :—  
“ The mind becomes that which it contemplates,”—

And thus Zonoras, by forever seeing  
Their bright creations, grew like wisest men ;  
And when he heard the crash of nations fleeing

A bloodier power than ruled thy ruins then,  
O sacred Hellas ! many weary years  
He wandered, till the path of Laian's glen

Was grass-grown—and the unremembered tears  
Were dry in Laian for their honoured chief,  
Who fell in Byzant, pierced by Moslem spears :—

And as the lady looked with faithful grief  
From her high lattice o'er the rugged path,  
Where she once saw that horseman toil, with brief

And blighting hope, who with the news of death  
Struck body and soul as with a mortal blight,  
She saw beneath the chesnuts, far beneath,

An old man toiling up, a weary wight ;  
And soon within her hospitable hall  
She saw his white hairs glittering in the light

Of the wood fire, and round his shoulders fall ;  
And his wan visage and his withered mien  
Yet calm and [                    ] and majestic.

And Athanase, her child, who must have been  
Then three years old, sate opposite and gazed.

## FRAGMENT II.

Such was Zonoras ; and as daylight finds  
An amaranth glittering on the path of frost,  
When autumn nights have nipt all weaker kinds,

Thus had his age, dark, cold, and tempest-tost,  
Shone truth upon Zonoras ; and he filled  
From fountains pure, nigh overgrown and lost,

The spirit of Prince Athanase, a child,  
With soul-sustaining songs of ancient lore  
And philosophic wisdom, clear and mild.

And sweet and subtle talk they evermore,  
The pupil and master shared ; until,  
Sharing the undiminishable store,

The youth, as shadows on a grassy hill  
Outrun the winds that chase them, soon outran  
His teacher, and did teach with native skill

Strange truths and new to that experienced man ;  
Still they were friends, as few have ever been  
Who mark the extremes of life's discordant span.

And in the caverns of the forest green,  
Or by the rocks of echoing ocean hoar,  
Zonoras and Prince Athanase were seen

By summer woodmen; and when winter's roar  
Sounded o'er earth and sea its blast of war,  
The Balearic fisher, driven from shore,

Hanging upon the peaked wave afar,  
Then saw their lamp from Laian's turret gleam,  
Piercing the stormy darkness like a star,

Which pours beyond the sea one steadfast beam,  
Whilst all the constellations of the sky  
Seemed wrecked.                    They did but seem—

For, lo! the wintry clouds are all gone by,  
And bright Arcturus through yon pines is glowing,  
And far o'er southern waves, immoveably

Belted Orion hangs—warm light is flowing  
From the young moon into the sunset's chasm.—  
“ O, summer night! with power divine, bestowing

“ On thine own bird the sweet enthusiasm  
Which overflows in notes of liquid gladness,  
Filling the sky like light! How many a spasm

“ Of fevered brains, oppressed with grief and madness,  
Were lulled by thee, delightful nightingale!  
And these soft waves, murmuring a gentle sadness,

“ And the far sighings of yon piny dale  
Made vocal by some wind, we feel not here,—  
I bear alone what nothing may avail

“ To lighten—a strange load ! ”—No human ear  
Heard this lament ; but o’er the visage wan  
Of Athanase, a ruffling atmosphere

Of dark emotion, a swift shadow ran,  
Like wind upon some forest-bosomed lake,  
Glassy and dark.—And that divine old man

Beheld his mystic friend’s whole being shake,  
Even where its inmost depths were gloomiest—  
And with a calm and measured voice he spake,

And with a soft and equal pressure, prest  
That cold lean hand :—“ Dost thou remember yet  
When the curved moon then lingering in the west

“ Paused in yon waves her mighty horns to wet,  
How in those beams we walked, half resting on the sea ?  
’Tis just one year—sure thou dost not forget—

“ Then Plato’s words of light in thee and me  
Lingered like moonlight in the moonless east,  
For we had just then read—thy memory

“ Is faithful now—the story of the feast ;  
And Agathon and Diotima seemed  
From death and [                      ] released.

## FRAGMENT III.

'Twas at the season when the Earth upsprings  
From slumber, as a sphered angel's child,  
Shadowing its eyes with green and golden wings,

Stands up before its mother bright and mild,  
Of whose soft voice the air expectant seems—  
So stood before the sun, which shone and smiled

To see it rise thus joyous from its dreams,  
The fresh and radiant Earth. The hoary grove  
Waxed green—and flowers burst forth like starry beams;—

The grass in the warm sun did start and move,  
And sea-buds burst under the waves serene :—  
How many a one, though none be near to love,

Loves then the shade of his own soul, half seen  
In any mirror—or the spring's young minions,  
The winged leaves amid the copses green ;—

How many a spirit then puts on the pinions  
Of fancy, and outstrips the lagging blast,  
And his own steps—and over wide dominions

Sweeps in his dream-drawn chariot, far and fast,  
More fleet than storms—the wide world shrinks below,  
When winter and despondency are past.

'Twas at this season that Prince Athanase  
Past the white Alps—those eagle-baffling mountains  
Slept in their shrouds of snow ;—beside the ways

The waterfalls were voiceless—for their fountains  
Were changed to mines of sunless crystal now,  
Or by the curdling winds—like brazen wings

Which clanged alone the mountain's marble brow,  
Warped into adamantine fretwork, hung  
And filled with frozen light the chasm below.

## FRAGMENT IV.

Thou art the wine whose drunkenness is all  
We can desire, O Love! and happy souls,  
Ere from thy vine the leaves of autumn fall,

Catch thee, and feed from their o'erflowing bowls  
Thousands who thirst for thy ambrosial dew ;—  
Thou art the radiance which where ocean rolls

Invests it ; and when heavens are blue  
Thou fillest them ; and when the earth is fair  
The shadow of thy moving wings imbue

Its desarts and its mountains, till they wear  
Beauty like some bright robe ;—thou ever soarest  
Among the towers of men, and as soft air

In spring, which moves the unawakened forest,  
Clothing with leaves its branches bare and bleak,  
Thou floatest among men ; and aye implorest

That which from thee they should implore :—the weak  
Alone kneel to thee, offering up the hearts  
The strong have broken—yet where shall any seek

A garment whom thou clothest not ?

*Marlow, 1817.*

## MAZENGLI.\*

OH! foster-nurse of man's abandoned glory,  
Since Athens, its great mother, sunk in splendour;  
Thou shadowest forth that mighty shape in story,  
As ocean its wrecked fanes, severe yet tender:—  
The light-invested angel Poesy  
Was drawn from the dim world to welcome thee.

And thou in painting didst transcribe all taught  
By loftiest meditations; marble knew  
The sculptor's fearless soul—and as he wrought,  
The grace of his own power and freedom grew.  
And more than all, heroic, just, sublime  
Thou wert among the false—was this thy crime?

Yes; and on Pisa's marble walls the twine  
Of direst weeds hangs garlanded—the snake  
Inhabits its wrecked palaces;—in thine  
A beast of subtler venom now doth make  
Its lair, and sits amid their glories overthrown,  
And thus thy victim's fate is as thine own.

\* This fragment refers to an event, told in Sismodi's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*, which occurred during the war when Florence finally subdued Pisa, and reduced it to a province. The opening stanzas are addressed to the conquering city.

The sweetest flowers are ever frail and rare,  
And love and freedom blossom but to wither;  
And good and ill like vines entangled are,  
So that their grapes may oft be plucked together;—  
Divide the vintage ere thou drink, then make  
Thy heart rejoice for dead Mazenghi's sake.

No record of his crime remains in story,  
But if the morning bright as evening shone,  
It was some high and holy deed, by glory  
Pursued into forgetfulness, which won  
From the blind crowd he made secure and free  
The patriot's meed, toil, death, and infamy.

For when by sound of trumpet was declared  
A price upon his life, and there was set  
A penalty of blood on all who shared  
So much of water with him as might wet  
His lips, which speech divided not—he went  
Alone, as you may guess, to banishment.

Amid the mountains, like a hunted beast,  
He hid himself, and hunger, cold, and toil,  
Month after month endured; it was a feast  
Whene'er he found those globes of deep red gold  
Which in the woods the strawberry-tree doth bear,  
Suspended in their emerald atmosphere.

And in the roofless huts of vast morasses,  
Deserted by the fever-stricken serf,  
All overgrown with reeds and long rank grasses,  
And hillocks heaped of moss-inwoven turf,

And where the huge and speckled aloe made,  
Rooted in stones, a broad and pointed shade,

He housed himself. There is a point of strand  
Near Vada's tower and town; and on one side  
The treacherous marsh divides it from the land,  
Shadowed by pine and ilex forests wide,  
And on the other creeps eternally,  
Through muddy weeds, the shallow, sullen sea.

*Naples, 1818.*

## THE WOODMAN AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A WOODMAN whose rough heart was out of tune  
(I think such hearts yet never came to good)  
Hated to hear, under the stars or moon

One nightingale in an interfluous wood  
Satiated the hungry dark with melody;—  
And as a vale is watered by a flood,

Or as the moonlight fills the open sky  
Struggling with darkness—as a tuberose  
Peoples some Indian dell with scents which lie

Like clouds above the flower from which they rose,  
The singing of that happy nightingale  
In this sweet forest, from the golden close

Of evening, till the star of dawn may fail,  
Was interfused upon the silentness;  
The folded roses and the violets pale

Heard her within their slumbers, the abyss  
Of heaven with all its planets; the dull ear  
Of the night-cradled earth; the loneliness

Of the circumfluous waters,—every sphere  
And every flower and beam and cloud and wave,  
And every wind of the mute atmosphere,

And every beast stretched in its rugged cave,  
And every bird lulled on its mossy bough,  
And every silver moth fresh from the grave,

Which is its cradle—ever from below  
Aspiring like one who loves too fair, too far,  
To be consumed within the purest glow

Of one serene and unapproached star,  
As if it were a lamp of earthly light,  
Unconscious, as some human lovers are,

Itself how low, how high beyond all height  
The heaven where it would perish!—and every form  
That worshipped in the temple of the night

Was awed into delight, and by the charm  
Girt as with an interminable zone,  
Whilst that sweet bird, whose music was a storm

Of sound, shook forth the dull oblivion  
Out of their dreams; harmony became love  
In every soul but one . . . .

---

And so this man returned with axe and saw  
At evening close from killing the tall treen,  
The soul of whom by nature's gentle law

Was each a wood-nymph, and kept ever green  
The pavement and the roof of the wild copse,  
Chequering the sunlight of the blue serene

With jagged leaves,—and from the forest tops  
Singing the winds to sleep—or weeping oft  
Fast showers of aerial water drops

Into their mother's bosom, sweet and soft,  
Nature's pure tears which have no bitterness;—  
Around the cradles of the birds aloft

They spread themselves into the loveliness  
Of fan-like leaves, and over palid flowers  
Hang like moist clouds:—or, where high branches kiss,

Make a green space among the silent bowers,  
Like a vast fane in a metropolis,  
Surrounded by the columns and the towers

All overwrought with branch-like traceries  
In which there is religion—and the mute  
Persuasion of unkindled melodies,

Odours and gleams and murmurs, which the lute  
Of the blind pilot-spirit of the blast  
Stirs as it sails, now grave and now acute,

Wakening the leaves and waves ere it has past  
To such brief unison as on the brain  
One tone, which never can recur, has cast,

One accent never to return again.

## TO THE MOON.

ART thou pale for weariness  
Of climbing heaven, and gazing on the earth,  
Wandering companionless  
Among the stars that have a different birth,—  
And ever changing, like a joyless eye  
That finds no object worth its constancy?



## THE WANING MOON.

AND like a dying lady, lean and pale,  
Who totters forth, wrapt in a gauzy veil,  
Out of her chamber, led by the insane  
And feeble wanderings of her fading brain,  
The moon arose up in the murky earth,  
A white and shapeless mass.

## EPITAPH.

THESE are two friends whose lives were undivided,  
So let their memory be, now they have glided  
Under the grave; let not their bones be parted,  
For their two hearts in life were single hearted.

ALASTOR;  
OR  
THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE.

---

Nondum amabam, et amare amabam, quærebam quid amarem  
amans amare.—CONFESS. ST. AUGUST.



# ALASTOR;

OR

## THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE.

---

EARTH, ocean, air, beloved brotherhood!  
If our great Mother has imbued my soul  
With aught of natural piety to feel  
Your love, and recompense the boon with mine;  
If dewy morn, and odorous noon, and even,  
With sunset and its gorgeous ministers,  
And solemn midnight's tingling silentness;  
If autumn's hollow sighs in the sere wood,  
And winter robing with pure snow and crowns  
Of starry ice the gray grass and bare boughs;           10  
If spring's voluptuous pantings when she breathes  
Her first sweet kisses, have been dear to me;  
If no bright bird, insect, or gentle beast  
I consciously have injured, but still loved  
And cherished these my kindred;—then forgive  
This boast, beloved brethren, and withdraw  
No portion of your wonted favour now!

Mother of this unfathomable world!  
Favour my solemn song, for I have loved  
Thee ever, and thee only; I have watched 20  
Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy steps  
And my heart ever gazes on the depth  
Of thy deep mysteries. I have made my bed  
In charnels and on coffins, where black death  
Keeps record of the trophies won from thee,  
Hoping to still these obstinate questionings  
Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone ghost,  
Thy messenger, to render up the tale  
Of what we are. In lone and silent hours,  
When night makes a weird sound of its own stillness, 30  
Like an inspired and desperate alchemist  
Staking his very life on some dark hope,  
Have I mixed awful talk and asking looks  
With my most innocent love, until strange tears  
Uniting with those breathless kisses, made  
Such magic as compels the charmed night  
To render up thy charge : . . . . and, though ne'er yet  
Thou hast unveiled thy inmost sanctuary,  
Enough from incommunicable dream,  
And twilight phantasms and deep noonday thought 40  
Has shone within me, that serenely now,  
And moveless as a long-forgotten lyre,  
Suspended in the solitary dome  
Of some mysterious and deserted fane,  
I wait thy breath, Great Parent, that my strain  
May modulate with murmurs of the air,  
And motions of the forests and the sea,  
And voice of living beings, and woven hymns  
Of night and day, and the deep heart of man.

There was a Poet whose untimely tomb 50  
 No human hands with pious reverence reared,  
 But the charmed eddies of autumnal winds  
 Built o'er his mouldering bones a pyramid  
 Of mouldering leaves in the waste wilderness :  
 A lovely youth,—no mourning maiden decked  
 With weeping flowers, or votive cypress wreath,  
 The lone couch of his everlasting sleep :  
 Gentle, and brave, and generous, no lorn bard  
 Breathed o'er his dark fate one melodious sigh :  
 He lived, he died, he sung, in solitude. 60  
 Strangers have wept to hear his passionate notes,  
 And virgins, as unknown he past, have sighed  
 And wasted for fond love of his wild eyes.  
 The fire of those soft orbs has ceased to burn,  
 And Silence, too enamoured of that voice,  
 Locks its mute music in her rugged cell.

By solemn vision and bright silver dream,  
 His infancy was nurtured. Every sight  
 And sound from the vast earth and ambient air,  
 Sent to his heart its choicest impulses. 70  
 The fountains of divine philosophy  
 Fled not his thirsting lips; and all of great,  
 Or good, or lovely, which the sacred past  
 In truth or fable consecrates, he felt  
 And knew. When early youth had past, he left  
 His cold fireside and alienated home  
 To seek strange truths in undiscovered lands.  
 Many a wide waste and tangled wilderness  
 Has lured his fearless steps; and as he bought  
 With his sweet voice and eyes, from savage men, 80

His rest and food. Nature's most secret steps  
 He like her shadow, has pursued, where'er  
 The red volcano overcanopies  
 Its fields of snow and pinnacles of ice  
 With burning smoke ; or where bitumen lakes,  
 On black bare pointed islets ever beat  
 With sluggish surge ; or where the secret caves  
 Rugged and dark, winding among the springs  
 Of fire and poison, inaccessible  
 To avarice or pride, their starry domes 90  
 Of diamond and of gold expand above  
 Numberless and immeasurable halls,  
 Frequent with crystal column, and clear shrines  
 Of pearl, and thrones radiant with chrysolite.  
 Nor had that scene of ampler majesty  
 Than gems or gold, the varying roof of heaven  
 And the green earth lost in his heart its claims  
 To love and wonder ; he would linger long  
 In lonesome vales, making the wild his home,  
 Until the doves and squirrels would partake 100  
 From his innocuous hand his bloodless food,  
 Lured by the gentle meaning of his looks,  
 And the wild antelope, that starts whene'er  
 The dry leaf rustles in the brake, suspend  
 Her timid steps, to gaze upon a form  
 More graceful than her own.

His wandering step,  
 Obedient to high thoughts, has visited  
 The awful ruins of the days of old :  
 Athens, and Tyre, and Balbec, and the waste 110  
 Where stood Jerusalem, the fallen towers

Of Babylon, the eternal pyramids,  
 Memphis and Thebes, and whatsoe'er of strange  
 Sculptured on alabaster obelisk,  
 Or jasper tomb, or mutilated sphinx,  
 Dark Ethiopia on her desert hills  
 Conceals. Among the ruined temples there,  
 Stupendous columns, and wild images  
 Of more than man, where marble demons watch  
 The Zodiac's brazen mystery, and dead men 120  
 Hang their mute thoughts on the mute walls around,  
 He lingered, poring on memorials  
 Of the world's youth, through the long burning day  
 Gazed on those speechless shapes, nor, when the moon  
 Filled the mysterious halls with floating shades  
 Suspended he that task, but ever gazed  
 And gazed, till meaning on his vacant mind  
 Flashed like strong inspiration, and he saw  
 The thrilling secrets of the birth of time.

Meanwhile an Arab maiden brought his food, 130  
 Her daily portion, from her father's tent,  
 And spread her matting for his couch, and stole  
 From duties and repose to tend his steps:—  
 Enamoured, yet not daring for deep awe  
 To speak her love:—and watched his nightly sleep,  
 Sleepless herself, to gaze upon his lips  
 Parted in slumber, whence the regular breath  
 Of innocent dreams arose: then, when red morn  
 Made paler the pale moon, to her cold home,  
 Wildered and wan and panting, she returned, 140

The Poet wandering on, through Arabie  
 And Persia, and the wild Carmanian waste,

And o'er the ærial mountains which pour down  
 Indus and Oxus from their icy caves,  
 In joy and exultation held his way;  
 Till in the vale of Cachmire, far within  
 Its loneliest dell, where odorous plants entwine  
 Beneath the hollow rocks a natural bower,  
 Beside a sparkling rivulet he stretched  
 His languid limbs. A vision on his sleep 150  
 There came, a dream of hopes that never yet  
 Had flushed his cheek. He dreamed a veiled maid  
 Sate near him, talking in low solemn tones.  
 Her voice was like the voice of his own soul  
 Heard in the calm of thought; its music long,  
 Like woven sounds of streams and breezes, held  
 His inmost sense suspended in its web  
 Of many-coloured woof and shifting hues.  
 Knowledge and truth and virtue were her theme,  
 And lofty hopes of divine liberty, 160  
 Thoughts the most dear to him, and poesy,  
 Herself a poet. Soon the solemn mood  
 Of her pure mind kindled through all her frame  
 A permeating fire: wild numbers then  
 She raised, with voice stifled in tremulous sobs  
 Subdued by its own pathos: her fair hands  
 Were bare alone, sweeping from some strange harp  
 Strange symphony, and in their branching veins  
 The eloquent blood told an ineffable tale,  
 The beating of her heart was heard to fill 170  
 The pauses of her music, and her breath  
 Tumultuously accorded with those fits  
 Of intermitted song. Sudden she rose,  
 As if her heart impatiently endured  
 Its bursting burthen: at the sound he turned,

And saw by the warm light of their own life  
 Her glowing limbs beneath the sinuous veil  
 Of woven wind, her outspread arms now bare,  
 Her dark locks floating in the breath of night,  
 Her beamy bending eyes, her parted lips 180  
 Outstretched, and pale, and quivering eagerly.  
 His strong heart sunk and sickened with excess  
 Of love. He reared his shuddering limbs and quelled  
 His gasping breath, and spread his arms to meet  
 Her panting bosom :—she drew back awhile,  
 Then, yielding to the irresistible joy,  
 With frantic gesture and short breathless cry  
 Folded his frame in her dissolving arms.  
 Now blackness veiled his dizzy eyes, and night  
 Involved and swallowed up the vision ; sleep, 190  
 Like a dark flood suspended in its course,  
 Rolled back its impulse on his vacant brain.

Roused by the shock, he started from his trance—  
 The cold white light of morning, the blue moon  
 Low in the west, the clear and garish hills,  
 The distinct valley and the vacant woods,  
 Spread round where he stood.—Whither have fled  
 The hues of heaven that canopied his bower  
 Of yesternight? The sounds that soothed his sleep,  
 The mystery and the majesty of earth, 200  
 The joy, the exultation? His wan eyes  
 Gaze on the empty scene as vacantly  
 As ocean's moon looks on the moon in heaven.  
 The spirit of sweet human love has sent  
 A vision to the sleep of him who spurned  
 Her choicest gifts. He eagerly pursues.

