

—Oh, there's our poet seated at his side,
 Beloved of ladies, soft, cerulean-eyed.
 Poets are prosy in their common talk,
 As the fast trotters, for the most part, walk.

—And there's our well-dressed gentleman, who sits,
 By right divine, no doubt, among the wits,
 Who airs his tailor's patterns when he walks,
 The man that often speaks, but never talks.
 Why should he talk, whose presence lends a grace
 To every table where he shows his face?
 He knows the manual of the silver fork,
 Can name his claret—if he sees the cork,—
 Remark that "White-top" was considered fine,
 But swear the "Juno" is the better wine;—
 Is not this talking? Ask Quintilian's rules;
 If they say No, the town has many fools.

—Pause for a moment,—for our eyes behold
 The plain unsceptred king, the man of gold,
 The thrice illustrious threefold millionaire;
 Mark his slow-creeping, dead, metallic stare;
 His eyes, dull glimmering, like the balance-pan
 That weighs its guinea as he weighs his man.

—Who's next? An artist, in a satin tie
 Whose ample folds defeat the curious eye.

—And there's the cousin,—must be asked, you
 know,—
 Looks like a spinster at a baby-show.
 Hope he is cool,—they set him next the door,—
 And likes his place, between the gap and bore.

—Next comes a Congress-man, distinguished guest!
 We don't count him,—they asked him with the rest;
 And then some white cravats, with well-shaped ties,
 And heads above them which their owners prize.

Of all that cluster round the genial board,
 Not one so radiant as the banquet's lord ;
 Some say they fancy, but they know not why,
 A shade of trouble brooding in his eye ;
 Nothing, perhaps—the rooms are overhot,—
 Yet see his cheek,—the dull-red burning spot,—
 Taste the brown sherry which he does not pass,—
 Ha ! that is brandy ; see him fill his glass !

But not forgetful of his feasting friends,
 To each in turn some lively word he sends ;
 See how he throws his baited lines about,
 And plays his men as anglers play their trout.

With the dry sticks all bonfires are begun ;
 Bring the first faggot, proser number one !
 A question drops among the listening crew
 And hits the traveller, pat on Timbuctoo.
 We're on the Niger, somewhere near its source,—
 Not the least hurry, take the river's course
 Through Kissi, Foota, Kankan, Bammakoo,
 Bambarra, Segou, so to Timbuctoo,
 Thence down to Youri ;—stop him if we can,
 We can't fare worse,—wake up the Congress-man !
 The Congress-man, once on his talking legs,
 Stirs up his knowledge to its thickest dregs ;
 Tremendous draught for dining men to quaff !
 Nothing will choke him but a purpling laugh,
 A word,—a shout,—a mighty roar,—'tis done ;
 Extinguished ; lassoed by a treacherous pun.

A laugh is priming to the loaded soul ;
 The scattering shots become a steady roll,
 Broke by sharp cracks that run along the line,
 The light artillery of the talker's wine.

The kindling goblets flame with golden dews,
 The hoarded flasks their tawny fire diffuse,
 And the Rhine's breast-milk gushes cold and bright,
 Pale as the moon and maddening as her light ;
 With crimson juice the thirsty southern sky
 Sucks from the hills where buried armies lie,
 So that the dreamy passion it imparts
 Is drawn from heroes' bones and lovers' hearts.

But lulls will come ; the flashing soul transmits
 Its gleams of light in alternating fits.
 The shower of talk that rattled down amain
 Ends in small patterings like an April's rain ;
 The voices halt ; the game is at a stand ;
 Now for a solo from the master-hand !

'Tis but a story,—quite a simple thing,—
 An *aria* touched upon a single string,
 But every accent comes with such a grace
 The stupid servants listen in their place,
 Each with his waiter in his lifted hands,
 Still as a well-bred pointer when he stands.
 A query checks him : " Is he quite exact ?"—
 (This from a grizzled, square-jawed man of fact.)
 The sparkling story leaves him to his fate,
 Crushed by a witness, smothered with a date,
 As a swift river, sown with many a star,
 Runs brighter, rippling on a shallow bar.
 The smooth divine suggests a graver doubt ;
 A neat quotation bowls the parson out ;
 Then, sliding gaily from his own display,
 He laughs the learned dulness all away.
 So, with the merry tale and jovial song,
 The jocund evening whirls itself along,

Till the last chorus shrieks its loud *encore*,
And the white neckcloths vanish through the door.