Beyond the realms of dream that fleeting shade;  
 He overleaps the bound. Alas! Alas!  
 Were limbs and breath and being intertwined  
 Thus treacherously? Lost, lost, for ever lost, 210  
 In the wide pathless desert of dim sleep,  
 That beautiful shape! does the dark gate of death  
 Conduct to thy mysterious paradise,  
 O Sleep? Does the bright arch of rainbow clouds,  
 And pendent mountains seen in the calm lake,  
 Lead only to a black and watery depth,  
 While death's blue vault with loathliest vapours hung,  
 Where every shade which the foul grave exhales  
 Hides its dead eye from the detested day,  
 Conduct, O Sleep, to thy delightful realms? 220  
 This doubt with sudden tide flowed on his heart,  
 The insatiate hope which it awakened, stung  
 His brain even like despair.

While day-light held

The sky, the Poet kept mute conference  
 With his still soul. At night the passion came,  
 Like the fierce fiend of a distempered dream,  
 And shook him from his rest, and led him forth  
 Into the darkness.—As an eagle grasped  
 In folds of the green serpent, feels her breast 230  
 Burn with the poison, and precipitates  
 'Through night and day, tempest, and calm, and cloud,  
 Frantic with dizzying anguish, her blind flight  
 O'er the wide aëry wilderness: thus driven  
 By the bright shadow of that lovely dream,  
 Beneath the cold glare of the desolate night,  
 Through tangled swamps and deep precipitous dells,

Startling with careless step the moon-light snake,  
He fled.—Red morning dawned upon his flight,  
Shedding the mockery of its vital hues 240  
Upon his cheek of death. He wandered on  
Till vast Aornos seen from Petra's steep  
Hung o'er the low horizon like a cloud ;  
Through Balk, and where the desolated tombs  
Of Parthian kings scatter to every wind  
Their wasting dust, wildly he wandered on,  
Day after day, a weary waste of hours,  
Bearing within his life the brooding care  
That ever fed on its decaying flame.  
And now his limbs were lean; his scattered hair, 250  
Sered by the autumn of strange suffering,  
Sung dirges in the wind; his listless hand  
Hung like dead bone within its withered skin;  
Life, and the lustre that consumed it, shone  
As in a furnace burning secretly  
From his dark eyes alone. The cottagers,  
Who ministered with human charity  
His human wants, beheld with wondering awe  
Their fleeting visitant. The mountaineer,  
Encountering on some dizzy precipice 260  
That spectral form, deemed that the Spirit of wind  
With lightning eyes, and eager breath, and feet  
Disturbing not the drifted snow, had paused  
In his career. The infant would conceal  
His troubled visage in his mother's robe  
In terror at the glare of those wild eyes,  
To remember their strange light in many a dream  
Of after-times: but youthful maidens taught  
By nature, would interpret half the woe

That wasted him, would call him with false names      270  
 Brother, and friend, would press his pallid hand  
 At parting, and watch, dim through tears, the path  
 Of his departure from their father's door.

At length upon the lone Chorasmian shore  
 He paused, a wide and melancholy waste  
 Of putrid marshes—a strong impulse urged  
 His steps to the sea shore. A swan was there  
 Beside a sluggish stream among the reeds.  
 It rose as he approached, and with strong wings  
 Scaling the upward sky, bent its bright course      280  
 High over the immeasurable main.  
 His eyes pursued its flight.—“Thou hast a home,  
 Beautiful bird, thou voyagest to thine home,  
 Where thy sweet mate will twine her downy neck  
 With thine, and welcome thy return with eyes  
 Bright in the lustre of their own fond joy.  
 And what am I that I should linger here  
 With voice far sweeter than thy dying notes,  
 Spirit more vast than thine, frame more attuned  
 To beauty, wasting these surpassing powers      290  
 In the deaf air, to the blind earth, and heaven  
 That echoes not my thoughts?” A gloomy smile  
 Of desperate hope wrinkled his quivering lips.  
 For sleep, he knew, kept most relentlessly  
 Its precious charge, and silent death exposed,  
 Faithless perhaps as sleep, a shadowy lure,  
 With doubtful smile mocking its own strange charms.

Startled by his own thoughts he looked around.  
 There was no fair fiend near him, not a sight

Or sound of awe but in his own deep mind. . . . . 300

A little shallop floating near the shore  
 Caught the impatient wandering of his gaze.  
 It had been long abandoned, for its sides  
 Gaped wide with many a rift, and its frail joints  
 Swayed with the undulations of the tide.  
 A restless impulse urged him to embark,  
 And meet lone Death on the drear ocean's waste;  
 For well he knew that mighty Shadow loves  
 The slimy caverns of the populous deep.

The day was fair and sunny, sea and sky . . . . . 310

Drank its inspiring radiance, and the wind  
 Swept strongly from the shore, blackening the waves.  
 Following his eager soul, the wanderer  
 Leaped in the boat, he spread his cloak aloft  
 On the bare mast, and took his lonely seat,  
 And felt the boat speed o'er the tranquil sea  
 Like a torn cloud before the hurricane.

As one that in a silver vision floats  
 Obedient to the sweep of odorous winds  
 Upon resplendent clouds, so rapidly . . . . . 320

Along the dark and ruffled waters fled  
 The straining boat.—A whirlwind swept it on,  
 With fierce gusts and precipitating force,  
 Through the white ridges of the chafed sea.  
 The waves arose. Higher and higher still  
 Their fierce necks writhed beneath the tempest's scourge.  
 Like serpents struggling in a vulture's grasp.  
 Calm and rejoicing in the fearful war  
 Of wave ruining on wave, and blast on blast

Descending, and black flood on whirlpool driven 330  
 With dark obliterating course, he sate :  
 As if their genii were the ministers  
 Appointed to conduct him to the light  
 Of those beloved eyes, the Poet sate  
 Holding the steady helm. Evening came on,  
 The beams of sunset hung their rainbow hues  
 High 'mid the shifting domes of sheeted spray  
 That canopied his path o'er the waste deep ;  
 Twilight, ascending slowly from the east,  
 Entwined in duskier wreaths her braided locks 340  
 O'er the fair front and radiant eyes of day ;  
 Night followed, clad with stars. On every side  
 More horribly the multitudinous streams  
 Of ocean's mountainous waste to mutual war  
 Rushed in dark tumult thundering, as to mock  
 The calm and spangled sky. The little boat  
 Still fled before the storm ; still fled, like foam  
 Down the steep cataract of a wintry river ;  
 Now pausing on the edge of the riven wave ;  
 Now leaving far behind the bursting mass 350  
 That fell, convulsing ocean. Safely fled—  
 As if that frail and wasted human form,  
 Had been an elemental god.

At midnight

The moon arose : and lo ! the ethereal cliffs  
 Of Caucasus, whose icy summits shone  
 Among the stars like sunlight, and around  
 Whose caverned base the whirlpools and the waves  
 Bursting and eddying irresistibly  
 Rage and resound for ever.—Who shall save ? 360

The boat fled on,—the boiling torrent drove,—  
 The crags closed round with black and jagged arms,  
 The shattered mountain overhung the sea,  
 And faster still, beyond all human speed,  
 Suspended on the sweep of the smooth wave,  
 The little boat was driven. A cavern there  
 Yawned, and amid its slant and winding depths  
 Ingulphed the rushing sea. The boat fled on  
 With unrelaxing speed. “Vision and Love!”  
 The Poet cried aloud, “I have beheld  
 The path of thy departure. Sleep and death  
 Shall not divide us long.”

370

The boat pursued

The windings of the cavern.—Day-light shone  
 At length upon that gloomy river's flow;  
 Now, where the fiercest war among the waves  
 Is calm, on the unfathomable stream  
 The boat moved slowly. Where the mountain riven  
 Exposed those black depths to the azure sky,  
 Ere yet the flood's enormous volume fell  
 Even to the base of Caucasus, with sound  
 That shook the everlasting rocks, the mass  
 Filled with one whirlpool all that ample chasm;  
 Stair above stair the eddying waters rose,  
 Circling immeasurably fast, and laved  
 With alternating dash the gnarled roots  
 Of mighty trees, that stretched their giant arms  
 In darkness over it. I' the midst was left,  
 Reflecting, yet distorting every cloud,  
 A pool of treacherous and tremendous calm.

380

390

Seized by the sway of the ascending stream,  
 With dizzy swiftness, round, and round, and round,  
 Ridge after ridge the straining boat arose,  
 Till on the verge of the extremest curve,  
 Where through an opening of the rocky bank,  
 The waters overflow, and a smooth spot  
 Of glassy quiet mid those battling tides  
 Is left, the boat paused shuddering. Shall it sink  
 Down the abyss? Shall the reverting stress  
 Of that resistless gulph embosom it? 400  
 Now shall it fall? A wandering stream of wind,  
 Breathed from the west, has caught the expanded sail,  
 And, lo! with gentle motion between banks  
 Of mossy slope, and on a placid stream,  
 Beneath a woven grove, it sails, and, hark!  
 The ghastly torrent mingles its far roar  
 With the breeze murmuring in the musical woods.  
 Where the embowering trees recede, and leave  
 A little space of green expanse, the cove  
 Is closed by meeting banks, whose yellow flowers 410  
 Forever gaze on their own drooping eyes,  
 Reflected in the crystal calm. The wave  
 Of the boat's motion marred their pensive task,  
 Which nought but vagrant bird, or wanton wind,  
 Or falling spear-grass, or their own decay  
 Had e'er disturbed before. The Poet longed  
 To deck with their bright hues his withered hair,  
 But on his heart its solitude returned,  
 And he forebore. Not the strong impulse hid  
 In those flushed cheeks, bent eyes, and shadowy frame, 420  
 Had yet performed its ministry: it hung

Upon his life, as lightning in a cloud  
 Gleams, hovering ere it vanish, ere the floods  
 Of night close over it.

The noonday sun

Now shone upon the forest, one vast mass  
 Of mingling shade, whose brown magnificence  
 A narrow vale embosoms. There, huge caves,  
 Scooped in the dark base of those aëry rocks  
 Mocking its moans, respond and roar for ever. 430  
 The meeting boughs and implicated leaves  
 Wove twilight o'er the Poet's path, as led  
 By love, or dream, or god, or mightier Death;  
 He sought in Nature's dearest haunt, some bank,  
 Her cradle, and his sepulchre. More dark  
 And dark the shades accumulate—the oak,  
 Expanding its immeasurable arms,  
 Embraces the light beech. The pyramids  
 Of the tall cedar overarching, frame  
 Most solemn domes within, and far below, 440  
 Like clouds suspended in an emerald sky,  
 The ash and the acacia floating hang  
 Tremulous and pale. Like restless serpents, clothed  
 In rainbow and in fire, the parasites,  
 Starred with ten thousand blossoms, flow around  
 The gray trunks, and as gamesome infants' eyes,  
 With gentle meanings, and most innocent wiles,  
 Fold their beams round the hearts of those that love,  
 These twine their tendrils with the wedded boughs,  
 Uniting their close union; the woven leaves 450  
 Make net-work of the dark blue light of day,  
 And the night's noontide clearness, mutable

As shapes in the wierd clouds. Soft mossy lawns  
 Beneath these canopies extend their swells,  
 Fragrant with perfumed herbs, and eyed with blooms  
 Minute yet beautiful. One darkest glen  
 Sends from its woods of musk-rose, twined with jasmine,  
 A soul-dissolving odour, to invite  
 To some more lovely mystery. Through the dell,  
 Silence and Twilight here, twin-sisters, keep 460  
 Their noonday watch, and sail among the shades  
 Like vaporous shapes half seen; beyond, a well,  
 Dark, gleaming, and of most translucent wave,  
 Images all the woven boughs above,  
 And each depending leaf, and every speck  
 Of azure sky, darting between their chasms;  
 Nor aught else in the liquid mirror laves  
 Its portraiture, but some inconstant star  
 Between one foliated lattice twinkling fair,  
 Or, painted bird, sleeping beneath the moon, 470  
 Or gorgeous insect floating motionless,  
 Unconscious of the day, ere yet his wings  
 Have spread their glories to the gaze of noon.

Hither the Poet came. His eyes beheld  
 Their own wan light through the reflected lines  
 Of his thin hair, distinct in the dark depth  
 Of that still fountain; as the human heart,  
 Gazing in dreams over the gloomy grave,  
 Sees its own treacherous likeness there. He heard  
 The motion of the leaves, the grass that sprung 480  
 Startled and glanced and trembled even to feel  
 An unaccustomed presence, and the sound  
 Of the sweet brook that from the secret springs

Of that dark fountain rose. A Spirit seemed  
 To stand beside him—clothed in no bright robes  
 Of shadowy silver or enshrining light,  
 Borrowed from aught the visible world affords  
 Of grace, or majesty, or mystery;—  
 But, undulating woods, and silent well,  
 And reaping rivulet, and evening gloom 490  
 Now deepening the dark shades, for speech assuming  
 Held commune with him, as if he and it  
 Were all that was,—only . . . when his regard  
 Was raised by intense pensiveness . . . two eyes,  
 Two starry eyes, hung in the gloom of thought,  
 And seemed with their serene and azure smiles  
 To beckon him.

## Obedient to the light

That shone within his soul, he went, pursuing  
 The windings of the dell.—The rivulet 500  
 Wanton and wild, through many a green ravine  
 Beneath the forest flowed. Sometimes it fell  
 Among the moss with hollow harmony  
 Dark and profound. Now on the polished stones  
 It danced; like childhood laughing as it went:  
 Then through the plain in tranquil wanderings crept,  
 Reflecting every herb and drooping bud  
 That overhung its quietness.—“ O stream!  
 Whose source is inaccessiblely profound,  
 Whither do thy mysterious waters tend? 510  
 Thou imagest my life. Thy darksome stillness,  
 Thy dazzling waves, thy loud and hollow gulphs,  
 Thy searchless fountain and invisible course  
 Have each their type in me: And the wide sky,

And measureless ocean may declare as soon  
 What oozy cavern or what wandering cloud  
 Contains thy waters, as the universe  
 Tell where these livingthoughts reside, when stretched  
 Upon thy flowers my bloodless limbs shall waste  
 I' the passing wind!" 520

Beside the grassy shore  
 Of the small stream he went; he did impress  
 On the green moss his tremulous step, that caught  
 Strong shuddering from his burning limbs. As one  
 Roused by some joyous madness from the couch  
 Of fever, he did move; yet, not like him,  
 Forgetful of the grave, where, when the flame  
 Of his frail exultation shall be spent,  
 He must descend. With rapid steps he went  
 Beneath the shade of trees, beside the flow 530  
 Of the wild babbling rivulet; and now  
 The forest's solemn canopies were changed  
 For the uniform and lightsome evening sky.  
 Gray rocks did peep from the spare moss, and stemmed  
 The struggling brook: tall spires of windlestrae  
 Threw their thin shadows down the rugged slope,  
 And nought but gnarled roots of ancient pines,  
 Branchless and blasted, clenched with grasping roots  
 The unwilling soil. A gradual change was here,  
 Yet ghastly. For, as fast years flow away, 540  
 The smooth brow gathers, and the hair grows thin  
 And white; and where irradiate dewy eyes  
 Had shone, gleam stony orbs: so from his steps  
 Bright flowers departed, and the beautiful shade  
 Of the green groves, with all their odorous winds

And musical motions. Calm, he still pursued  
The stream, that with a larger volume now  
Rolled through the labyrinthine dell; and there  
Fretted a path through its descending curves  
With its wintry speed. On every side now rose 550  
Rocks, which, in unimaginable forms,  
Lifted their black and barren pinnacles  
In the light of evening, and its precipice  
Obscuring the ravine, disclosed above,  
'Mid toppling stones, black gulphs, and yawning caves,  
Whose windings gave ten thousand various tongues  
To the loud stream. Lo! Where the pass expands  
Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain breaks,  
And seems, with its accumulated crags,  
To overhang the world: for wide expand 560  
Beneath the wan stars and descending moon  
Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty streams,  
Dim tracts and vast, robed in the lustrous gloom  
Of leaden-coloured even, and fiery hills  
Mingling their flames with twilight, on the verge  
Of the remote horizon. The near scene,  
In naked and severe simplicity,  
Made contrast with the universe. A pine,  
Rock-rooted, stretched athwart the vacancy  
Its swinging boughs, to each inconstant blast 570  
Yielding one only response at each pause,  
In most familiar cadence, with the howl  
The thunder and the hiss of homeless streams  
Mingling its solemn song, whilst the broad river,  
Foaming and hurrying o'er its rugged path,  
Fell into that immeasurable void.  
Scattering its waters to the passing winds.

Yet the gray precipice, and solemn pine  
And torrent, were not all;—one silent nook  
Was there. Even on the edge of that vast mountain, 580  
Upheld by knotty roots and fallen rocks,  
It overlooked in its serenity  
The dark earth, and the bending vault of stars.  
It was a tranquil spot, that seemed to smile  
Even in the lap of horror. Ivy clasped  
The fissured stones with its entwining arms,  
And did embower with leaves for ever green,  
And berries dark, the smooth and even space  
Of its inviolated floor; and here  
The children of the autumnal whirlwind bore, 590  
In wanton sport, those bright leaves, whose decay,  
Red, yellow, or etherially pale,  
Rival the pride of summer. 'Tis the haunt  
Of every gentle wind, whose breath can teach  
The wilds to love tranquillity. One step,  
One human step alone, has ever broken  
The stillness of its solitude:—one voice  
Alone inspired its echoes;—even that voice  
Which hither came, floating among the winds,  
And led the loveliest among human forms 600  
To make their wild haunts the depository  
Of all the grace and beauty that endued  
Its motions, render up its majesty,  
Scatter its music on the unfeeling storm,  
And to the damp leaves and blue cavern mould,  
Nurses of rainbow flowers and branching moss,  
Commit the colours of that varying cheek,  
That snowy breast, those dark and drooping eyes.

The dim and horned moon hung low, and poured  
 A sea of lustre on the horizon's verge 610  
 That overflowed its mountains. Yellow mist  
 Filled the unbounded atmosphere, and drank  
 Wan moonlight even to fullness : not a star  
 Shone, not a sound was heard ; the very winds,  
 Danger's grim playmates, on that precipice  
 Slept, clasped in his embrace.—O, storm of death !  
 Whose sightless speed divides this sullen night :  
 And thou, colossal Skeleton, that, still  
 Guiding its irresistible career  
 In thy devastating omnipotence, 620  
 Art king of this frail world, from the red field  
 Of slaughter, from the reeking hospital,  
 The patriot's sacred couch, the snowy bed  
 Of innocence, the scaffold and the throne,  
 A mighty voice invokes thee. Ruin calls  
 His brother Death. A rare and regal prey  
 He hath prepared, prowling around the world ;  
 Glutted with which thou mayst repose, and men  
 Go to their graves like flowers or creeping worms,  
 Nor ever more offer at thy dark shrine 630  
 The unheeded tribute of a broken heart.

When on the threshold of the green recess  
 The wanderer's footsteps fell, he knew that death  
 Was on him. Yet a little, ere it fled,  
 Did he resign his high and holy soul  
 To images of the majestic past,  
 That paused within his passive being now,  
 Like winds that bear sweet music, when they breathe  
 Through some dim latticed chamber. He did place

His pale lean hand upon the rugged trunk 640  
 Of the old pine. Upon an ivied stone  
 Reclined his languid head; his limbs did rest,  
 Diffused and motionless, on the smooth brink  
 Of that obscurest chasm;—and thus he lay,  
 Surrendering to their final impulses  
 The hovering powers of life. Hope and Despair,  
 The torturers, slept; no mortal pain or fear  
 Marred his repose, the influxes of sense,  
 And his own being unalloyed by pain,  
 Yet feebler and more feeble, calmly fed 650  
 The stream of thought, till he lay breathing there  
 At peace, and faintly smiling:—his last sight  
 Was the great moon, which o'er the western line  
 Of the wide world her mighty horn suspended,  
 With whose dun beams inwoven darkness seemed  
 To mingle. Now upon the jagged hills  
 It rests, and still as the divided frame  
 Of the vast meteor sunk, the Poet's blood,  
 That ever beat in mystic sympathy  
 With nature's ebb and flow, grew feebler still: 660  
 And when two lessening points of light alone  
 Gleamed through the darkness, the alternate gasp  
 Of his faint respiration scarce did stir  
 The stagnate night:—till the minutest ray  
 Was quenched, the pulse yet lingered in his heart.  
 It paused—it fluttered. But when heaven remained  
 Utterly black, the murky shades involved  
 An image, silent, cold, and motionless,  
 As their own voiceless earth and vacant air.  
 Even as a vapour fed with golden beams 670  
 That ministered on sunlight, ere the west

Eclipses it, was now that wondrous frame—  
 No sense, no motion, no divinity—  
 A fragile lute, on whose harmonious strings  
 The breath of heaven did wander—a bright stream  
 Once fed with many-voiced waves—a dream  
 Of youth, which night and time have quenched for ever,  
 Still, dark, and dry, and unremembered now.

O, for Medea's wondrous alchymy,  
 Which wheresoe'er it fell made the earth gleam 680  
 With bright flowers, and the wintry boughs exhale  
 From vernal blooms fresh fragrance! O, that God,  
 Profuse of poisons, would concede the chalice  
 Which but one living man has drained, who now,  
 Vessel of deathless wrath, a slave that feels  
 No proud exemption in the blighting curse  
 He bears, over the world wanders for ever,  
 Lone as incarnate death! O, that the dream  
 Of dark magician in his visioned cave,  
 Raking the cinders of a crucible 690  
 For life and power, even when his feeble hand  
 Shakes in its last decay, were the true law  
 Of this so lovely world! But thou art fled  
 Like some frail exhalation, which the dawn  
 Robes in its golden beams,—ah! thou hast fled!  
 The brave, the gentle, and the beautiful,  
 The child of grace and genius. Heartless things  
 Are done and said i'the world, and many worms  
 And beasts and men live on, and mighty Earth  
 From sea and mountain, city and wilderness, 700  
 In vesper low or joyous orison,  
 Lifts still its solemn voice:—but thou art fled—

Thou canst no longer know or love the shapes  
 Of this phantasmal scene, who have to thee  
 Been purest ministers, who are, alas!  
 Now thou art not. Upon those pallid lips  
 So sweet even in their silence, on those eyes  
 That image sleep in death, upon that form  
 Yet safe from the worm's outrage, let no tear  
 Be shed—not even in thought. Nor, when those hues 710  
 Are gone, and those divinest lineaments,  
 Worn by the senseless wind, shall live alone  
 In the frail pauses of this simple strain,  
 Let not high verse, mourning the memory  
 Of that which is no more, or painting's woe  
 Or sculpture, speak in feeble imagery  
 Their own cold powers. Art and eloquence,  
 And all the shows o'the world are frail and vain  
 To weep a loss that turns their light to shade.  
 It is a woe too ' deep for tears,' when all 720  
 Is reft at once, when some surpassing Spirit,  
 Whose light adorned the world around it, leaves  
 Those who remain behind, nor sobs nor groans,  
 The passionate tumult of a clinging hope;  
 But pale despair and cold tranquillity,  
 Nature's vast frame, the web of human things,  
 Birth and the grave, that are not as they were. 727

**TRANSLATIONS.**



## TRANSLATIONS.

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### HYMN TO MERCURY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF HOMER

#### I.

SING, Muse, the son of Maia and of Jove,  
The Herald-child, king of Arcadia  
And all its pastoral hills, whom in sweet love  
Having been interwoven, modest May  
Bore Heaven's dread Supreme—an antique grove  
Shadowed the cavern where the lovers lay  
In the deep night, unseen by Gods or Men,  
And white-armed Juno slumbered sweetly then.

#### II.

Now, when the joy of Jove had its fulfilling,  
And Heaven's tenth moon chronicled her relief,  
She gave to light a babe all babes excelling,  
A schemer subtle beyond all belief;  
A shepherd of thin dreams, a cow-stealing,  
A night-watching, and door-waylaying thief,  
Who mongst the Gods was soon about to thieve  
And other glorious actions to achieve.

## III.

The babe was born at the first peep of day;  
 He began playing on the lyre at noon,  
 And the same evening did he steal away  
 Apollo's herds;—the fourth day of the moon  
 On which him bore the venerable May,  
 From her immortal limbs he leaped full soon,  
 Nor long could in the sacred cradle keep,  
 But out to seek Apollo's herds would creep.

## IV.

Out of the lofty cavern wandering  
 He found a tortoise, and cried out—"A treasure!"  
 (For Mercury first made the tortoise sing)  
 The beast before the portal at his leisure  
 The flowery herbage was depasturing,  
 Moving his feet in a deliberate measure  
 Over the turf. Jove's profitable son  
 Eyeing him laughed, and laughing thus begun:—

## V.

"A useful god-send are you to me now,  
 King of the dance, companion of the feast,  
 Lovely in all your nature! Welcome, you  
 Excellent plaything! Where, sweet mountain beast,  
 Got you that speckled shell? Thus much I know,  
 You must come home with me and be my guest;  
 You will give joy to me, and I will do  
 All that is in my power to honour you.

## VI.

“ Better to be at home than out of door ;—  
So come with me, and though it has been said  
That you alive defend from magic power,  
I know you will sing sweetly when you're dead.”  
Thus having spoken, the quaint infant bore,  
Lifting it from the grass on which it fed,  
And grasping it in his delighted hold,  
His treasured prize into the cavern old.

## VII.

Then scooping with a chisel of grey steel  
He bored the life and soul out of the beast—  
Not swifter a swift thought of woe or weal  
Darts through the tumult of a human breast  
Which thronging cares annoy—not swifter wheel  
The flashes of its torture and unrest  
Out of the dizzy eyes—than Maia's son  
All that he did devise hath featly done.

## VIII.

And through the tortoise's hard strong skin  
At proper distances small holes he made,  
And fastened the cut stems of reeds within,  
And with a piece of leather overlaid  
The open space and fixed the cubits in,  
Fitting the bridge to both, and stretched o'er all  
Symphonious cords of sheep gut rhythmical.

## IX.

When he had wrought the lovely instrument,  
He tried the chords, and made division meet  
Preluding with the plectrum, and thère went  
Up from beneath his hand a tumult sweet  
Of mighty sounds, and from his lips he sent  
A strain of unpremeditated wit  
Joyous and wild and wanton—such you may  
Hear among revellers on a holiday.

## X.

He sung how Jove and May of the bright sandal  
Dallied in love not quite legitimate;  
And his own birth, still scoffing at the scandal,  
And naming his own name, did celebrate;  
His mother's cave and servant maids he planned all  
In plastic verse, her household stuff and state,  
Perennial pot, trippet, and brazen pan,—  
But singing he conceived another plan.

## XI.

Seized with a sudden fancy for fresh meat,  
He in his sacred crib deposited  
The hollow lyre, and from the cavern sweet  
Rushed with great leaps up to the mountain's head,  
Revolving in his mind some subtle feat  
Of thievish craft, such as a swindler might  
Devise in the lone season of dun night.

## XII.

Lo! the great Sun under the ocean's bed has  
Driven steeds and chariot—the child meanwhile strode  
O'er the Pierian mountains clothed in shadows,  
Where the immortal oxen of the God  
Are pastured in the flowering unmown meadows,  
And safely stalled in a remote abode—  
The archer Argicide, elate and proud,  
Drove fifty from the herd, lowing aloud.

## XIII.

He drove them wandering o'er the sandy way,  
But, being ever mindful of his craft,  
Backward and forward drove he them astray,  
So that the tracks which seemed before, were aft;  
His sandals then he threw to the ocean spray,  
And for each foot he wrought a kind of raft  
Of tamarisk, and tamarisk-like sprigs,  
And bound them in a lump with withy twigs.

## XIV.

And on his feet he tied these sandals light,  
The trail of whose wide leaves might not betray  
His track; and then, a self-sufficing wight,  
Like a man hastening on some distant way,  
He from Piera's mountain bent his flight;  
But an old man perceived the infant pass  
Down green Onchestus heaped like beds with grass.

## XV.

The old man stood dressing his sunny vine :  
 “ Halloo ! old fellow with the crooked shoulder !  
 You grub those stumps ? before they will bear wine  
 Methinks even you must grow a little older :  
 Attend, I pray, to this advice of mine,  
 As you would 'scape what might appal a bolder—  
 Seeing, see not—and hearing, hear not—and—  
 If you have understanding—understand.”

## XVI.

So saying, Hermes roused the oxen vast ;  
 O'er shadowy mountain and resounding dell,  
 And flower-paven plains, great Hermes past ;  
 Till the black night divine, which favouring fell  
 Around his steps, grew grey, and morning fast  
 Wakened the world to work, and from her cell  
 Sea-strewn, the Pallantean Moon sublime  
 Into her watch-tower just began to climb.

## XVII.

Now to Alpheus he had driven all  
 The broad-foreheaded oxen of the Sun ;  
 They came unwearied to the lofty stall  
 And to the water troughs which ever run  
 Through the fresh fields—and when with rushgrass tall,  
 Lotus and all sweet herbage, every one  
 Had pastured been, the great God made them move  
 Towards the stall in a collected drove.

## XVIII.

A mighty pile of wood the God then heaped,  
And having soon conceived the mystery  
Of fire, from two smooth laurel branches stript  
The bark, and rubbed them in his palms,—on high  
Suddenly forth the burning vapour leapt,  
And the divine child saw delightedly—  
Mercury first found out for human weal  
Tinder-box, matches, fire-irons, flint and steel.

## XIX.

And fine dry logs and roots innumeros  
He gathered in a delve upon the ground—  
And kindled them—and instantaneous  
The strength of the fierce flame was breathed around:  
And whilst the might of glorious Vulcan thus  
Wrapt the great pile with glare and roaring sound,  
Hermes dragged forth two heifers, lowing loud,  
Close to the fire—such might was in the God.

## XX.

And on the earth upon their backs he threw  
The panting beasts, and rolled them o'er and o'er,  
And bored their lives out. Without more ado  
He cut up fat and flesh, and down before  
The fire, on spits of wood he placed the two,  
Toasting their flesh and ribs, and all the gore  
Pursed in the bowels; and while this was done  
He stretched their hides over a craggy stone.

## XXI.

We mortals let an ox grow old, and then  
Cut it up after long consideration,—  
But joyous-minded Hermes from the glen  
Drew the fat spoils to the more open station  
Of a flat smooth space, and portioned them; and when  
He had by lot assigned to each a ration  
Of the twelve Gods, his mind became aware  
Of all the joys which in religion are.

## XXII.

For the sweet savour of the roasted meat  
Tempted him though immortal. Nathelesse  
He checked his haughty will and did not eat,  
Though what it cost him words can scarce express,  
And every wish to put such morsels sweet  
Down his most sacred throat, he did repress;  
But soon within the lofty portalled stall  
He placed the fat and flesh and bones and all.

## XXIII.

And every trace of the fresh butchery  
And cooking, the God soon made disappear,  
As if it all had vanished through the sky;  
He burned the hoofs and horns and head and hair,  
The insatiate fire devoured them hungrily;—  
And when he saw that everything was clear,  
He quenched the coals and trampled the black dust,  
And in the stream his bloody sandals tossed.

## XXIV.

All night he worked in the serene moonshine—  
But when the light of day was spread abroad  
He sought his natal mountain peaks divine.  
On his long wandering, neither man nor god  
Had met him, since he killed Apollo's kine,  
Nor house-dog had barked at him on his road;  
Now he obliquely through the key-hole past,  
Like a thin mist, or an autumnal blast.

## XXV.

Right through the temple of the spacious cave  
He went with soft light feet—as if his tread  
Fell not on earth; no sound their falling gave;  
Then to his cradle he crept quick, and spread  
The swaddling-clothes about him; and the knave  
Lay playing with the covering of the bed  
With his left hand about his knees—the right  
Held his beloved tortoise-lyre tight.

## XXVI.

There he lay innocent as a new born child,  
As gossips say; but though he was a god,  
The goddess, his fair mother, unbeguiled  
Knew all that he had done being abroad:  
“ Whence come you, and from what adventure wild,  
You cunning rogue, and where have you abode  
All the long night, clothed in your impudence?  
What have you done since you departed hence?”

## XXVII.

“ Apollo soon will pass within this gate  
And bind your tender body in a chain  
Inextricably tight, and fast as fate,  
Unless you can delude the God again,  
Even when within his arms—ah, runagate!  
A pretty torment both for gods and men  
Your father made when he made you!”—“ Dear mother,”  
Replied sly Hermes, “ Wherefore scold and bother?”

## XXVIII.

“ As if I were like other babes as old,  
And understood nothing of what is what;  
And cared at all to hear my mother scold.  
I in my subtle brain a scheme have got,  
Which whilst the sacred stars round Heaven are rolled  
Will profit you and me—nor shall our lot  
Be as you counsel, without gifts or food,  
To spend our lives in this obscure abode.

## XXIX.

“ But we will leave this shadow-peopled cave  
And live among the Gods, and pass each day  
In high communion, sharing what they have  
Of profuse wealth and unexhausted prey;  
And from the portion which my father gave  
To Phœbus, I will snatch my share away,  
Which if my father will not—nathelless I,  
Who am the king of robbers, can but try.

## XXX.

“ And, if Latona’s son should find me out,  
 I’ll countermine him by a deeper plan ;  
 I’ll pierce the Pythian temple-walls, though stout,  
 And sack the fane of every thing I can—  
 Cauldrons and tripods of great worth no doubt,  
 Each golden cup and polished brazen pan,  
 All the wrought tapestries and garments gay.”—  
 So they together talked ;—meanwhile the Day

## XXXI.

Ætherial born arose out of the flood  
 Of flowing Ocean, bearing light to men.  
 Apollo past toward the sacred wood,  
 Which from the inmost depths of its green glen  
 Echoes the voice of Neptune,—and there stood  
 On the same spot in green Onchestus then  
 That same old animal, the vine-dresser,  
 Who was employed hedging his vineyard there.

## XXXII.

Latona’s glorious Son began :—“ I pray  
 Tell, ancient hedger of Onchestus green,  
 Whether a drove of kine has past this way,  
 All heifers with crooked horns ? for they have been  
 Stolen from the herd in high Pieria,  
 Where a black bull was fed apart, between  
 Two woody mountains in a neighbouring glen,  
 And four fierce dogs watched there, unanimous as men.

## XXXIII.

“ And, what is strange, the author of this theft  
 Has stolen the fatted heifers every one,  
 But the four dogs and the black bull are left :—  
 Stolen they were last night at set of sun,  
 Of their soft beds and their sweet food bereft—  
 Now tell me, man born ere the world begun,  
 Have you seen any one pass with the cows ?”—  
 To whom the man of overhanging brows :

## XXXIV.

“ My friend, it would require no common skill  
 Justly to speak of everything I see :  
 On various purposes of good or ill  
 Many pass by my vineyard,—and to me  
 ’Tis difficult to know the invisible  
 Thoughts, which in all those many minds may be :—  
 Thus much alone I certainly can say,  
 I tilled these vines till the decline of day.

## XXXV.

“ And then I thought I saw, but dare not speak  
 With certainty of such a wondrous thing,  
 A child, who could not have been born a week,  
 Those fair-horned cattle closely following,  
 And in his hand he held a polished stick :  
 And, as on purpose, he walked wavering  
 From one side to the other of the road,  
 And with his face opposed the steps he trod.”

## XXXVI.

Apollo hearing this, past quickly on—

No winged omen could have shown more clear  
That the deceiver was his father's son.

So the God wraps a purple atmosphere  
Around his shoulders, and like fire is gone

To famous Pylos, seeking his kine there,  
And found their track and his, yet hardly cold,  
And cried—"What wonder do mine eyes behold!

## XXXVII.

"Here are the footsteps of the horned herd

Turned back towards their fields of asphodel;—

But these! are not the tracks of beast or bird,

Grey wolf, or bear, or lion of the dell,

Or maned Centaur—sand was never stirred

By man or woman thus! Inexplicable!

Who with unwearied feet could e'er impress

The sand with such enormous vestiges?

## XXXVIII.

"That was most strange—but this is stranger still!"

Thus having said, Phœbus impetuously

Sought high Cyllene's forest-cinctured hill,

And the deep cavern where dark shadows lie,

And where the ambrosial nymph with happy will

Bore the Saturnian's love-child, Mercury—

And a delightful odour from the dew

Of the hill pastures, at his coming, flew.

## XXXIX.

And Phœbus stooped under the craggy roof  
    Arched over the dark cavern :—Maia's child  
Perceived that he came angry, far aloof,  
    About the cows of which he had been beguiled,  
And over him the fine and fragrant woof  
    Of his ambrosial swaddling clothes he piled—  
As among fire-brands lies a burning spark  
Covered, beneath the ashes cold and dark.

## XL.

There, like an infant who had sucked his fill  
    And now was newly washed and put to bed,  
Awake, but courting sleep with weary will,  
    And gathered in a lump hands, feet, and head,  
He lay, and his beloved tortoise still  
    He grasped and held under his shoulder-blade.  
Phœbus the lovely mountain-goddess knew,  
Not less her subtle, swindling baby, who

## XLI.

Lay swathed in his sly wiles. Round every crook  
    Of the ample cavern, for his kine, Apollo  
Looked sharp; and when he saw them not, he took  
    The glittering key, and opened three great hollow  
Recesses in the rock—where many a nook  
    Was filled with the sweet food immortals swallow,  
And mighty heaps of silver and of gold  
Were piled within—a wonder to behold!

## XLII.

And white and silver robes, all overwrought  
With cunning workmanship of tracery sweet—  
Except among the Gods there can be nought  
In the wide world to be compared with it.  
Latona's offspring, after having sought  
His herds in every corner, thus did greet  
Great Hermes :—" Little cradled rogue, declare  
Of my illustrious heifers, where they are!

## XLIII.

" Speak quickly! or a quarrel between us  
Must rise, and the event will be, that I  
Shall hawl you into dismal Tartarus,  
In fiery gloom to dwell eternally;  
Nor shall your father nor your mother loose  
The bars of that black dungeon—utterly  
You shall be cast out from the light of day,  
To rule the ghosts of men, unblest as they."

## XLIV.

To whom thus Hermes sily answered :—" Son  
Of great Latona, what a speech is this !  
Why come you here to ask me what is done  
With the wild oxen which it seems you miss ?  
I have not seen them, nor from any one  
Have heard a word of the whole business ;  
If you should promise an immense reward,  
I could not tell more than you now have heard.

## XLV.

“ An ox-stealer should be both tall and strong,  
 And I am but a little new-born thing,  
 Who, yet at least, can think of nothing wrong :—  
 My business is to suck, and sleep, and fling  
 The cradle-clothes about me all day long,—  
 Or half asleep, hear my sweet mother sing,  
 And to be washed in water clean and warm,  
 And hushed and kissed and kept secure from harm.

## XLVI.

“ O, let not e'er this quarrel be averred!  
 The astounded Gods would laugh at you, if e'er  
 You should allege a story so absurd,  
 As that a new-born infant forth could fare  
 Out of his home after a savage herd.  
 I was born yesterday—my small feet are  
 Too tender for the roads so hard and rough :—  
 And if you think that this is not enough,

## XLVII.

“ I swear a great oath, by my father's head,  
 That I stole not your cows, and that I know  
 Of no one else, who might, or could, or did.—  
 Whatever things cows are, I do not know,  
 For I have only heard the name.”—This said,  
 He winked as fast as could be, and his brow  
 Was wrinkled, and a whistle loud gave he,  
 Like one who hears some strange absurdity.

## XLVIII.

Apollo gently smiled and said :—" Aye, aye,—  
 You cunning little rascal, you will bore  
 Many a rich man's house, and your array  
 Of thieves will lay their siege before his door,  
 Silent as night, in night; and many a day  
 In the wild glens rough shepherds will deplore  
 That you or yours, having an appetite,  
 Met with their cattle, comrade of the night !

## XLIX.

" And this among the Gods shall be your gift,  
 To be considered as the lord of those  
 Who swindle, house-break, sheep-steal, and shop-lift;—  
 But now if you would not your last sleep dose,  
 Crawl out!"—Thus saying, Phœbus did uplift  
 The subtle infant in his swaddling clothes,  
 And in his arms, according to his wont,  
 A scheme devised the illustrious Argiphont.

## L.

\* \* \* \* \*

And sneezed and shuddered—Phœbus on the grass  
 Him threw, and whilst all that he had designed  
 He did perform—eager although to pass,  
 Apollo darted from his mighty mind  
 Towards the subtle babe the following scoff:—  
 " Do not imagine this will get you off,

## LI.

“ You little swaddled child of Jove and May!”  
 And seized him :—“ By this omen I shall trace  
 My noble herds, and you shall lead the way.”—  
 Cyllenian Hermes from the grassy place,  
 Like one in earnest haste to get away,  
 Rose, and with hands lifted towards his face  
 Roused both his ears—up from his shoulders drew  
 His swaddling clothes, and—“ What mean you to do

## LII.

“ With me, you unkind God?”—said Mercury:  
 “ Is it about these cows you teize me so?  
 I wished the race of cows were perished!—I  
 Stole not your cows—I do not even know  
 What things cows are. Alas! I well may sigh,  
 That since I came into this world of woe,  
 I should have ever heard the name of one—  
 But I appeal to the Saturnian’s throne.”

## LIII.

Thus Phœbus and the vagrant Mercury  
 Talked without coming to an explanation,  
 With adverse purpose. As for Phœbus, he  
 Sought not revenge, but only information,  
 And Hermes tried with lies and roguery  
 To cheat Apollo—But when no evasion  
 Served—for the cunning one his match had found—  
 He paced on first-over the sandy ground.