One savage word!—The menials know its tone,
And slink away; the master stands alone.
“Well played, by —;” breathe not what were
best unheard;

His goblet shivers while he speaks the word,—
“If wine tells truth,—and so have said the wise,—
It makes me laugh to think how brandy lies!
Bankrupt to-morrow,—millionaire to-day—
The farce is over,—now begins the play!”

The spring he touches lets a panel glide;
An iron closet lurks beneath the slide,
Bright with such treasures as a search might bring
From the deep pockets of a truant king.
Two diamonds, eyeballs of a god of bronze,
Bought from his faithful priest, a pious Bonze;
A string of brilliants; rubies, three or four;
Bags of old coin and bars of virgin ore;
A jewelled poniard and a Turkish knife,
Noiseless and useful if we come to strife.

Gone! as a pirate flies before the wind,
And not one tear for all he leaves behind!
From all the love his better years have known
Fled like a felon,—ah! but not alone!
The chariot flashes through a lantern's glare,—
Oh the wild eyes! the storm of sable hair!
Still to his side the broken heart will cling,—
The bride of shame, the wife without the ring:
Hark, the deep oath,—the wail of frenzied woe,—
Lost! lost to hope of Heaven and peace below!

He kept his secret ; but the seed of crime
 Burst of itself in God's appointed time.
 The lives he wrecked were scattered far and wide ;
 One never blamed nor wept,—she only died.
 None knew his lot, though idle tongues would say
 He sought a lonely refuge far away,
 And there, with borrowed name and altered mien,
 He died unheeded, as he lived unseen.
 The moral market had the usual chills
 Of Virtue suffering from protested bills ;
 The White Cravats, to friendship's memory true,
 Sighed for the past, surveyed the future too ;
 Their sorrow breathed in one expressive line,—
 "Gave pleasant dinners ; who has got his wine?"

THE MYSTERIOUS ILLNESS.

WHAT ailed young Lucius? Art had vainly tried
 To guess his ill, and found herself defied.
 The Augur plied his legendary skill ;
 Useless ; the fair young Roman languished still.
 His chariot took him every cloudless day
 Along the Pincian Hill or Appian Way ;
 They rubbed his wasted limbs with sulphurous oil,
 Oozed from the far-off Orient's heated soil ;
 They led him tottering down the steamy path
 Where bubbling fountains filled the thermal bath ;
 Borne in his litter to Egeria's cave,
 They washed him, shivering, in her icy wave.

They sought all curious herbs and costly stones,
 They scraped the moss that grew on dead men's
 bones,

They tried all cures the votive tablets taught,
 Scoured every place whence healing drugs were
 brought,

O'er Thracian hills his breathless couriers ran,
 His slaves waylaid the Syrian caravan.

At last a servant heard a stranger speak
 A new churgeon's name ; a clever Greek,
 Skilled in his art ; from Pergamus he came
 To Rome but lately ; GALEN was the name.
 The Greek was called ; a man with piercing eyes,
 Who must be cunning, and who might be wise.

He spoke but little,—if they pleased, he said,
 He'd wait awhile beside the sufferer's bed.
 So by his side he sat, serene and calm,
 His very accents soft as healing balm ;
 Not curious seemed, but every movement spied,
 His sharp eyes searching where they seemed to
 glide ;

Asked a few questions,—what he felt, and where ?

“A pain just here,” “A constant beating there.”

Who ordered bathing for his aches and ails ?

“Charmis, the water-doctor from Marseilles.”

What was the last prescription in his case ?

“A draught of wine with powdered chrysoprase.”

Had he no secret grief he nursed alone ?

A pause ; a little tremor ; answer,—“None.”

Thoughtful, a moment, sat the cunning leech,

And muttered “Eros !” in his native speech.