## LIV.

He of the Silver Bow the child of Jove  
Followed behind, till to their heavenly Sire  
Came both his children—beautiful as Love,  
And from his equal balance did require  
A judgment in the cause wherein they strove.  
O'er odorous Olympus and its snows  
A murmuring tumult as they came arose,—

## LV.

And from the folded depths of the great Hill,  
While Hermes and Apollo reverent stood  
Before Jove's throne, the indestructible  
Immortals rushed in mighty multitude;  
And whilst their seats in order due they fill,  
The lofty Thunderer in a careless mood  
To Phœbus said:—"Whence drive you this sweet prey,  
This herald-baby, born but yesterday?—

## LVI.

"A most important subject, trifter, this  
To lay before the Gods!"—"Nay, father, nay,  
When you have understood the business,  
Say not that I alone am fond of prey.  
I found this little boy in a recess  
Under Cyllene's mountains far away—  
A manifest and most apparent thief,  
A scandal-monger beyond all belief.

## LVII.

" I never saw his like either in heaven  
 Or upon earth for knavery or craft:—  
 Out of the field my cattle yester-even,  
 By the low shore on which the loud sea laughed,  
 He right down to the river-ford had driven ;  
 And mere astonishment would make you daft  
 To see the double kind of footsteps strange  
 He has impressed wherever he did range.

## LVIII.

" The cattle's track on the black dust, full well  
 Is evident, as if they went towards  
 The place from which they came—that asphodel  
 Meadow, in which I feed my many herds,—  
*His* steps were most incomprehensible—  
 I know not how I can describe in words  
 Those tracks—he could have gone along the sands  
 Neither upon his feet nor on his hands ;—

## LIX.

" He must have had some other stranger mode  
 Of moving on: those vestiges immense,  
 Far as I traced them on the sandy road,  
 Seemed like the trail of oak-toppings :—but thence  
 No mark or track denoting where they trod  
 The hard ground gave :—but, working at his fence,  
 A mortal hedger saw him as he past  
 To Pylos, with the cows, in fiery haste.

## LX.

“ I found that in the dark he quietly  
Had sacrificed some cows, and before light  
Had thrown the ashes all dispersedly  
About the road—then, still as gloomy night,  
Had crept into his cradle, either eye  
Rubbing, and cogitating some new sleight.  
No eagle could have seen him as he lay  
Hid in his cavern from the peering day.

## LXI.

“ I tax'd him with the fact, when he averred  
Most solemnly that he did neither see  
Or even had in any manner heard  
Of my lost cows, whatever things cows be ;  
Nor could he tell, though offered a reward,  
Not even who could tell of them to me.”  
So speaking, Phœbus sate ; and Hermes then  
Addressed the Supreme Lord of Gods and Men :—

## LXII.

“ Great Father, you know clearly before hand  
That all which I shall say to you is soothe ;  
I am a most veracious person, and  
Totally unacquainted with untruth.  
At sunrise, Phœbus came, but with no band  
Of Gods to bear him witness, in great wrath,  
To my abode, seeking his heifers there,  
And saying that I must shew him where they are,

## LXIII.

“ Or he would hurl me down the dark abyss.  
I know, that every Apollonian limb  
Is clothed with speed and might and manliness,  
As a green bank with flowers—but unlike him  
I was born yesterday, and you may guess  
He well knew this when he indulged the whim  
Of bullying a poor little new-born thing  
That slept, and never thought of cow-driving.

## LXIV.

“ Am I like a strong fellow who steals kine?  
Believe me, dearest Father, such you are,  
This driving of the herds is none of mine;  
Across my threshold did I wander ne'er,  
So may I thrive! I reverence the divine  
Sun and the Gods, and I love you, and care  
Even for this hard accuser—who must know  
I am as innocent as they or you.

## LXV.

“ I swear by these most gloriously-wrought portals—  
(It is, you will allow, an oath of might)  
Through which the multitude of the Immortals  
Pass and repass forever, day and night,  
Devising schemes for the affairs of mortals—  
That I am guiltless; and I will requite,  
Although mine enemy be great and strong,  
His cruel threat—do thou defend the young!”

## LXVI.

So speaking, the Cyllenian Argiphont  
Winked, as if now his adversary was fitted :—  
And Jupiter according to his wont,  
Laughed heartily to hear the subtle-witted  
Infant give such a plausible account,  
And every word a lie. But he remitted  
Judgment at present—and his exhortation  
Was, to compose the affair by arbitration.

## LXVII.

And they by mighty Jupiter were bidden  
To go forth with a single purpose both,  
Neither the other chiding nor yet chidden :  
And Mercury with innocence and truth  
To lead the way, and show where he had hidden  
The mighty heifers.—Hermes, nothing loth,  
Obeyed the Ægis-bearer's will—for he  
Is able to persuade all easily.

## LXVIII.

These lovely children of Heaven's highest Lord  
Hastened to Pylos and the pastures wide  
And lofty stalls by the Alphean ford,  
Where wealth in the mute night is multiplied  
With silent growth. Whilst Hermes drove the herd  
Out of the stony cavern, Phœbus spied  
The hides of those the little babe had slain,  
Stretched on the precipice above the plain.

## LXIX.

“ How was it possible,” then Phœbus said,  
 “ That you, a little child, born yesterday,  
 A thing on mother’s milk and kisses fed,  
 Could two prodigious heifers ever flay?  
 Even I myself may well hereafter dread  
 Your prowess, offspring of Cyllenian May,  
 When you grow strong and tall.”—He spoke, and bound  
 Stiff withy bands the infant’s wrists around.

## LXX.

He might as well have bound the oxen wild;  
 The withy bands, though starkly interknit,  
 Fell at the feet of the immortal child,  
 Loosened by some device of his quick wit.  
 Phœbus perceived himself again beguiled,  
 And stared—while Hermes sought some hole or pit,  
 Looking askance and winking fast as thought,  
 Where he might hide himself and not be caught.

## LXXI.

Sudden he changed his plan, and with strange skill  
 Subdued the strong Latonian, by the might  
 Of winning music, to his mightier will;  
 His left hand held the lyre, and in his right  
 The plectrum struck the chords—unconquerable  
 Up from beneath his hand in circling flight  
 The gathering music rose—and sweet as Love  
 The penetrating notes did live and move

## LXXII.

Within the heart of great Apollo—he  
     Listened with all his soul, and laughed for pleasure.  
 Close to his side stood harping fearlessly  
     The unabashed boy; and to the measure  
 Of the sweet lyre, there followed loud and free  
     His joyous voice; for he unlocked the treasure  
 Of his deep song, illustrating the birth  
 Of the bright Gods and the dark desert Earth:

## LXXIII.

And how to the Immortals every one  
     A portion was assigned of all that is;  
 But chief Mnemosyne did Maia's son—  
     Clothe in the light of his loud melodies;—  
 And as each God was born or had begun  
     He in their order due and fit degrees  
 Sung of his birth and being—and did move  
 Apollo to unutterable love.

## LXXIV.

These words were winged with his swift delight:  
     “ You heifer-stealing schemer, well do you  
 Deserve that fifty oxen should requite  
     Such minstrelsies as I have heard even now.  
 Comrade of feasts, little contriving wight,  
     One of your secrets I would gladly know,  
 Whether the glorious power you now show forth  
 Was folded up within you at your birth,

## LXXV.

“ Or whether mortal taught or God inspired  
The power of unpremeditated song ?  
Many divinest sounds have I admired,  
The Olympian Gods and mortal men among ;  
But such a strain of wondrous, strange, untired,  
And soul-awakening music, sweet and strong,  
Yet did I never hear except from thee,  
Offspring of May, impostor Mercury !

## LXXVI.

“ What Muse, what skill, what unimagined use,  
What exercise of subtlest art, has given  
Thy songs such power?—for those who hear may choose  
From three, the choicest of the gifts of Heaven,  
Delight, and love, and sleep,—sweet sleep, whose dews  
Are sweeter than the balmy tears of even :—  
And I, who speak this praise, am that Apollo  
Whom the Olympian Muses ever follow :

## LXXVII.

“ And their delight is dance, and the blithe noise  
Of song and overflowing poesy ;  
And sweet, even as desire, the liquid voice  
Of pipes, that fills the clear air thrillingly ;  
But never did my inmost soul rejoice  
In this dear work of youthful revelry,  
As now I wonder at thee, son of Jove ;  
Thy harpings and thy song are soft as love.

## LXXVIII.

“ Now since thou hast, although so very small,  
 Science of arts so glorious, thus I swear,  
 And let this cornel javelin, keen and tall,  
 Witness between us what I promise here,—  
 That I will lead thee to the Olympian Hall,  
 Honoured and mighty, with thy mother dear,  
 And many glorious gifts in joy will give thee,  
 And even at the end will ne'er deceive thee.”

## LXXIX.

To whom thus Mercury with prudent speech:—  
 “ Wisely hast thou enquired of my skill:  
 I envy thee no thing I know to teach  
 Even this day:—for both in word and will  
 I would be gentle with thee; thou canst reach  
 All things in thy wise spirit, and thy sill  
 Is highest in heaven among the sons of Jove,  
 Who loves thee in the fulness of his love.

## LXXX.

“ The Counsellor Supreme has given to thee  
 Divinest gifts, out of the amplitude  
 Of his profuse exhaustless treasury;  
 By thee, 'tis said, the depths are understood  
 Of his far voice; by thee the mystery  
 Of all oracular fates,—and the dread mood  
 Of the diviner is breathed up, even I—  
 A child—perceive thy might and majesty—

## LXXXI.

" Thou canst seek out and compass all that wit  
   Can find or teach ;—yet since thou wilt, come take  
 The lyre—be mine the glory giving it—  
   Strike the sweet chords, and sing aloud, and wake  
 Thy joyous pleasure out of many a fit  
   Of tranced sound—and with fleet fingers make  
 Thy liquid-voiced comrade talk with thee,  
 It can talk measured music eloquently.

## LXXXII.

" Then bear it boldly to the revel loud,  
   Love-wakening dance, or feast of solemn state,  
 A joy by night or day—for those endowed  
   With art and wisdom who interrogate  
 It teaches, babbling in delightful mood  
   All things which make the spirit most elate,  
 Soothing the mind with sweet familiar play,  
 Chasing the heavy shadows of dismay.

## LXXXIII.

" To those who are unskilled in its sweet tongue,  
   Though they should question most impetuously  
 Its hidden soul, it gossips something wrong—  
   Some senseless and impertinent reply.  
 But thou who art as wise as thou art strong  
   Can compass all that thou desirest. I  
 Present thee with this music-flowing shell,  
 Knowing thou canst interrogate it well.

## LXXXIV.

“ And let us two henceforth together feed  
 On this green mountain slope and pastoral plain,  
 The herds in litigation—they will breed  
 Quickly enough to recompense our pain,  
 If to the bulls and cows we take good heed;—  
 And thou, though somewhat over fond of gain,  
 Grudge me not half the profit.”—Having spoke,  
 The shell he proffered, and Apollo took.

## LXXXV.

And gave him in return the glittering lash,  
 Installing him as herdsman;—from the look  
 Of Mercury then laughed a joyous flash.  
 And then Apollo with the plectrum strook  
 The chords, and from beneath his hands a crash  
 Of mighty sounds rushed up, whose music shook  
 The soul with sweetness, as of an adept  
 His sweeter voice a just accordance kept.

## LXXXVI.

The herd went wandering o'er the divine mead,  
 Whilst these most beautiful Sons of Jupiter  
 Won their swift way up to the snowy head  
 Of white Olympus, with the joyous lyre  
 Soothing their journey; and their father dread  
 Gathered them both into familiar  
 Affection sweet,—and then, and now, and ever,  
 Hermes must love Him of the Golden Quiver,

## LXXXVII.

To whom he gave the lyre that sweetly sounded,  
 Which skilfully he held and played thereon.  
 He piped the while, and far and wide rebounded  
 The echo of his pipings ; every one  
 Of the Olympians sat with joy astounded,  
 While he conceived another piece of fun,  
 One of his old tricks—which the God of Day  
 Perceiving, said :—“ I fear thee, Son of May ;—

## LXXXVIII.

“ I fear thee and thy sly camelion spirit,  
 Lest thou should steal my lyre and crooked bow ;  
 This glory and power thou dost from Jove inherit,  
 To teach all craft upon the earth below ;  
 Thieves love and worship thee—it is thy merit  
 To make all mortal business ebb and flow  
 By roguery :—now, Hermes, if you dare,  
 By sacred Styx a mighty oath to swear

## LXXXIX.

“ That you will never rob me, you will do  
 A thing extremely pleasing to my heart.”  
 Then Mercury sware by the Stygian dew,  
 That he would never steal his bow or dart,  
 Or lay his hands on what to him was due,  
 Or ever would employ his powerful art  
 Against his Pythian fane. Then Phœbus swore  
 There was no God or man whom he loved more.

## XC.

“ And I will give thee as a good-will token,  
The beautiful wand of wealth and happiness ;  
A perfect three-leaved rod of gold unbroken,  
Whose magic will thy footsteps ever bless ;  
And whatsoever by Jove’s voice is spoken  
Of earthly or divine from its recess,  
It, like a loving soul to thee will speak,  
And more than this, do thou forbear to seek.

## XCI.

“ For, dearest child, the divinations high  
Which thou requirest, ’tis unlawful ever  
That thou, or any other deity  
Should understand—and vain were the endeavour ;  
For they are hidden in Jove’s mind, and I  
In trust of them, have sworn that I would never  
Betray the counsels of Jove’s inmost will  
To any God—the oath was terrible.

## XCII.

“ Then, golden-wanded brother, ask me not  
To speak the fates by Jupiter designed ;  
But be it mine to tell their various lot  
To the unnumbered tribes of human kind.  
Let good to these, and ill to those be wrought  
As I dispense—but he who comes consigned  
By voice and wings of perfect augury  
To my great shrine, shall find avail in me.

## XCIII.

“ Him will I not deceive, but will assist;  
 But he who comes relying on such birds  
 As chatter vainly, who would strain and twist  
 The purpose of the Gods with idle words,  
 And deems their knowledge light, he shall have mist  
 His road—whilst I among my other hoards  
 His gifts deposit. Yet, O son of May,  
 I have another wondrous thing to say.

## XCIV.

“ There are three Fates, three virgin Sisters, who  
 Rejoicing in their wind-outspeeding wings,  
 Their heads with flour snowed over white and new,  
 Sit in a vale round which Parnassus flings  
 Its circling skirts—from these I have learned true  
 Vaticinations of remotest things.  
 My father cared not. Whilst they search out dooms,  
 They sit apart and feed on honeycombs.

## XCV.

“ They, having eaten the fresh honey, grow  
 Drunk with divine enthusiasm, and utter  
 With earnest willingness the truth they know;  
 But if deprived of that sweet food, they mutter  
 All plausible delusions;—these to you  
 I give;—if you inquire, they will not stutter;  
 Delight your own soul with them :—any man  
 You would instruct, may profit, if he can.

## XCVI.

“ Take these and the fierce oxen, Maia’s child—  
O’er many a horse and toil-enduring mule,  
O’er jagged-jawed lions, and the wild  
White-tusked boars, o’er all, by field or pool,  
Of cattle which the mighty Mother mild  
Nourishes in her bosom, thou shalt rule—  
Thou dost alone the veil of death uplift—  
Thou givest not—yet this is a great gift.”

## XCVII.

Thus king Apollo loved the child of May  
In truth, and Jove covered them with love and joy.  
Hermes with Gods and men even from that day  
Mingled, and wrought the latter much annoy,  
And little profit, going far astray  
Through the dun night. Farewell, delightful Boy,  
Of Jove and Maia sprung,—never by me,  
Nor thou, nor other songs shall unremembered be.



# THE CYCLOPS;

A SATYRIC DRAMA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF EURIPIDES.

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SILENUS.

CHORUS OF SATYRS.

ULYSSES.

THE CYCLOPS.

SILENUS.

O, BACCHUS, what a world of toil, both now  
And ere these limbs were overworn with age,  
Have I endured for thee! First, when thou fled'st  
The mountain-nymphs who nurst thee, driven afar  
By the strange madness Juno sent upon thee;  
Then in the battle of the sons of Earth,  
When I stood foot by foot close to thy side,  
No unpropitious fellow combatant,  
And driving through his shield my winged spear,  
Slew vast Enceladus. Consider now,  
Is it a dream of which I speak to thee?  
By Jove it is not, for you have the trophies!  
And now I suffer more than all before.  
For when I heard that Juno had devised  
A tedious voyage for you, I put to sea

With all my children quaint in search of you,  
And I myself stood on the beaked prow  
And fixed the naked mast, and all my boys  
Leaning upon their oars, with splash and strain  
Made white with foam the green and purple sea,—  
And so we sought you, king. We were sailing  
Near Malea, when an eastern wind arose,  
And drove us to this wild Ætnean rock;  
The one-eyed children of the Ocean God,  
The man-destroying Cyclopes inhabit,  
On this wild shore, their solitary caves,  
And one of these, named Polypheme, has caught us  
To be his slaves; and so, for all delight  
Of Bacchic sports, sweet dance and melody,  
We keep this lawless giant's wandering flocks.  
My sons indeed, on far declivities,  
Young things themselves, tend on the youngling sheep,  
But I remain to fill the water casks,  
Or sweeping the hard floor, or ministering  
Some impious and abominable meal  
To the fell Cyclops. I am wearied of it!  
And now I must scrape up the littered floor  
With this great iron rake, so to receive  
My absent master and his evening sheep  
In a cave neat and clean. Even now I see  
My children tending the flocks hitherward.  
Ha! what is this? are your Sicinnian measures  
Even now the same, as when with dance and song  
You brought young Bacchus to Athæa's halls?

\* \* \* \* \*

## CHORUS OF SATYRS.

## STROPHE.

Where has he of race divine  
 Wandered in the winding rocks?  
 Here the air is calm and fine  
 For the father of the flocks;—  
 Here the grass is soft and sweet,  
 And the river-eddies meet  
 In the trough beside the cave,  
 Bright as in their fountain wave.—  
 Neither here, nor on the dew  
 Of the lawny uplands feeding?  
 Oh, you come!—a stone at you  
 Will I throw to mend your breeding;—  
 Get along, you horned thing,  
 Wild, seditious, rambling!

## EPODE.\*

An Iacchic melody  
 To the golden Aphrodite  
 Will I lift, as erst did I  
 Seeking her and her delight  
 With the Mænads, whose white feet  
 To the music glance and fleet.  
 Bacchus, O beloved, where,  
 Shaking wide thy yellow hair,  
 Wanderest thou alone, afar?  
 To the one-eyed Cyclops, we,  
 Who by right thy servants are,  
 Minister in misery,  
 In these wretched goat-skins clad,  
 Far from thy delights and thee.

\* The Antistrophe is omitted.

SILENUS.

Be silent, sons; command the slaves to drive  
The gathered flocks into the rock-roofed cave.

CHORUS.

Go! But what needs this serious haste, O father?

SILENUS.

I see a Greek ship's boat upon the coast,  
And thence the rowers with some general  
Approaching to this cave. About their necks  
Hang empty vessels, as they wanted food,  
And water-flasks.—O, miserable strangers!  
Whence come they, that they know not what and who  
My master is, approaching in ill hour  
The inhospitable roof of Polypheme,  
And the Cyclopiian jaw-bone, man-destroying?  
Be silent, Satyrs, while I ask and hear  
Whence coming, they arrive the Ætnean hill.

ULYSSES.

Friends, can you show me some clear water spring,  
The remedy of our thirst? Will any one  
Furnish with food seamen in want of it?  
Ha! what is this? We seem to be arrived  
At the blithe court of Bacchus. I observe  
This sportive band of Satyrs near the caves.  
First let me greet the elder.—Hail!

SILENUS.

Hail thou,  
O, Stranger! tell thy country and thy race.

ULYSSES.

The Ithacan Ulysses and the king  
Of Cephalonia.

SILENUS.

Oh! I know the man,  
Wordy and shrewd, the son of Sisyphus.

ULYSSES.

I am the same, but do not rail upon me.—

SILENUS.

Whence sailing do you come to Sicily?

ULYSSES.

From Ilion, and from the Trojan toils.

SILENUS.

How, touched you not at your paternal shore?

ULYSSES.

The strength of tempests bore me here by force.

SILENUS.

The self-same accident occurred to me.

ULYSSES.

Were you then driven here by stress of weather?

SILENUS.

Following the Pirates who had kidnapped Bacchus.

ULYSSES.

What land is this, and who inhabit it?—

SILENUS.

Ætna, the loftiest peak in Sicily.

ULYSSES.

And are there walls, and tower-surrounded towns?

SILENUS.

There are not;—These lone rocks are bare of men.

ULYSSES.

And who possess the land? the race of beasts?

SILENUS.

Cyclops, who live in caverns, not in houses.

ULYSSES.

Obeying whom? Or is the state popular?

SILENUS.

Shepherds: no one obeys any in aught.

ULYSSES.

How live they? do they sow the corn of Ceres?

SILENUS.

On milk and cheese, and on the flesh of sheep.

ULYSSES.

Have they the Bromian drink from the vine's stream?

SILENUS.

Ah! no; they live in an ungracious land.

ULYSSES.

And are they just to strangers?—hospitable?

SILENUS.

They think the sweetest thing a stranger brings  
Is his own flesh.

ULYSSES.

What! do they eat man's flesh?

SILENUS.

No one comes here who is not eaten up.

ULYSSES.

The Cyclops now—Where is he? Not at home?

SILENUS.

Absent on Ætna, hunting with his dogs.

ULYSSES.

Know'st thou what thou must do to aid us hence?

SILENUS.

I know not: we will help you all we can.

ULYSSES.

Provide us food, of which we are in want.

SILENUS.

Here is not anything, as I said, but meat.

ULYSSES.

But meat is a sweet remedy for hunger.

SILENUS.

Cow's milk there is, and store of curdled cheese.

ULYSSES.

Bring out:—I would see all before I bargain.

SILENUS.

But how much gold will you engage to give?

ULYSSES.

I bring no gold, but Bacchic juice.

SILENUS.

O, joy!

'Tis long since these dry lips were wet with wine.

ULYSSES.

Maron, the son of the God, gave it me.

SILENUS.

Whom I have nursed a baby in my arms.

ULYSSES.

The son of Bacchus, for your clearer knowledge.

SILENUS.

Have you it now?—or is it in the ship?

ULYSSES.

Old man, this skin contains it, which you see.

SILENUS.

Why this would hardly be a mouthful for me.

ULYSSES.

Nay, twice as much as you can draw from thence.

SILENUS.

You speak of a fair fountain, sweet to me.

ULYSSES.

Would you first taste of the unmingled wine?

SILENUS.

'Tis just—tasting invites the purchaser.

ULYSSES.

Here is the cup, together with the skin.

SILENUS.

Pour: that the draught may fillip my remembrance.

ULYSSES.

See!

SILENUS.

Papaiapæx! what a sweet smell it has!

ULYSSES.

You see it then?—

SILENUS.

By Jove, no! but I smell it.

ULYSSES.

Taste, that you may not praise it in words only.

SILENUS.

Babai! Great Bacchus calls me forth to dance!  
Joy! joy!

ULYSSES.

Did it flow sweetly down your throat?

SILENUS.

So that it tingled to my very nails.

ULYSSES.

And in addition I will give you gold.

SILENUS.

Let gold alone! only unlock the cask.

ULYSSES.

Bring out some cheeses now, or a young goat.

SILENUS.

That will I do, despising any master.  
 Yes, let me drink one cup, and I will give  
 All that the Cyclops feed upon their mountains.

\* \* \* \* \*

CHORUS.

Ye have taken Troy and laid your hands on Helen?

ULYSSES.

And utterly destroyed the race of Priam.

SILENUS.

\* \* \* \* \*

The wanton wretch! she was bewitched to see  
 The many-coloured anklets and the chain  
 Of woven gold which girt the neck of Paris,  
 And so she left that good man Menelaus.  
 There should be no more women in the world  
 But such as are reserved for me alone.—  
 See, here are sheep, and here are goats, Ulysses,  
 Here are unsparing cheeses of pressed milk;  
 Take them; depart with what good speed ye may;  
 First leaving my reward, the Bacchic dew  
 Of joy-inspiring grapes.

ULYSSES.

Ah me! Alas!

What shall we do? the Cyclops is at hand!  
 Old man, we perish! whither can we fly?

SILENUS.

Hide yourselves quick within that hollow rock.

ULYSSES.

'Twere perilous to fly into the net.

SILENUS.

The cavern has recesses numberless;  
 Hide yourselves quick.

ULYSSES.

That will I never do!

The mighty Troy would be indeed disgraced  
If I should fly one man. How many times  
Have I withstood, with shield immoveable,  
Ten thousand Phrygians!—if I needs must die,  
Yet will I die with glory;—if I live,  
The praise which I have gained will yet remain.

SILENUS.

What, ho! assistance, comrades, haste assistance!

*The CYCLOPS, SILENUS, ULYSSES; CHORUS.*

CYCLOPS.

What is this tumult? Bacchus is not here,  
Nor tympanies nor brazen castanets.  
How are my young lambs in the cavern? Milking  
Their dams or playing by their sides? And is  
The new cheese pressed into the bull-rush baskets?  
Speak! I'll beat some of you till you rain tears—  
Look up, not downwards when I speak to you.

SILENUS.

See! I now gape at Jupiter himself,  
I stare upon Orion and the stars.

CYCLOPS.

Well, is the dinner fitly cooked and laid?

SILENUS.

All ready, if your throat is ready too.

CYCLOPS.

Are the bowls full of milk besides?

SILENUS.

O'er brimming;

So you may drink a tunful if you will.

CYCLOPS.

Is it ewe's milk or cow's milk, or both mixed?—

SILENUS.

Both, either ; only pray don't swallow me.

CYCLOPS.

By no means.—

\* \* \*

What is this crowd I see beside the stalls?  
 Outlaws or thieves? for near my cavern-home,  
 I see my young lambs coupled two by two  
 With willow bands ; mixed with my cheeses lie  
 Their implements ; and this old fellow here  
 Has his bald head broken with stripes.

SILENUS.

Ah me!

I have been beaten till I burn with fever.

CYCLOPS.

By whom? Who laid his fist upon your head?

SILENUS.

Those men, because I would not suffer them  
 To steal your goods.

CYCLOPS.

Did not the rascals know  
 I am a God, sprung from the race of heaven?

SILENUS.

I told them so, but they bore off your things,  
 And ate the cheese in spite of all I said,  
 And carried out the lambs—and said, moreover,  
 They'd pin you down with a three cubit collar,  
 And pull your vitals out through your one eye,  
 Torture your back with stripes, then binding you,  
 Throw you as ballast into the ship's hold,

And then deliver you, a slave, to move  
Enormous rocks, or found a vestibule.

CYCLOPS.

In truth? Nay, haste, and place in order quickly  
The cooking knives, and heap upon the hearth,  
And kindle it, a great faggot of wood—  
As soon as they are slaughtered, they shall fill  
My belly, broiling warm from the live coals,  
Or boiled and seethed within the bubbling cauldron.  
I am quite sick of the wild mountain game,  
Of stags and lions I have gorged enough,  
And I grow hungry for the flesh of men.

SILENUS.

Nay, master, something new is very pleasant  
After one thing for ever, and of late  
Very few strangers have approached our cave.

ULYSSES.

Hear, Cyclops, a plain tale on the other side.  
We, wanting to buy food, came from our ship  
Into the neighbourhood of your cave, and here  
This old Silenus gave us in exchange  
These lambs for wine, the which he took and drank,  
And all by mutual compact, without force.  
There is no word of truth in what he says,  
For sily he was selling all your store.

SILENUS..

I? May you perish, wretch—

ULYSSES.

If I speak false!

SILENUS.

Cyclops, I swear by Neptune who begot thee,  
By mighty Triton and by Nereus old,

Calypso and the glaucous ocean Nymphs,  
 The sacred waves and all the race of fishes—  
 Be these the witnesses, my dear sweet master,  
 My darling little Cyclops, that I never  
 Gave any of your stores to these false strangers ;—  
 If I speak false may those whom most I love,  
 My children, perish wretchedly!

CHORUS.

There stop!

I saw him giving these things to the strangers.  
 If I speak false, then may my father perish,  
 But do not thou wrong hospitality.

CYCLOPS.

You lie! I swear that he is juster far  
 Than Rhadamanthus—I trust more in him.  
 But let me ask, whence have ye sailed, O strangers?  
 Who are you? And what city nourished ye?

ULYSSES.

Our race is Ithacan—having destroyed  
 The town of Troy, the tempests of the sea  
 Have driven us on thy land, O Polypheme.

CYCLOPS.

What, have ye shared in the unenvied spoil  
 Of the false Helen, near Scamander's stream?

ULYSSES.

The same, having endured a woful toil.

CYCLOPS.

O, basest expedition! sailed ye not  
 From Greece to Phrygia for one woman's sake?

ULYSSES.

'Twas the God's work—no mortal was in fault.  
 But, O great offspring of the ocean-king,

We pray thee and admonish thee with freedom,  
That thou dost spare thy friends who visit thee,  
And place no impious food within thy jaws.  
For in the depths of Greece we have upreared  
Temples to thy great father, which are all  
His homes. The sacred bay of Tænarus  
Remains inviolate, and each dim recess  
Scooped high on the Malean promontory,  
And aery Sunium's silver-veined crag,  
Which divine Pallas keeps unprofaned ever,  
The Gerastian asylums, and whate'er  
Within wide Greece our enterprise has kept  
From Phrygian contumely; and in which  
You have a common care, for you inhabit  
The skirts of Grecian land, under the roots  
Of Ætna and its crags, spotted with fire.  
Turn then to converse under human laws,  
Receive us shipwrecked suppliants, and provide  
Food, clothes, and fire, and hospitable gifts;  
Nor fixing upon oxen-piercing spits  
Our limbs, so fill your belly and your jaws.  
Priam's wide land has widowed Greece enough;  
And weapon-winged murder heaped together  
Enough of dead, and wives are husbandless,  
And ancient women and grey fathers wail  
Their childless age;—if you should roast the rest,  
And 'tis a bitter feast that you prepare,  
Where then would any turn? Yet be persuaded;  
Forego the lust of your jaw-bone; prefer  
Pious humanity to wicked will:  
Many have bought too dear their evil joys.

## SILENUS.

Let me advise you, do not spare a morsel  
Of all his flesh. If you should eat his tongue  
You would become most eloquent, O Cyclops?

## CYCLOPS.

Wealth, my good fellow, is the wise man's God,  
All other things are a pretence and boast.  
What are my father's ocean promontories,  
The sacred rocks whereon he dwells, to me?  
Stranger, I laugh to scorn Jove's thunderbolt,  
I know not that his strength is more than mine.  
As to the rest I care not:—When he pours  
Rain from above, I have a close pavilion  
Under this rock, in which I lie supine,  
Feasting on a roast calf or some wild beast,  
And drinking pans of milk, and gloriously  
Emulating the thunder of high heaven.  
And when the Thracian wind pours down the snow,  
I wrap my body in the skins of beasts,  
Kindle a fire, and bid the snow whirl on.  
The earth, by force, whether it will or no,  
Bringing forth grass, fattens my flocks and herds,  
Which, to what other God but to myself  
And this great belly, first of deities,  
Should I be bound to sacrifice? I well know  
The wise man's only Jupiter is this,  
To eat and drink during his little day,  
And give himself no care. And as for those  
Who complicate with laws the life of man,  
I freely give them tears for their reward.  
I will not cheat my soul of its delight,  
Or hesitate in dining upon you:—

And that I may be quit of all demands,  
 These are my hospitable gifts;—fierce fire  
 And yon ancestral cauldron, which o'er bubbling  
 Shall finely cook your miserable flesh.  
 Creep in!—

\* \* \* \*

ULYSSES.

Ay! ay! I have escaped the Trojan toils,  
 I have escaped the sea, and now I fall  
 Under the cruel grasp of one impious man.  
 O Pallas, mistress, Goddess, sprung from Jove,  
 Now, now, assist me! Mightier toils than Troy  
 Are these;—I totter on the chasms of peril;—  
 And thou who inhabitest the thrones  
 Of the bright stars, look, hospitable Jove,  
 Upon this outrage of thy deity,  
 Otherwise be considered as no God!

CHORUS (*alone*).

For your gaping gulph, and your gullet wide  
 The ravine is ready on every side,  
 The limbs of the strangers are cooked and done,  
 There is boiled meat, and roast meat, and meat from the coal,  
 You may chop it, and tear it, and gnash it for fun,  
 An hairy goat's-skin contains the whole.  
 Let me but escape, and ferry me o'er  
 The stream of your wrath to a safer shore.

The Cyclops Ætnean is cruel and bold,  
 He murders the strangers  
 That sit on his hearth,  
 And dreads no avengers  
 To rise from the earth.

He roasts the men before they are cold,  
 He snatches them broiling from the coal,  
 And from the cauldron pulls them whole,  
 And minces their flesh and gnaws their bone  
 With his cursed teeth, till all begone.

Farewell, foul pavilion!  
 Farewell, rites of dread!  
 The Cyclops vermilion,  
 With slaughter uncloying,  
 Now feasts on the dead,  
 In the flesh of strangers joying!

ULYSSES.

O Jupiter! I saw within the cave  
 Horrible things; deeds to be feigned in words,  
 But not believed as being done.

CHORUS.

What sawest thou the impious Polypheme  
 Feasting upon your loved companions now?

ULYSSES.

Selecting two, the plumpest of the crowd,  
 He grasped them in his hands.—

CHORUS.

Unhappy man

•            •            \*            \*

ULYSSES.

Soon as we came into this craggy place,  
 Kindling a fire, he cast on the broad hearth  
 The knotty limbs of an enormous oak,  
 Three waggon loads at least, and then he strewed  
 Upon the ground, beside the red fire light,  
 His couch of pine leaves; and he milked the cows,

And pouring forth the white milk, filled a bowl  
Three cubits wide and four in depth, as much  
As would contain four amphoræ, and bound it  
With ivy wreaths; then placed upon the fire  
A brazen pot to boil, and made red hot  
The points of spits, not sharpened with the sickle,  
But with a fruit tree bough, and with the jaws  
Of axes for Ætnean slaughtering.\*  
And when this God-abandoned cook of hell  
Had made all ready, he seized two of us  
And killed them in a kind of measured manner;  
For he flung one against the brazen rivets  
Of the huge cauldron, and seized the other  
By the foot's tendon, and knocked out his brains  
Upon the sharp edge of the craggy stone:  
Then peeled his flesh with a great cooking knife  
And put him down to roast. The other's limbs  
He chopped into the cauldron to be boiled.  
And I, with the tears raining from my eyes,  
Stood near the Cyclops, ministering to him;  
The rest, in the recesses of the cave,  
Clung to the rock like bats, bloodless with fear.  
When he was filled with my companions flesh,  
He threw himself upon the ground and sent  
A loathsome exhalation from his maw.  
Then a divine thought came to me. I filled  
The cup of Maron, and I offered him  
To taste, and said:—"Child of the Ocean God,  
Behold what drink the vines of Greece produce,  
The exultation and the joy of Bacchus."

\* I confess I do not understand this.—*Note of the Author.*

He, satiated with his unnatural food,  
 Received it, and at one draught drank it off,  
 And taking my hand, praised me:—"Thou hast given  
 A sweet draught after a sweet meal, dear guest."  
 And I perceiving that it pleased him, filled  
 Another cup, well knowing that the wine  
 Would wound him soon and take a sure revenge.  
 And the charm fascinated him, and I  
 Plied him cup after cup, until the drink  
 Had warmed his entrails, and he sang aloud  
 In concert with my wailing fellow-seamen  
 A hideous discord—and the cavern rung.  
 I have stolen out, so that if you will  
 You may achieve my safety and your own.  
 But say, do you desire, or not, to fly  
 This uncompanionable man, and dwell  
 As was your wont among the Grecian Nymphs  
 Within the fanes of your beloved God?  
 Your father there within agrees to it,  
 But he is weak and overcome with wine,  
 And caught as if with bird-lime by the cup,  
 He claps his wings and crows in doting joy.  
 You who are young escape with me, and find  
 Bacchus your ancient friend; unsuited he  
 To this rude Cyclops.

## CHORUS.

Oh my dearest friend,  
 That I could see that day, and leave for ever  
 The impious Cyclops.

\* \* \* \*

## ULYSSES.

Listen then what a punishment I have

For this fell monster, how secure a flight  
From your hard servitude.

CHORUS.

Oh sweeter far  
Than is the music of an Asian lyre  
Would be the news of Polypheme destroyed.

ULYSSES.

Delighted with the Bacchic drink he goes  
To call his brother Cyclops—who inhabit  
A village upon Ætna not far off.

CHORUS.

I understand, catching him when alone  
You think by some measure to dispatch him,  
Or thrust him from the precipice.

ULYSSES.

O no ;

Nothing of that kind ; my device is subtle.

CHORUS.

How then ? I heard of old that thou wert wise.

ULYSSES.

I will dissuade him from this plan, by saying  
It were unwise to give the Cyclopes  
This precious drink, which if enjoyed alone  
Would make life sweeter for a longer time.  
When vanquished by the Bacchic power, he sleeps,  
There is a trunk of olive wood within,  
Whose point having made sharp with this good sword  
I will conceal in fire, and when I see  
It is alight, will fix it, burning yet,  
Within the socket of the Cyclops' eye  
And melt it out with fire—as when a man  
Turns by its handle a great auger round,

Fitting the frame work of a ship with beams,  
 So will I, in the Cyclops' fiery eye  
 Turn round the brand and dry the pupil up.

CHORUS.

Joy! I am mad with joy at your device.

ULYSSES.

And then with you, my friends, and the old man,  
 We'll load the hollow depth of our black ship,  
 And row with double strokes from this dread shore.

CHORUS.

May I, as in libations to a God,  
 Share in the blinding him with the red brand?  
 I would have some communion in his death.

ULYSSES.

Doubtless: the brand is a great brand to hold.

CHORUS.

Oh! I would lift an hundred waggon loads,  
 If like a wasp's nest I could scoop the eye out  
 Of the detested Cyclops.

ULYSSES.

Silence now!

Ye know the close device—and when I call,  
 Look ye obey the masters of the craft.  
 I will not save myself and leave behind  
 My comrades in the cave: I might escape  
 Having got clear from that obscure recess,  
 But 'twere unjust to leave in jeopardy  
 The dear companions who sailed here with me.

CHORUS.

Come! who is first, that with his hand  
 Will urge down the burning brand—

Through the lids, and quench and pierce  
The Cyclops' eye so fiery fierce ?

## SEMI-CHORUS I.

*Song within.*

Listen ! listen ! he is coming,  
A most hideous discord humming,  
Drunken, museless, awkward, yelling,  
Far along his rocky dwelling ;  
Let us with some comic spell  
Teach the yet unteachable.  
By all means he must be blinded,  
If my council be but minded.

## SEMI-CHORUS II.

Happy those made odorous  
With the dew which sweet grapes weep,  
To the village hastening thus,  
Seek the vines that soothe to sleep,  
Having first embraced thy friend,  
There in luxury without end,  
With the strings of yellow hair,  
Of thy voluptuous leman fair,  
Shalt sit playing on a bed !—  
Speak what door is opened ?

## CYCLOPS.

Ha ! ha ! ha ! I'm full of wine,  
Heavy with the joy divine,  
With the young feast oversated,  
Like a merchant's vessel freighted  
To the waters edge, my crop  
Is laden to the gullet's top.

The fresh meadow grass of spring  
 Tempts me forth thus wandering  
 To my brothers on the mountains,  
 Who shall share the wine's sweet fountains.  
 Bring the cask, O stranger, bring!

CHORUS.

One with eyes the fairest  
 Cometh from his dwelling;  
 Some one loves thee, rarest,  
 Bright beyond my telling.  
 In thy grace thou shinest  
 Like some nymph divinest,  
 In her caverns dewy:—  
 All delights pursue thee,  
 Soon pied flowers, sweet-breathing,  
 Shall thy head be wreathing.

ULYSSES.

Listen, O Cyclops, for I am well skilled  
 In Bacchus, whom I gave thee of to drink.

CYCLOPS.

What sort of God is Bacchus then accounted?

ULYSSES.

The greatest among men for joy of life.

CYCLOPS.

I gulpt him down with very great delight.

ULYSSES.

This is a God who never injures men.

CYCLOPS.

How does the God like living in a skin?

ULYSSES.

He is content wherever he is put.

CYCLOPS.

Gods should not have their body in a skin.

ULYSSES.

If he gives joy, what is his skin to you?

CYCLOPS.

I hate the skin, but love the wine within.

ULYSSES.

Stay here, now drink, and make your spirit glad.

CYCLOPS.

Should I not share this liquor with my brothers?

ULYSSES.

Keep it yourself, and be more honoured so.

CYCLOPS.

I were more useful, giving to my friends.

ULYSSES.

But village mirth breeds contests, broils, and blows.

CYCLOPS.

When I am drunk none shall lay hands on me.—

ULYSSES.

A drunken man is better within doors.

CYCLOPS.

He is a fool, who drinking, loves not mirth.

ULYSSES.

But he is wise, who drunk, remains at home.

CYCLOPS.

Whall shall I do, Silenus? Shall I stay?

SILENUS.

Stay—for what need have you of pot companions?

CYCLOPS.

Indeed this place is closely carpeted

With flowers and grass.

SILENUS.

And in the sun-warm noon  
'Tis sweet to drink. Lie down beside me now,  
Placing your mighty sides upon the ground.

CYCLOPS.

What do you put the cup behind me for?

SILENUS.

That no one here may touch it.

CYCLOPS.

Thievish one!

You want to drink;—here place it in the midst.  
And thou, O stranger, tell how art thou called?

ULYSSES.

My name is Nobody. What favour now  
Shall I receive to praise you at your hands?

CYCLOPS.

I'll feast on you the last of your companions.

ULYSSES.

You grant your guest a fair reward, O Cyclops.

CYCLOPS.

Ha! what is this? Stealing the wine, you rogue!

SILENUS.

It was this stranger kissing me because  
I looked so beautiful.

CYCLOPS.

You shall repent  
For kissing the coy wine that loves you not.

SILENUS.

By Jupiter! you said that I am fair.

CYCLOPS.

Pour out, and only give me the cup full.

SILENUS.

How is it mixed? let me observe.

CYCLOPS.

Curse you!

Give it me so.

SILENUS.

Not till I see you wear  
That coronal, and taste the cup to you.

CYCLOPS.

Thou wily traitor!

SILENUS.

But the wine is sweet.  
Aye, you will roar if you are caught in drinking.

CYCLOPS.

See now, my lip is clean and all my beard.

SILENUS.

Now put your elbow right and drink again.  
As you see me drink— \* \* \* \*

CYCLOPS.

How now?

SILENUS.

Ye Gods, what a delicious gulp!

CYCLOPS.

Guest, take it;—you pour out the wine for me.

ULYSSES.

The wine is well accustomed to my hand.

CYCLOPS.

Pour out the wine!

ULYSSES.

I pour; only be silent.

CYCLOPS.

Silence is a hard task to him who drinks.

ULYSSES.

Take it and drink it off; leave not a dreg.  
O, that the drinker died with his own draught!

CYCLOPS.

Papai! the wine must be a sapient plant.

ULYSSES.

If you drink much after a mighty feast,  
Moistening your thirsty maw, you will sleep well;  
If you leave aught, Bacchus will dry you up.

CYCLOPS.

Ho! ho! I can scarce rise. What pure delight!  
The heavens and earth appear to whirl about  
Confusedly. I see the throne of Jove  
And the clear congregation of the Gods.  
Now if the Graces tempted me to kiss  
I would not, for the loveliest of them all  
I would not leave this Ganymede.

SILENUS.

Polypheme,

I am the Ganymede of Jupiter.

CYCLOPS.

By Jove you are; I bore you off from Dardanus.

ULYSSES *and the* CHORUS.

ULYSSES.

Come boys of Bacchus, children of high race,  
This man within is folded up in sleep,  
And soon will vomit flesh from his fell maw;  
The brand under the shed thrusts out its smoke,  
No preparation needs, but to burn out  
The monster's eye;—but bear yourselves like men.

## CHORUS.

We will have courage like the adamant rock,  
 All things are ready for you here; go in,  
 Before our father shall perceive the noise.

## ULYSSES.

Vulcan, Ætnean king! burn out with fire  
 The shining eye of this thy neighbouring monster!  
 And thou, O Sleep, nursling of gloomy night,  
 Descend unmixed on this God-hated beast,  
 And suffer not Ulysses and his comrades,  
 Returning from their famous Trojan toils,  
 To perish by this man, who cares not either  
 For God or mortal; or I needs must think  
 That Chance is a supreme divinity,  
 And things divine are subject to her power.

## CHORUS.

Soon a crab the throat will seize  
 Of him who feeds upon his guest,  
 Fire will burn his lamp-like eyes  
 In revenge of such a feast!  
 A great oak stump now is lying  
 In the ashes yet undying.  
 Come, Maron, come!  
 Raging let him fix the doom,  
 Let him tear the eyelid up,  
 Of the Cyclops—that his cup  
 May be evil!  
 O, I long to dance and revel  
 With sweet Bromian, long desired,  
 In loved ivy-wreathes attired;  
 Leaving this abandoned home—  
 Will the moment ever come?

## ULYSSES.

Be silent, ye wild things! Nay, hold your peace,  
 And keep your lips quite close; dare not to breathe,  
 Or spit, or e'en wink, lest ye wake the monster,  
 Until his eye be tortured out with fire.

## CHORUS.

Nay, we are silent, and we chaw the air.

## ULYSSES.

Come now, and lend a hand to the great stake  
 Within—it is delightfully red hot.

## CHORUS.

You then command who first should seize the stake  
 To burn the Cyclops' eye, that all may share  
 In the great enterprise.

## SEMI-CHORUS I.

We are too few,  
 We cannot at this distance from the door  
 Thrust fire into his eye.

## SEMI-CHORUS II.

And we just now  
 Have become lame; cannot move hand or foot.

## CHORUS.

The same thing has occurred to us,—our ancles  
 Are sprained with standing here, I know not how.

## ULYSSES.

What, sprained with standing still?

## CHORUS.

And there is dust  
 Or ashes in our eyes, I know not whence.

## ULYSSES.

Cowardly dogs! ye will not aid me then?

## CHORUS.

With pitying my own back and my back bone,

And with not wishing all my teeth knocked out,  
 This cowardice comes of itself—but stay,  
 I know a famous Orphic incantation  
 To make the brand stick of its own accord  
 Into the skull of this one-eyed son of Earth.

ULYSSES.

Of old I knew ye thus by nature; now  
 I know ye better.—I will use the aid  
 Of my own comrades—yet though weak of hand  
 Speak cheerfully, that so ye may awaken  
 The courage of my friends with your blithe words.

CHORUS.

This I will do with peril of my life,  
 And blind you with my exhortations, Cyclops.  
     Hasten and thrust,  
     And parch up to dust,  
     The eye of the beast,  
     Who feeds on his guest.  
     Burn and blind  
     The Ætnean hind!  
     Scoop and draw,  
     But beware lest he claw  
     Your limbs near his maw.

CYCLOPS.

Ah me! my eye-sight is parched up to cinders.

CHORUS.

What a sweet pæan! sing me that again!

CYCLOPS.

Ah me! indeed, what woe has fallen upon me!  
 But wretched nothings, think ye not to flee  
 Out of this rock; I, standing at the outlet,  
 Will bar the way and catch you as you pass.

CHORUS.

What are you roaring out, Cyclops?

CYCLOPS.

I perish!

CHORUS.

For you are wicked.

CYCLOPS.

And besides miserable.

CHORUS.

What, did you fall into the fire when drunk?

CYCLOPS.

'Twas Nobody destroyed me.

CHORUS.

Why then no one

Can be to blame.

CYCLOPS.

I say 'twas Nobody

Who blinded me.

CHORUS.

Why then you are not blind.

CYCLOPS.

I wish you were as blind as I am.

CHORUS.

Nay,

It cannot be that no one made you blind.

CYCLOPS.

You jeer me; where, I ask, is Nobody?

CHORUS.

No where, O Cyclops \* \* \*

CYCLOPS.

It was that stranger ruined me:—the wretch  
First gave me wine and then burnt out my eyes,

For wine is strong and hard to struggle with.  
Have they escaped, or are they yet within?

CHORUS.

They stand under the darkness of the rock  
And cling to it.

CYCLOPS.

At my right hand or left?

CHORUS.

Close on your right.

CYCLOPS.

Where?

CHORUS.

Near the rock itself.

You have them.

CYCLOPS.

Oh, misfortune on misfortune!

I've cracked my skull.

CHORUS.

Now they escape you there.

CYCLOPS.

Not there, although you say so.

CHORUS.

Not on that side.

CYCLOPS.

Where then?

CHORUS.

They creep about you on your left.

CYCLOPS.

Ah! I am mocked! They jeer me in my ills.

CHORUS.

Not there! he is a little there beyond you.

CYCLOPS.

Detested wretch! where are you?

ULYSSES.

Far from you  
I keep with care this body of Ulysses.

CYCLOPS.

What do you say? You proffer a new name.

ULYSSES.

My father named me so; and I have taken  
A full revenge for your unnatural feast;  
I should have done ill to have burned down Troy  
And not revenged the murder of my comrades.

CYCLOPS.

Ai! ai! the ancient oracle is accomplished;  
It said that I should have my eyesight blinded  
By you coming from Troy, yet it foretold  
That you should pay the penalty for this  
By wandering long over the homeless sea.

ULYSSES.

I bid thee weep—consider what I say,  
I go towards the shore to drive my ship  
To mine own land, o'er the Sicilian wave.

CYCLOPS.

Not so, if whelming you with this huge stone  
I can crush you and all your men together;  
I will descend upon the shore, though blind,  
Groping my way adown the steep ravine.

CHORUS.

And we, the shipmates of Ulysses now,  
Will serve our Bacchus all our happy lives.

## TRANSLATION FROM MOSCHUS.

PAN loved his neighbour Echo—but that child  
Of Earth and Air pined for the Satyr leaping ;  
The Satyr loved with wasting madness wild  
The bright nymph Lyda,—and so three went weeping.  
As Pan loved Echo, Echo loved the Satyr ;  
The Satyr, Lyda—and thus love consumed them.—  
And thus to each—which was a woful matter—  
To bear what they inflicted, justice doomed them ;  
For inasmuch as each might hate the lover,  
Each loving, so was hated.—Ye that love not  
Be warned—in thought turn this example over,  
That when ye love, the like return ye prove not.

## SCENES

FROM THE "MAGICO PRODIGIOSO" OF CALDERON.

---

CYPRIAN *as a Student*; CLARIN *and* MOSCON *as poor  
Scholars, with books.*

CYPRIAN.

IN the sweet solitude of this calm place,  
This intricate wild wilderness of trees  
And flowers and undergrowth of odorous plants,  
Leave me; the books you brought out of the house  
To me are ever best society.  
And whilst with glorious festival and song  
Antioch now celebrates the consecration  
Of a proud temple to great Jupiter,  
And bears his image in loud jubilee  
To its new shrine, I would consume what still  
Lives of the dying day, in studious thought,  
Far from the throng and turmoil. You, my friends,  
Go and enjoy the festival; it will  
Be worth the labour, and return for me  
When the sun seeks its grave among the billows,  
Which among dim grey clouds on the horizon  
Dance like white plumes upon a hearse;—and here  
I shall expect you.

MOSCON.

I cannot bring my mind,

Great as my haste to see the festival  
 Certainly is, to leave you, Sir, without  
 Just saying some three or four hundred words.  
 How is it possible that on a day  
 Of such festivity, you can bring your mind  
 To come forth to a solitary country  
 With three or four old books, and turn your back  
 On all this mirth?

CLARIN.

My master's in the right;  
 There is not any thing more tiresome  
 Than a procession day, with troops of men,  
 And dances, and all that.

MOSCON.

From first to last,  
 Clarin, you are a temporizing flatterer;  
 You praise not what you feel but what he does;—  
 Toadeater!

CLARIN.

You lie—under a mistake—  
 For this is the most civil sort of lie  
 That can be given to a man's face. I now  
 Say what I think.

CYPRIAN.

Enough, you foolish fellows.  
 Puffed up with your own doting ignorance,  
 You always take the two sides of one question.  
 Now go, and as I said, return for me  
 When night falls, veiling in its shadows wide  
 This glorious fabric of the universe.

MOSCON.

How happens it, although you can maintain

The folly of enjoying festivals,  
That yet you go there?

CLARIN.

Nay, the consequence  
Is clear:—who ever did what he advises  
Others to do?—

MOSCON.

Would that my feet were wings,  
So would I fly to Livia. [Exit.

CLARIN.

To speak truth,  
Livia is she who has surprised my heart;  
But he is more than half way there.—Soho!  
Livia, I come; good sport, Livia, Soho! [Exit.

CYPRIAN.

Now, since I am alone, let me examine  
The question which has long disturbed my mind  
With doubt; since first I read in Plinius  
The words of mystic import and deep sense  
In which he defines God. My intellect  
Can find no God with whom these marks and signs  
Fitly agree. It is a hidden truth  
Which I must fathom. [Reads.

*Enter the DEVIL, as a fine Gentleman.*

DÆMON.

Search even as thou wilt,  
But thou shalt never find what I can hide.

CYPRIAN.

What noise is that among the boughs? Who moves?  
What art thou?—

## DEMON.

'Tis a foreign gentleman.  
 Even from this morning I have lost my way  
 In this wild place, and my poor horse at last  
 Quite overcome, has stretched himself upon  
 The enamelled tapestry of this mossy mountain,  
 And feeds and rests at the same time. I was  
 Upon my way to Antioch upon business  
 Of some importance, but wrapt up in cares  
 (Who is exempt from this inheritance)  
 I parted from my company, and lost  
 My way, and lost my servants and my comrades.

## CYPRIAN.

'Tis singular, that even within the sight  
 Of the high towers of Antioch, you could lose  
 Your way. Of all the avenues and green paths  
 Of this wild wood there is not one but leads  
 As to its centre, to the walls of Antioch ;  
 Take which you will you cannot miss your road.

## DEMON.

And such is ignorance! Even in the sight  
 Of knowledge it can draw no profit from it.  
 But as it still is early, and as I  
 Have no acquaintances in Antioch,  
 Being a stranger there, I will even wait  
 The few surviving hours of the day,  
 Until the night shall conquer it. I see  
 Both by your dress and by the books in which  
 You find delight and company, that you  
 Are a great student;—for my part, I feel  
 Much sympathy with such pursuits.

CYPRIAN.

Have you

Studied much?—

DÆMON.

No,—and yet I know enough  
Not to be wholly ignorant.

CYPRIAN.

Pray, Sir,

What science may you know?—

DÆMON.

Many.

CYPRIAN.

Alas!

Much pains must we expend on one alone,  
And even then attain it not;—but you  
Have the presumption to assert that you  
Know many without study.

DÆMON.

And with truth.

For in the country whence I come, sciences  
Require no learning,—they are known.

CYPRIAN.

Oh, would

I were of that bright country! for in this  
The more we study, we the more discover  
Our ignorance.

DÆMON.

It is so true that I

Had so much arrogance as to oppose  
The chair of the most high Professorship,  
And obtained many votes, and though I lost,  
The attempt was still more glorious, than the failure

Could be dishonourable: if you believe not,  
 Let us refer it to dispute respecting  
 That which you know best, and although I  
 Know not the opinion you maintain, and though  
 It be the true one, I will take the contrary.

CYPRIAN.

The offer gives me pleasure. I am now  
 Debating with myself upon a passage  
 Of Plinius, and my mind is racked with doubt  
 To understand and know who is the God  
 Of whom he speaks.

DÆMON.

It is a passage, if  
 I recollect it right, couched in these words:  
 "God is one supreme goodness, one pure essence,  
 One substance, and one sense, all sight, all hands."

CYPRIAN.

'Tis true.

DÆMON.

What difficulty find you here?

CYPRIAN.

I do not recognise among the Gods  
 The God defined by Plinius; if he must  
 Be supreme goodness, even Jupiter,  
 Is not supremely good; because we see  
 His deeds are evil, and his attributes  
 Tainted with mortal weakness; in what manner  
 Can supreme goodness be consistent with  
 The passions of humanity?

DÆMON.

The wisdom  
 Of the old world masked with the names of Gods,

The attributes of Nature and of Man ;  
A sort of popular philosophy.

CYPRIAN.

This reply will not satisfy me, for  
Such awe is due to the high name of God  
That ill should never be imputed. Then,  
Examining the question with more care,  
It follows, that the gods should always will  
That which is best, were they supremely good.  
How then does one will one thing—one another ?  
And you may not say that I allege  
Poetical or philosophic learning :—  
Consider the ambiguous responses  
Of their oracular statues ; from two shrines  
Two armies shall obtain the assurance of  
One victory. Is it not indisputable  
That two contending wills can never lead  
To the same end ? And being opposite,  
If one be good is not the other evil ?  
Evil in God is inconceivable ;  
But supreme goodness fails among the gods  
Without their union.

DÆMON.

I deny your major.

These responses are means towards some end  
Unfathomed by our intellectual beam.  
They are the work of providence, and more  
The battle's loss may profit those who lose,  
Than victory advantage those who win.

CYPRIAN.

That I admit, and yet that God should not  
(Falsehood is incompatible with deity)

Assure the victory ; it would be enough  
 To have permitted the defeat ; if God  
 Be all sight,—God, who beheld the truth,  
 Would not have given assurance of an end  
 Never to be accomplished ; thus, although  
 The Deity may according to his attributes  
 Be well distinguished into persons, yet,  
 ven in the minutest circumstance,  
 His essence must be one.

DÆMON.

To attain the end  
 The affections of the actors in the scene  
 Must have been thus influenced by his voice.

CYPRIAN.

But for a purpose thus subordinate  
 He might have employed genii, good or evil,—  
 A sort of spirits called so by the learned,  
 Who roam about inspiring good or evil,  
 And from whose influence and existence we  
 May well infer our immortality :—  
 Thus God might easily, without descending  
 To a gross falsehood in his proper person,  
 Have moved the affections by this mediation  
 To the just point.

DÆMON.

These trifling contradictions  
 Do not suffice to impugn the unity  
 Of the high gods ; in things of great importance  
 They still appear unanimous ; consider  
 That glorious fabric—man,—his workmanship,  
 Is stamped with one conception.

CYPRIAN.

Who made man  
 Must have, methinks, the advantage of the others.  
 If they are equal, might they not have risen  
 In opposition to the work, and being  
 All hands, according to our author here,  
 Have still destroyed even as the other made?  
 If equal in their power, and only unequal  
 In opportunity, which of the two  
 Will remain conqueror?

DEMON.

On impossible  
 And false hypothesis there can be built  
 No argument. Say, what do you infer  
 From this?

CYPRIAN.

That there must be a mighty God  
 Of supreme goodness and of highest grace,  
 All sight, all hands, all truth, infallible,  
 Without an equal and without a rival;  
 The cause of all things and the effect of nothing,  
 One power, one will, one substance, and one essence.  
 And in whatever persons, one or two,  
 His attributes may be distinguished, one  
 Sovereign power, one solitary essence,  
 One cause of all cause.

[*They rise.*]

DEMON.

How can I impugn  
 So clear a consequence?

CYPRIAN.

Do you regret  
 My victory?

DÆMON.

Who but regrets a check  
In rivalry of wit? I could reply  
And urge new difficulties, but will now  
Depart, for I hear steps of men approaching,  
And it is time that I should now pursue  
My journey to the city.

CYPRIAN.

Go in peace!

DEMON.

Remain in peace! Since thus it profits him  
To study, I will wrap his senses up  
In sweet oblivion of all thought, but of  
A piece of excellent beauty; and as I  
Have power given me to wage enmity  
Against Justina's soul, I will extract  
From one effect two vengeance.

[*Exit.*]

CYPRIAN.

I never  
Met a more learned person. Let me now  
Revolve this doubt again with careful mind. [*He reads.*]

*Enter LELIO and FLORO.*

LELIO.

Here stop. These toppling rocks and tangled boughs,  
Impenetrable by the noonday beam,  
Shall be sole witnesses of what we ——

FLORO.

Draw!

If there were words, here is the place for deeds.

LELIO.

Thou needest not instruct me ; well I know  
That in the field the silent tongue of steel  
Speaks thus.

[*They fight.*

CYPRIAN.

Ha ! what is this ? Lelio, Floro,  
Be it enough that Cyprian stands between you,  
Although unarmed.

LELIO.

Whence comest thou, to stand  
Between me and my vengeance ?

FLORO.

From what rocks  
And desert cells ?

*Enter MOSCON and CLARIN.*

MOSCON.

Run, run ! for where we left my master  
We hear the clash of swords.

CLARIN.

I never  
Run to approach things of this sort, but only  
To avoid them. Sir ! Cyprian ! sir !

CYPRIAN.

Be silent, fellows ! What ! two friends who are  
In blood and fame the eyes and hope of Antioch ;  
One of the noble men of the Colatti,  
The other son of the Governor, adventure  
And cast away, on some slight cause no doubt,  
Two lives the honour of their country ?

LELIO.

Cyprian!

Although my high respect towards your person  
 Holds now my sword suspended, thou canst not  
 Restore it to the slumber of its scabbard.  
 Thou knowest more of science than the duel;  
 For when two men of honour take the field,  
 No [            ] or respect can make them friends,  
 But one must die in the pursuit.

FLORO.

I pray

That you depart hence with your people, and  
 Leave us to finish what we have begun  
 Without advantage.

CYPRIAN.

Though you may imagine

That I know little of the laws of duel,  
 Which vanity and valour instituted,  
 You are in error. By my birth I am  
 Held no less than yourselves to know the limits  
 Of honour and of infamy, nor has study  
 Quenched the free spirit which first ordered them;  
 And thus to me, as one well experienced  
 In the false quicksands of the sea of honour,  
 You may refer the merits of the case;  
 And if I should perceive in your relation  
 That either has the right to satisfaction  
 From the other, I give you my word of honour  
 To leave you.

LELIO.

Under this condition then  
 I will relate the cause, and you will cede

And must confess th' impossibility  
Of compromise ; for the same lady is  
Beloved by Floro and myself.

FLORO.

It seems  
Much to me that the light of day should look  
Upon that idol of my heart—but he——  
Leave us to fight, according to thy word.

CYPRIAN.

Permit one question further : is the lady  
Impossible to hope or not ?

LELIO.

She is  
So excellent, that if the light of day  
Should excite Floro's jealousy, it were  
Without just cause, for even the light of day  
Trembles to gaze on her.

CYPRIAN.

Would you for your  
Part marry her ?

FLORO.

Such is my confidence.

CYPRIAN.

And you ?

LELIO.

O, would that I could lift my hope  
So high ? for though she is extremely poor,  
Her virtue is her dowry.

CYPRIAN.

And if you both  
Would marry her, is it not weak and vain,  
Culpable and unworthy, thus beforehand

To slur her honour. What would the world say  
 If one should slay the other, and if she  
 Should afterwards espouse the murderer ?

*[The rivals agree to refer their quarrel to CYPRIAN ;  
 who in consequence visits JUSTINA, and  
 becomes enamoured of her : she disdains him,  
 and he retires to a solitary sea-shore.]*

## SCENE II.

CYPRIAN.

Oh, memory ! permit it not  
 That the tyrant of my thought  
 Be another soul that still  
 Holds dominion o'er the will,  
 That would refuse, but can no more,  
 To bend, to tremble, and adore.  
 Vain idolatry !—I saw,  
 And gazing, became blind with error ;  
 Weak ambition, which the awe  
 Of her presence bound to terror !  
 So beautiful she was—and I,  
 Between my love and jealousy,  
 Am so convulsed with hope and fear,  
 Unworthy as it may appear ;—  
 So bitter is the life I live,  
 That, hear me, Hell ! I now would give  
 To thy most detested spirit  
 My soul, for ever to inherit,  
 To suffer punishment and pine,

So this woman may be mine.  
 Hear'st thou, Hell! dost thou reject it?  
 My soul is offered!

DEMON (*unseen*).

I accept it.

[*Tempest, with thunder and lightning.*

CYPRIAN.

What is this? ye heavens for ever pure,  
 At once intensely radiant and obscure!  
     Athwart the ethereal halls  
 The lightning's arrow and the thunder-balls  
     The day affright.  
     As from the horizon round,  
     Burst with earthquake sound,  
 In mighty torrents the electric fountains;—  
 Clouds quench the sun, and thunder smoke  
 Strangles the air, and fire eclipses heaven.  
 Philosophy, thou canst not even  
 Compel their causes underneath thy yoke,  
 From yonder clouds even to the waves below  
 The fragments of a single ruin choke  
     Imagination's flight;  
 For, on flakes of surge, like feathers light,  
 The ashes of the desolation cast  
     Upon the gloomy blast,  
 Tell of the footsteps of the storm.  
 And nearer see the melancholy form  
 Of a great ship, the outcast of the sea,  
     Drives miserably!  
 And it must fly the pity of the port,  
 Or perish, and its last and sole resort  
 Is its own raging enemy.

The terror of the thrilling cry  
 Was a fatal prophesy  
 Of coming death, who hovers now  
 Upon that shattered prow,  
 That they who die not may be dying still.  
 And not alone the insane elements  
 Are populous with wild portents,  
 But that sad ship is as a miracle  
 Of sudden ruin, for it drives so fast  
 It seems as if it had arrayed its form  
 With the headlong storm.  
 It strikes—I almost feel the shock,—  
 It stumbles on a jagged rock,—  
 Sparkles of blood on the white foam are cast.

*A Tempest—All exclaim within,*

We are all lost!

DÆMON (*within*).

Now from this plank will I  
 Pass to the land and thus fulfil my scheme.

CYPRIAN.

As in contempt of the elemental rage  
 A man comes forth in safety, while the ship's  
 Great form is in a watery eclipse  
 Obliterated from the Ocean's page,  
 And round its wreck the huge sea-monsters sit,  
 A horrid conclave, and the whistling wave  
 Are heaped over its carcase, like a grave.

*The DÆMON enters, as escaped from the sea.*

DÆMON (*aside*).

It was essential to my purposes

To wake a tumult on the sapphire ocean,  
 That in this unknown form I might at length  
 Wipe out the blot of the discomfiture  
 Sustained upon the mountain, and assail  
 With a new war the soul of Cyprian,  
 Forging the instruments of his destruction  
 Even from his love and from his wisdom.—Oh!  
 Beloved earth, dear mother, in thy bosom  
 I seek a refuge from the monster who  
 Precipitates itself upon me.

CYPRIAN.

Friend,

Collect thyself; and be the memory  
 Of thy late suffering, and thy greatest sorrow  
 But as a shadow of the past,—for nothing  
 Beneath the circle of the moon, but flows  
 And changes, and can never know repose.

DÆMON.

And who art thou, before whose feet my fate  
 Has prostrated me?

CYPRIAN.

One who moved with pity,  
 Would soothe its stings.

DÆMON.

Oh! that can never be!  
 No solace can my lasting sorrows find.

CYPRIAN.

Wherefore?

DÆMON.

Because my happiness is lost.  
 Yet I lament what has long ceased to be

The object of desire or memory,  
And my life is not life.

CYPRIAN.

Now, since the fury  
Of this earthquaking hurricane is still,  
And the crystalline heaven has reassumed  
Its windless calm so quickly, that it seems  
As if its heavy wrath had been awakened  
Only to overwhelm that vessel,—speak,  
Who art thou, and whence comest thou?

DÆMON.

Far more  
My coming hither cost, than thou hast seen  
Or I can tell. Among my misadventures  
This shipwreck is the least. Wilt thou hear?

CYPRIAN.

Speak.

DÆMON.

Since thou desirest, I will then unveil  
Myself to thee;—for in myself I am  
A world of happiness and misery;  
This I have lost, and that I must lament  
For ever. In my attributes I stood  
So high and so heroically great,  
In lineage so supreme, and with a genius  
Which penetrated with a glance the world  
Beneath my feet, that won by my high merit  
A king—whom I may call the king of kings,  
Because all others tremble in their pride  
Before the terrors of his countenance,  
In his high palace roofed with brightest gems.

Of living light—call them the stars of Heaven—  
Named me his counsellor. But the high praise  
Stung me with pride and envy, and I rose  
In mighty competition, to ascend  
His seat and place my foot triumphantly  
Upon his subject thrones. Chastised, I know  
The depth to which ambition falls; too mad  
Was the attempt, and yet more mad were now  
Repentance of the irrevocable deed:—  
Therefore I chose this ruin with the glory  
Of not to be subdued, before the shame  
Of reconciling me with him who reigns  
By coward cession.—Nor was I alone,  
Nor am I now, nor shall I be alone;  
And there was hope, and there may still be hope,  
For many suffrages among his vassals  
Hailed me their lord and king, and many still  
Are mine, and many more, perchance shall be.  
Thus vanquished, though in fact victorious,  
I left his seat of empire, from mine eye  
Shooting forth poisonous lightning, while my words  
With inauspicious thunderings shook Heaven,  
Proclaiming vengeance, public as my wrong,  
And imprecating on his prostrate slaves  
Rapine, and death, and outrage. Then I sailed  
Over the mighty fabric of the world,  
A pirate ambushed in its pathless sands,  
A lynx crouched watchfully among its caves  
And craggy shores; and I have wandered over  
The expanse of these wide wildernesses  
In this great ship, whose bulk is now dissolved  
In the light breathings of the invisible wind,

And which the sea has made a dustless ruin,  
 Seeking ever a mountain, through whose forests  
 I seek a man, whom I must now compel  
 To keep his word with me. I came arrayed  
 In tempest, and although my power could well  
 Bridle the forest winds\* in their career,  
 For other causes I forbore to soothe  
 Their fury to Favonian gentleness,  
 I could and would not; (thus I wake in him [*Aside.*  
 A love of magic art.) Let not this tempest,  
 Nor the succeeding calm excite thy wonder;  
 For by my art the sun would turn as pale  
 As his weak sister with unwonted fear.  
 And in my wisdom are the orbs of Heaven  
 Written as in a record; I have pierced  
 The flaming circles of their wondrous spheres  
 And know them as thou knowest every corner  
 Of this dim spot. Let it not seem to thee  
 That I boast vainly; wouldst thou that I work  
 A charm over this waste and savage wood,  
 This Babylon of crags and aged trees,  
 Filling its leafy coverts with a horror  
 Thrilling and strange? I am the friendless guest  
 Of these wild oaks and pines—and as from thee  
 I have received the hospitality  
 Of this rude place, I offer thee the fruit  
 Of years of toil in recompense; whate'er  
 Thy wildest dream presented to thy thought  
 As object of desire, that shall be thine.

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And thenceforth shall so firm an amity  
 'Twixt thou and me be, that neither fortune,

The monstrous phantom which pursues success,  
 That careful miser, that free prodigal,  
 Who ever alternates with changeful hand,  
 Evil and good, reproach and fame; nor Time,  
 That loadstar of the ages, to whose beam  
 The winged years speed o'er the intervals  
 Of their unequal revolutions; nor  
 Heaven itself, whose beautiful bright stars  
 Rule and adorn the world, can ever make  
 The least division between thee and me,  
 Since now I find a refuge in thy favour.

## SCENE III.

*The DÆMON tempts JUSTINA, who is a Christian.*

DÆMON.

Abyss of Hell! I call on thee,  
 Thou wild misrule of thine own anarchy!  
 From thy prison-house set free  
 The spirits of voluptuous death,  
 That with their mighty breath  
 They may destroy a world of virgin thoughts;  
 Let her chaste mind with fancies thick as motes  
 Be peopled from thy shadowy deep,  
 Till her guiltless phantasy  
 Full to overflowing be!  
 And with sweetest harmony,  
 Let birds, and flowers, and leaves, and all things move  
     To love, only to love.  
 Let nothing meet her eyes

But signs of Love's soft victories ;  
 Let nothing meet her ear  
 But sounds of love's sweet sorrow,  
 So that from faith no succour she may borrow,  
 But, guided by my spirit blind  
 And in a magic snare entwined,  
 She may now seek Cyprian.  
 Begin, while I in silence bind  
 My voice, when thy sweet song thou hast began.

A VOICE WITHIN.

What is the glory far above  
 All else in human life?

ALL.

Love! love!

[*While these words are sung, the DÆMON goes out at one door, and JUSTINA enters at another.*]

THE FIRST VOICE.

There is no form in which the fire  
 Of love its traces has impressed not.  
 Man lives far more in love's desire  
 Than by life's breath, soon possessed not.  
 If all that lives must love or die,  
 All shapes on earth, or sea, or sky,  
 With one consent to Heaven cry  
 That the glory far above  
 All else in life is—

ALL.

Love! O love!

JUSTINA.

Thou melancholy thought which art  
 So fluttering and so sweet, to thee  
 When did I give the liberty

Thus to afflict my heart?  
 What is the cause of this new power  
 Which doth my fevered being move,  
 Momently raging more and more?  
 What subtle pain is kindled now  
 Which from my heart doth overflow  
 Into my senses?—

ALL.

Love, O, love!

JUSTINA.

'Tis that enamoured nightingale  
 Who gives me the reply;  
 He ever tells the same soft tale  
 Of passion and of constancy  
 To his mate, who rapt and fond  
 Listening sits, a bough beyond.

Be silent, Nightingale—no more  
 Make me think, in hearing thee  
 Thus tenderly thy love deplore,  
 If a bird can feel his so,  
 What a man would feel for me.  
 And, voluptuous vine, O thou  
 Who seekest most when least pursuing,—  
 To the trunk thou interlacest  
 Art the verdure which embracest,  
 And the weight which is its ruin,—  
 No more, with green embraces, vine,  
 Make me think on what thou lovest,—  
 For whilst thou thus thy boughs entwine,

I fear lest thou should'st teach me, sophist,  
How arms might be entangled too.

Light-enchanted sunflower, thou  
Who gazest ever true and tender  
On the sun's revolving splendour!  
Follow not his faithless glance  
With thy faded countenance,  
Nor teach my beating heart to fear,  
If leaves can mourn without a tear,  
How eyes must weep! O Nightingale,  
Cease from thy enamoured tale,—  
Leafy vine, unwreath thy bower,  
Restless sunflower, cease to move,—  
Or tell me all, what poisonous power  
Ye use against me—

ALL.

Love! love! love!

JUSTINA.

It cannot be!—Whom have I ever loved?  
Trophies of my oblivion and disdain,  
Floro and Lelio did I not reject?  
And Cyprian?—

[*She becomes troubled at the name of Cyprian.*

Did I not requite him  
With such severity, that he has fled  
Where none has ever heard of him again?—  
Alas! I now begin to fear that this  
May be the occasion whence desire grows bold,  
As if there were no danger. From the moment  
That I pronounced to my own listening heart,

Cyprian is absent, O me miserable!

I know not what I feel!

[*More calmly.*]

It must be pity

To think that such a man, whom all the world

Admired, should be forgot by all the world,

And I the cause.

[*She again becomes troubled.*]

And yet if it were pity,

Floro and Lelio might have equal share,

For they are both imprisoned for my sake.

[*Calmly.*]

Alas! what reasonings are these? it is

Enough I pity him, and that, in vain,

Without this ceremonious subtlety.

And woe is me! I know not where to find him now,

Even should I seek him through this wide world.

*Enter* DÆMON.

DÆMON.

Follow, and I will lead thee where he is.

JUSTINA.

And who art thou, who hast found entrance hither,

Into my chamber through the doors and locks?

Art thou a monstrous shadow which my madness

Has formed in the idle air?

DÆMON.

No. I am one

Called by the thought which tyrannizes thee

From his eternal dwelling; who this day

Is pledged to bear thee unto Cyprian.

JUSTINA.

So shall thy promise fail. This agony

Of passion which afflicts my heart and soul  
 May sweep imagination in its storm,  
 The will is firm.

DÆMON.

Already half is done  
 In the imagination of an act.  
 The sin incurred, the pleasure then remains,  
 Let not the will stop half-way on the road.

JUSTINA.

I will not be discouraged, nor despair,  
 Although I thought it, and although 'tis true,  
 That thought is but a prelude to the deed:—  
 Thought is not in my power, but action is:  
 I will not move my foot to follow thee.

DÆMON.

But far a mightier wisdom than thine own  
 Exerts itself within thee, with such power  
 Compelling thee to that which it inclines  
 That it shall force thy step; how wilt thou then  
 Resist, Justina?

JUSTINA.

By my free-will.

DÆMON.

I

Must force thy will.

JUSTINA.

It is invincible;  
 It were not free if thou hadst power upon it.

*[He draws, but cannot move her.]*

DÆMON.

Come, where a pleasure waits thee.

JUSTINA.

It were bought

Too dear.

DÆMON.

'Twill soothe thy heart to softest peace.

JUSTINA.

'Tis dread captivity.

DÆMON.

'Tis joy, 'tis glory.

JUSTINA.

'Tis shame, 'tis torment, 'tis despair.

DÆMON.

But how

Canst thou defend thyself from that or me,  
If my power drags thee onward?

JUSTINA.

My defence

Consists in God.

*[He vainly endeavours to force her, and at last releases her.]*

DÆMON.

Woman, thou hast subdued me,  
Only by not owning thyself subdued.  
But since thou thus findest defence in God,  
I will assume a feigned form, and thus  
Make thee a victim of my baffled rage.  
For I will mask a spirit in thy form  
Who will betray thy name to infamy,  
And doubly shall I triumph in thy loss,  
First by dishonouring thee, and then by turning  
False pleasure to true ignominy.

*[Exit.]*

JUSTINA.

I

Appeal to Heaven against thee; so that Heaven  
 May scatter thy delusions, and the blot  
 Upon my fame vanish in idle thought,  
 Even as flame dies in the envious air,  
 And as the flowret wanes at morning frost,  
 And thou shouldst never——But, alas! to whom  
 Do I still speak?—Did not a man but now  
 Stand here before me?—No, I am alone,  
 And yet I saw him. Is he gone so quickly?  
 Or can the heated mind engender shapes  
 From its own fear? Some terrible and strange  
 Peril is near. Lisander! father! lord!  
 Livia!—

*Enter LISANDER and LIVIA.*

LISANDER.

O, my daughter! What?

LIVIA.

What?

JUSTINA.

Saw you

A man go forth from my apartment now?—

I scarce sustain myself!

LISANDER.

A man here!

JUSTINA.

Have you not seen him?

LIVIA.

No, Lady.

JUSTINA.

I saw him.

LISANDER.

'Tis impossible; the doors  
Which led to this apartment were all locked.

LIVIA (*aside*).

I dare say it was Moscon whom she saw,  
For he was locked up in my room.

LISANDER.

It must

Have been some image of thy phantasy.  
Such melancholy as thou feedest, is  
Skilful in forming such in the vain air  
Out of the motes and atoms of the day.

LIVIA.

My master's in the right.

JUSTINA.

O, would it were

Delusion; but I fear some greater ill.  
I feel as if out of my bleeding bosom  
My heart were torn in fragments; aye,  
Some mortal spell is wrought against my frame;  
So potent was the charm, that had not God  
Shielded my humble innocence from wrong,  
I should have sought my sorrow and my shame  
With willing steps.—Livia, quick bring my cloak,  
For I must seek refuge from these extremes  
Even in the temple of the highest God  
Which secretly the faithful worship.

LIVIA.

Here.

JUSTINA (*putting on her cloak*).

In this, as in a shroud of snow, may I  
Quench the consuming fire in which I burn,  
Wasting away!

LISANDER.

And I will go with thee.

LIVIA.

When I once see them safe out of the house  
I shall breathe freely.

JUSTINA.

So do I confide

In thy just favour, Heaven!

LISANDER.

Let us go.

JUSTINA.

Thine is the cause, great God! turn for my sake,  
And for thine own, mercifully to me!

## SCENES

FROM THE FAUST OF GOËTHE.

---

### PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN.

*The Lord and the Host of Heaven. Enter three Archangels.*

RAPHAEL.

THE sun makes music as of old  
Amid the rival spheres of Heaven,  
On its predestined circle rolled  
With thunder speed: the Angels even  
Draw strength from gazing on its glance,  
Though none its meaning fathom may:—  
The world's unwithered countenance  
Is bright as at creation's day.

GABRIEL.

And swift and swift, with rapid lightness,  
The adorned Earth spins silently,  
Alternating Elysian brightness  
With deep and dreadful night; the sea  
Foams in broad billows from the deep  
Up to the rocks, and rocks and ocean,  
Onward, with spheres which never sleep,  
Are hurried in eternal motion.

MICHAEL. .

And tempests in contention roar  
 From land to sea, from sea to land;  
 And, raging, weave a chain of power,  
 Which girds the earth, as with a band.—  
 A flashing desolation there,  
 Flames before the thunder's way;  
 But thy servants, Lord, reverse  
 The gentle changes of thy day.

CHORUS OF THE THREE.

The Angels draw strength from thy glance,  
 Though no one comprehend thee may;—  
 Thy world's unwithered countenance  
 Is bright as on creation's day.\*

\* RAPHAEL.

The sun sounds, according to ancient custom,  
 In the song of emulation of his brother-spheres.  
 And its fore-written circle  
 Fulfills with a step of thunder.  
 Its countenance gives the Angels strength  
 Though no one can fathom it.  
 The incredible high works  
 Are excellent as at the first day.

GABRIEL.

And swift, and inconceivably swift  
 The adornment of earth winds itself round,  
 And exchanges Paradise-clearness  
 With deep dreadful night.  
 The sea foams in broad waves  
 From its deep bottom, up to the rocks,  
 And rocks and sea are torn on together  
 In the eternal swift course of the spheres.

MICHAEL.

And storms roar in emulation  
 From sea to land, from land to sea,  
 And make, raging, a chain  
 Of deepest operation round about.  
 There flames a flashing destruction

*Enter* MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

As thou, O Lord, once more art kind enough  
 To interest thyself in our affairs—  
 And ask, “ How goes it with you there below ?”  
 And as indulgently at other times  
 Thou tookedst not my visits in ill part,  
 Thou seest me here once more among thy household.  
 Though I should scandalize this company,  
 You will excuse me if I do not talk  
 In the high style which they think fashionable;  
 My pathos would certainly make you laugh too,  
 Had you not long since given over laughing.  
 Nothing know I to say of suns and worlds;  
 I observe only how men plague themselves;—  
 The little god o’ the world keeps the same stamp,  
 As wonderful as on creation’s day :—  
 A little better would he live, hadst thou  
 Not given him a glimpse of heaven’s light

Before the path of the thunderbolt.  
 But thy servants, Lord, revere  
 The gentle alternations of thy day.

CHORUS.

Thy countenance gives the Angels strength,  
 Though none can comprehend thee :  
 And all thy lofty works  
 Are excellent as at the first day.

Such is a literal translation of this astonishing Chorus ; it is impossible to represent in another language the melody of the versification ; even the volatile strength and delicacy of the ideas escape in the crucible of translation, and the reader is surprised to find a caput mortuum.—*Author’s Note.*

Which he calls reason, and employs it only  
 To live more beastlily than any beast.  
 With reverence to your Lordship be it spoken,  
 He's like one of those long-legged grasshoppers,  
 Who flits and jumps about, and sings for ever  
 The same old song i' the grass. There let him lie,  
 Burying his nose in every heap of dung.

THE LORD.

Have you no more to say? Do you come here  
 Always to scold, and cavil, and complain?  
 Seems nothing ever right to you on earth?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No, Lord! I find all there, as ever, bad at best.  
 Even I am sorry for man's days of sorrow;  
 I could myself almost give up the pleasure  
 Of plaguing the poor things.

THE LORD.

Knowest thou Faust?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The Doctor?

THE LORD.

Aye; my servant Faust.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In truth

He serves you in a fashion quite his own;  
 And the fool's meat and drink are not of earth.  
 His aspirations bear him on so far  
 That he is half aware of his own folly,  
 For he demands from Heaven its fairest star,  
 And from the earth the highest joy it bears,  
 Yet all things far, and all things near, are vain  
 To calm the deep emotions of his breast.

## THE LORD.

Though he now serves me in a cloud of error,  
 I will soon lead him forth to the clear day.  
 When trees look green full well the gardener knows  
 That fruits and blooms will deck the coming year.

## MEPHISTOPHELES.

What will you bet?—now I am sure of winning—  
 Only, observe you give me full permission  
 To lead him softly on my path.

## THE LORD.

As long

As he shall live upon the earth, so long  
 Is nothing unto thee forbidden—Man  
 Must err till he has ceased to struggle.

## MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thanks.

And that is all I ask; for willingly  
 I never make acquaintance with the dead.  
 The full fresh cheeks of youth are food for me,  
 And if a corpse knocks, I am not at home.  
 For I am like a cat—I like to play  
 A little with the mouse before I eat it.

## THE LORD.

Well, well! it is permitted thee. Draw thou  
 His spirit from its springs; as thou find'st power,  
 Seize him and lead him on thy downward path;  
 And stand ashamed when failure teaches thee  
 That a good man, even in his darkest longings,  
 Is well aware of the right way.

## MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well and good.

I am not in much doubt about my bet,

And if I lose, then 'tis your turn to-crow ;  
 Enjoy your triumph then with a full breast.  
 Aye ; dust shall he devour, and that with pleasure,  
 Like my old paramour, the famous Snake.

THE LORD.

Pray come here when it suits you ; for I never  
 Had much dislike for people of your sort.  
 And, among all the Spirits who rebelled,  
 The knave was ever the least tedious to me.  
 The active spirit of man soon sleeps, and soon  
 He seeks unbroken quiet ; therefore I  
 Have given him the Devil for a companion,  
 Who may provoke him to some sort of work,  
 And must create for ever.—But ye, pure  
 Children of God, enjoy eternal beauty ;—  
 Let that which ever operates and lives  
 Clasp you within the limits of its love ;  
 And seize with sweet and melancholy thoughts  
 The floating phantoms of its loveliness.

*[Heaven closes ; the Archangels exeunt.]*

MEPHISTOPHELES.

From time to time I visit the old fellow,  
 And I take care to keep on good terms with him.  
 Civil enough is this same God Almighty,  
 To talk so freely with the Devil himself.

SCENES  
FROM THE FAUST OF GOËTHE.

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MAY-DAY NIGHT.

SCENE—*The Hartz Mountain, a desolate Country.*

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

WOULD you not like a broomstick? As for me  
I wish I had a good stout ram to ride;  
For we are still far from th' appointed place.

FAUST.

This knotted staff is help enough for me,  
Whilst I feel fresh upon my legs. What good  
Is there in making short a pleasant way?  
To creep along the labyrinths of the vales,  
And climb those rocks, where ever-babbling springs  
Precipitate themselves in waterfalls,  
Is the true sport that seasons such a path.  
Already Spring kindles the birchen spray,  
And the hoar pines already feel her breath:  
Shall she not work also within our limbs?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nothing of such an influence do I feel.  
My body is all wintry, and I wish  
The flowers upon our path were frost and snow.

But see, how melancholy rises now,  
 Dimly uplifting her belated beam,  
 The blank unwelcome round of the red moon,  
 And gives so bad a light, that every step  
 One stumbles 'gainst some crag. With your permission,  
 I'll call an Ignis-fatuus to our aid :  
 I see one yonder burning jollily.  
 Halloo, my friend ! may I request that you  
 Would favour us with your bright company ?  
 Why should you blaze away there to no purpose ?  
 Pray be so good as light us up this way.

IGNIS-FATUUS.

With reverence be it spoken, I will try  
 To overcome the lightness of my nature ;  
 Our course, you know, is generally zig-zag.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ha, ha ! your worship thinks you have to deal  
 With men. Go strait on, in the Devil's name,  
 Or I shall puff your flickering life out.

IGNIS-FATUUS.

Well,

I see you are the master of the house ;  
 I will accommodate myself to you.  
 Only consider, that to-night this mountain  
 Is all enchanted, and if Jack-a-lantern  
 Shows you his way, though you should miss your own,  
 You ought not to be too exact with him.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, and IGNIS-FATUUS, in alter-  
*nate Chorus.*

The limits of the sphere of dream,

The bounds of true and false, are past.  
Lead us on, thou wandering Gleam,  
Lead us onward, far and fast,  
To the wide, the desert waste.

But see, how swift advance and shift,  
Trees behind trees, row by row,—  
How, clift by clift, rocks bend and lift  
Their frowning foreheads as we go.  
The giant-snouted crags, ho ! ho !  
How they snort, and how they blow !

Through the mossy sods and stones,  
Stream and streamlet hurry down  
A rushing throng ! A sound of song  
Beneath the vault of Heaven is blown !  
Sweet notes of love, the speaking tones  
Of this bright day, sent down to say  
That Paradise on Earth is known,  
Resound around, beneath, above.  
All we hope and all we love  
Finds a voice in this blithe strain,  
Which wakens hill and wood and rill,  
And vibrates far o'er field and vale,  
And which Echo, like the tale  
Of old times, repeats again.

To whoo ! to whoo ! near, nearer now  
The sound of song, the rushing throng !  
Are the screech, the lapwing, and the jay,  
All awake as if 'twere day ?

See, with long legs and belly wide,  
 A salamander in the brake !  
 Every root is like a snake,  
 And along the loose hill side,  
 With strange contortions through the night,  
 Curls, to seize or to affright ;  
 And, animated, strong, and many,  
 They dart forth polypus-antennæ,  
 To blister with their poison spume  
 The wanderer. Through the dazzling gloom  
 The many-coloured mice, that thread  
 The dewy turf beneath our tread,  
 In troops each other's motions cross,  
 Through the heath and through the moss ;  
 And, in legions intertangled,  
 The fire-flies flit, and swarm, and throng,  
 Till all the mountain depths are spangled.

Tell me, shall we go or stay ?  
 Shall we onward ? Come along !  
 Everything around is swept  
 Forward, onward, far away !  
 Trees and masses intercept  
 The sight, and wisps on every side  
 Are puffed up and multiplied.

## MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now vigorously seize my skirt, and gain  
 This pinnacle of isolated crag.  
 One may observe with wonder from this point,  
 How Mammon glows among the mountains.

FAUST.

Aye—

And strangely through the solid depth below  
 A melancholy light, like the red dawn,  
 Shoots from the lowest gorge of the abyss  
 Of mountains, lightning hitherward: there rise  
 Pillars of smoke, here clouds float gently by;  
 Here the light burns soft as the enkindled air,  
 Or the illumined dust of golden flowers;  
 And now it glides like tender colours spreading;  
 And now bursts forth in fountains from the earth;  
 And now it winds, one torrent of broad light,  
 Through the far valley with a hundred veins;  
 And now once more within that narrow corner  
 Masses itself into intensest splendour.  
 And near us, see, sparks spring out of the ground,  
 Like golden sand scattered upon the darkness;  
 The pinnacles of that black wall of mountains  
 That hems us in, are kindled.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Rare, in faith!

Does not Sir Mammon gloriously illuminate  
 His palace for this festival—it is  
 A pleasure which you had not known before.  
 I spy the boisterous guests already.

FAUST,

How

The children of the wind rage in the air!  
 With what fierce strokes they fall upon my neck!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Cling tightly to the old ribs of the crag.  
 Beware! for if with them thou warrest

In their fierce flight towards the wilderness,  
 Their breath will sweep thee into dust, and drag  
 Thy body to a grave in the abyss.

A cloud thickens the night.

Hark! how the tempest crashes through the forest!

The owls fly out in strange affright;

The columns of the evergreen palaces

Are split and shattered;

The roots creak, and stretch, and groan;

And ruinously overthrown,

The trunks are crushed and shattered

By the fierce blast's unconquerable stress.

Over each other crack and crash they all

In terrible and intertangled fall;

And through the ruins of the shaken mountain

The airs hiss and howl—

It is not the voice of the fountain,

Nor the wolf in his midnight prowl.

Dost thou not hear?

Strange accents are ringing

Aloft, afar, anear;

The witches are singing!

The torrent of a raging wizard song

Streams the whole mountain along.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

The stubble is yellow, the corn is green,

Now to the Brocken the witches go;

The mighty multitude here may be seen

Gathering, wizard and witch, below.

Sir Urean is sitting aloft in the air;

Hey over stock! and hey over stone!

'Twixt witches and incubi, what shall be done?

Tell it who dare! tell it who dare!

A VOICE.

Upon a sow-swine, whose farrows were nine,  
Old Baubo rideth alone.

CHORUS.

Honour her, to whom honour is due,  
Old mother Baubo, honour to you!  
An able sow, with old Baubo upon her,  
Is worthy of glory, and worthy of honour!  
The legion of witches is coming behind,  
Darkening the night, and outspeeding the wind—

A VOICE.

Which way comest thou?

A VOICE.

Over Ilsestein;

The owl was awake in the white moon-shine;  
I saw her at rest in her downy nest,  
And she stared at me with her broad, bright eye.

VOICES.

And you may now as well, take your course on to Hell,  
Since you ride by so fast, on the headlong blast.

A VOICE.

She dropt poison upon me as I past.  
Here are the wounds—

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

Come away! come along!

The way is wide, the way is long,  
But what is that for a Bedlam throng?  
Stick with the prong, and scratch with the broom.  
The child in the cradle lies strangled at home,  
And the mother is clapping her hands.—

SEMI-CHORUS OF WIZARDS I.

We glide in

Like snails when the women are all away ;  
 And from a house once given over to sin  
 Woman has a thousand steps to stray.

## SEMI-CHORUS II.

A thousand steps must a woman take,  
 Where a man but a single spring will make.

## VOICES ABOVE.

Come with us, come with us, from Felunsee.

## VOICES BELOW.

With what joy would we fly, through the upper sky !  
 We are washed, we are 'nointed, stark naked are we ;  
 But our toil and our pain, is for ever in vain.

## BOTH CHORUSSES.

The wind is still, the stars are fled,  
 The melancholy moon is dead ;  
 The magic notes, like spark on spark,  
 Drizzle, whistling through the dark.

Come away !

## VOICES BELOW.

Stay, oh, stay !

## VOICES ABOVE.

Out of the crannies of the rocks,  
 Who calls ?

## VOICES BELOW.

Oh, let me join your flocks !

I, three hundred years have striven  
 To catch your skirt and mount to Heaven,—  
 And still in vain. Oh, might I be  
 With company akin to me !

## BOTH CHORUSSES.

Some on a ram and some on a prong,

On poles and on broomsticks we flutter along ;  
 Forlorn is the wight, who can rise not to-night.

A HALF-WITCH BELOW.

I have been tripping this many an hour :  
 Are the others already so far before ?  
 No quiet at home, and no peace abroad !  
 And less methinks is found by the road.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

Come onward away ! aroint thee, aroint !  
 A witch to be strong must anoint—anoint—  
 Then every trough, will be boat enough ;  
 With a rag for a sail we can sweep through the sky,  
 Who flies not to-night, when means he to fly ?

BOTH CHORUSSES.

We cling to the skirt, and we strike on the ground ;  
 Witch-legions thicken around and around ;  
 Wizard-swarms cover the heath all over.

[*They descend.*]

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What thronging, dashing, raging, rustling ;  
 What whispering, babbling, hissing, bustling ;  
 What glimmering, spurting, stinking, burning,  
 As Heaven and Earth were overturning.  
 There is a true witch element about us,  
 Take hold on me, or we shall be divided :—  
 Where are you ?

FAUST (*from a distance.*)

Here !

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What

I must exert my authority in the house.  
 Place for young Voland ! pray make way, good people.  
 Take hold on me, doctor, and with one step

Let us escape from this unpleasant crowd :  
 They are too mad for people of my sort.  
 Just there shines a peculiar kind of light—  
 Something attracts me in those bushes. Come  
 This way : we shall slip down there in a minute.

FAUST.

Spirit of Contradiction ! Well, lead on—  
 'Twere a wise feat indeed to wander out  
 Into the Brocken upon May-day night,  
 And then to isolate oneself in scorn,  
 Disgusted with the humours of the time.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

See yonder, round a many-coloured flame  
 A merry club is huddled altogether :  
 Even with such little people as sit there  
 One would not be alone.

FAUST.

Would that I were  
 Up yonder in the glow and whirling smoke,  
 Where the blind million rush impetuously  
 To meet the evil ones ; there might I solve  
 Many a riddle that torments me !

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yet

Many a riddle there is tied anew  
 Inextricably. Let the great world rage !  
 We will stay here safe in the quiet dwellings.  
 'Tis an old custom. Men have ever built  
 Their own small world in the great world of all.  
 I see young witches naked there, and old ones  
 Wisely attired with greater decency.  
 Be guided now by me, and you shall buy

A pound of pleasure with a dram of trouble.  
 I hear them tune their instruments—one must  
 Get used to this damned scraping. Come, I'll lead you  
 Among them; and what there you do and see,  
 As a fresh compact 'twixt us two shall be.  
 How say you now? this space is wide enough—  
 Look forth, you cannot see the end of it—  
 An hundred bonfires burn in rows, and they  
 Who throng around them seem innumerable:  
 Dancing and drinking, jabbering, making love,  
 And cooking, are at work. Now tell me, friend,  
 What is there better in the world than this?

FAUST.

In introducing us, do you assume  
 The character of wizard or of devil?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In truth, I generally go about  
 In strict incognito; and yet one likes  
 To wear one's orders upon gala days.  
 I have no ribbon at my knee; but here  
 At home, the cloven foot is honourable.  
 See you that snail there?—she comes creeping up,  
 And with her feeling eyes hath smelt out something,  
 I could not, if I would, mask myself here.  
 Come now, we'll go about from fire to fire:  
 I'll be the pimp, and you shall be the lover.

*[To some Old Women, who are sitting round a heap  
 of glimmering coals.]*

Old gentlewomen, what do you do out here?  
 You ought to be with the young rioters  
 Right in the thickest of the revelry—  
 But every one is best content at home.

## GENERAL.

Who dare confide in right or a just claim?  
 So much as I had done for them! and now—  
 With women and the people 'tis the same,  
 Youth will stand foremost ever,—age may go  
 To the dark grave unhonoured.

## MINISTER.

Now-a-days  
 People assert their rights: they go too far;  
 But as for me, the good old times I praise;  
 Then we were all in all, 'twas something worth  
 One's while to be in place and wear a star;  
 That was indeed the golden age on earth.

## PARVENU.\*

We too are active, and we did and do  
 What we ought not, perhaps; and yet we now  
 Will seize, whilst all things are whirled round and round,  
 A spoke of Fortune's wheel, and keep our ground.

## AUTHOR.

Who now can taste a treatise of deep sense  
 And ponderous volume? 'tis impertinence  
 To write what none will read, therefore will I  
 To please the young and thoughtless people try.

## MEPHISTOPHELES

*(Who at once appears to have grown very old).*

I find the people ripe for the last day,  
 Since I last came up to the wizard mountain;  
 And as my little cask runs turbid now,  
 So is the world drained to the dregs.

\* A sort of fundholder.

## PEDLAR-WITCH.

Look here,

Gentlemen ; do not hurry on so fast  
 And lose the chance of a good pennyworth.  
 I have a pack full of the choicest wares  
 Of every sort, and yet in all my bundle  
 Is nothing like what may be found on earth ;  
 Nothing that in a moment will make rich  
 Men and the world with fine malicious mischief—  
 There is no dagger drunk with blood ; no bowl  
 From which consuming poison may be drained  
 By innocent and healthy lips ; no jewel,  
 The price of an abandoned maiden's shame ;  
 No sword which cuts the bond it cannot loose,  
 Or stabs the wearer's enemy in the back ;  
 No——

## MEPHISTOPHELES.

Gossip, you know little of these times.  
 What has been, has been ; what is done, is past.  
 They shape themselves into the innovations  
 They breed, and innovation drags us with it.  
 The torrent of the crowd sweeps over us,  
 You think to impel, and are yourself impelled.

## FAUST.

Who is that yonder ?

## MEPHISTOPHELES.

Mark her well. It is

Lilith.

## FAUST.

Who ?

## MEPHISTOPHELES.

Lilith, the first wife of Adam.

Beware of her fair hair, for she excels  
 All women in the magic of her locks;  
 And when she winds them round a young man's neck,  
 She will not ever set him free again.

FAUST.

There sit a girl and an old woman—they  
 Seem to be tired with pleasure and with play.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

There is no rest to-night for any one:  
 When one dance ends another is begun;  
 Come, let us to it; We shall have rare fun.

*[Faust dances and sings with a Girl, and Mephistopheles with an Old Woman.]*

BROCTO-PHANTASMIST.

What is this cursed multitude about?  
 Have we not long since proved to demonstration  
 That ghosts move not on ordinary feet?  
 But these are dancing just like men and women.

THE GIRL.

What does he want then at our ball?

FAUST.

Oh! he

Is far above us all in his conceit:  
 Whilst we enjoy, he reasons of enjoyment;  
 And any step which in our dance we tread,  
 If it be left out of his reckoning.  
 Is not to be considered as a step.  
 There are few things that scandalize him not:  
 And when you whirl round in the circle now,  
 As he went round the wheel in his old mill,  
 He says that you go wrong in all respects,

Especially if you congratulate him  
Upon the strength of the resemblance.

BROCTO-PHANTASMIST.

Fly!

Vanish! Unheard of impudence! What, still there!  
In this enlightened age too, since you have been  
Proved not to exist!—But this infernal brood  
Will hear no reason and endure no rule.  
Are we so wise, and is the *pond* still haunted?  
How long have I been sweeping out this rubbish  
Of superstition, and the world will not  
Come clean with all my pains!—it is a case  
Unheard of!

THE GIRL.

Then leave off teasing us so.

BROCTO-PHANTASMIST.

I tell you, spirits, to your faces now,  
That I should not regret this despotism  
Of spirits, but that mine can wield it not.  
To-night I shall make poor work of it;  
Yet I will take a round with you, and hope  
Before my last step in the living dance  
To beat the poet and the devil together.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

At last he will sit down in some foul puddle;  
That is his way of solacing himself;  
Until some leech, diverted with his gravity,  
Cures him of spirits and the spirit together.

[*To FAUST, who has seceded from the dance.*

Why do you let that fair girl pass from you,  
Who sung so sweetly to you in the dance?

FAUST.

A red mouse in the middle of her singing  
Sprung from her mouth.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That was all right, my friend,  
Be it enough that the mouse was not grey.  
Do not disturb your hour of happiness  
With close consideration of such trifles.

FAUST.

Then saw I——

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What?

FAUST.

Seest thou not a pale  
Fair girl, standing alone, far, far away?  
She drags herself now forward with slow steps,  
And seems as if she moved with shackled feet:  
I cannot overcome the thought that she  
Is like poor Margaret.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Let it be—pass on—  
No good can come of it—it is not well  
To meet it—it is an enchanted phantom,  
A lifeless idol; with its numbing look,  
It freezes up the blood of man; and they  
Who meet its ghastly stare are turned to stone,  
Like those who saw Medusa.

FAUST.

Oh, too true!  
Her eyes are like the eyes of a fresh corpse  
Which no beloved hand has closed, alas!  
That is the heart which Margaret yielded to me—  
Those are the lovely limbs which I enjoyed!

## MEPHISTOPHELES.

It is all magic, poor deluded fool ;  
She looks to every one like his first love.

## FAUST.

Oh, what delight! what woe! I cannot turn  
My looks from her sweet piteous countenance.  
How strangely does a single blood-red line,  
Not broader than the sharp edge of a knife,  
Adorn her lovely neck!

## MEPHISTOPHELES.

Aye, she can carry  
Her head under her arm upon occasion ;  
Perseus has cut it off for her. These pleasures  
End in delusion.—Gain this rising ground,  
It is as airy here as in a [                    ]  
And if I am not mightily deceived,  
I see a theatre—What may this mean ?

## ATTENDANT.

Quite a new piece, the last of seven, for 'tis  
The custom now to represent that number.  
'Tis written by a Dilettante, and  
The actors who perform are Dilettanti ;  
Excuse me, gentleman ; but I must vanish,  
I am a Dilettante curtain-lifter.

THE END.

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