In the broad atrium various friends await

The last new utterance from the lips of fate ;

Men, matrons, maids, they talk the question o'er,
 And, restless, pace the tessellated floor.
 Not unobserved the youth so long had pined
 By gentle-hearted dames and damsels kind ;
 One with the rest, a rich Patrician's pride,
 The lady Hermia, called "the golden-eyed ;"
 The same the old Proconsul fain must woo,
 Whom, one dark night, a masked sicarius slew ;
 The same black Crassus over roughly pressed
 To hear his suit,—the Tiber knows the rest,
 (Crassus was missed next morning by his set ;
 Next week the fishers found him in their net.)
 She with the others paced the ample hall,
 Fairest, alas ! and saddest of them all.

At length the Greek declared, with puzzled face,
 Some strange enchantment mingled in the case,
 And naught would serve to act as counter-charm
 Save a warm bracelet from a maiden's arm.
 Not every maiden's,—many might be tried ;
 Which not in vain, experience must decide.
 Were there no damsels willing to attend
 And do such service for a suffering friend ?

The message passed among the waiting crowd,
 First in a whisper, then proclaimed aloud.
 Some wore no jewels ; some were disinclined,
 For reasons better guessed at than defined ;
 Though all were saints,—at least professed to be,—
 The list all counted, there were named but three.

The leech, still seated by the patient's side,
 Held his thin wrist, and watched him, eagle-eyed.

Aurelia first, a fair-haired Tuscan girl,
 Slipped off her golden asp, with eyes of pearl.

His solemn head the grave physician shook ;
The waxen features thanked her with a look.

Olympia next, a creature half divine,
Sprung from the blood of old Evander's line,
Held her white arm, that wore a twisted chain
Clasped with an opal-sheeny cymophane.
In vain, O daughter ! said the baffled Greek,
'The patient sighed the thanks he could not speak.

Last, Hermia entered ; look, that sudden start !
The pallium heaves above his leaping heart ;
The beating pulse, the cheek's rekindled flame,
Those quivering lips, the secret all proclaim.
The deep disease long throbbing in the breast,
The dread enchantment, all at once confessed !
The case was plain ; the treatment was begun ;
And Love soon cured the mischief he had done.

Young Love, too oft thy treacherous bandage
slips

Down from the eyes it blinded to the lips !
Ask not the Gods, O youth, for clearer sight,
But the bold heart to plead thy cause aright.
And thou, fair maiden, when thy lovers sigh,
Suspect thy flattering ear, but trust thine eye ;
And learn this secret from the tale of old :
No love so true as love that dies untold.



A MOTHER'S SECRET.

How sweet the sacred legend—if unblamed
In my slight verse such holy things are named—
Of Mary's secret hours of hidden joy,
Silent, but pondering on her wondrous Boy !

Ave, Maria! Pardon, if I wrong
Those heavenly words that shame my earthly song!

The choral host had closed the Angel's strain
Sung to the listening watch on Bethlehem's plain,
And now the shepherds, hastening on their way,
Sought the still hamlet where the Infant lay.
They passed the fields that gleaning Ruth toiled
o'er,—

They saw afar the ruined threshing-floor
Where Moab's daughter, homeless and forlorn,
Found Boaz slumbering by his heaps of corn;
And some remembered how the holy scribe,
Skilled in the lore of every jealous tribe,
Traced the warm blood of Jesse's royal son
To that fair alien, bravely wooed and won.
So fared they on to seek the promised sign,

That marked the anointed heir of David's line.

At last, by forms of earthly semblance led,

They found the crowded inn, the oxen's shed.

No pomp was there, no glory shone around

On the coarse straw that strewed the reeking
ground;

One dim retreat a flickering torch betrayed,—

In that poor cell the Lord of Life was laid!

The wondering shepherds told their breathless
tale

Of the bright choir that woke the sleeping vale;

Told how the skies with sudden glory flamed,

Told how the shining multitude proclaimed,

"Joy, joy to earth! Behold the hallowed morn!

In David's city Christ the Lord is born!

'Glory to God!' let angels shout on high,

'Good-will to men!' the listening earth reply!"

They spoke with hurried words and accents
 wild ;
 Calm in His cradle slept the heavenly Child.
 No trembling word the mother's joy revealed,—
 One sigh of rapture, and her lips were sealed ;
 Unmoved she saw the rustic train depart,
 But kept their words to ponder in her heart.

Twelve years had passed ; the Boy was fair and
 tall,
 Growing in wisdom, finding grace with all.
 The maids of Nazareth, as they trooped to fill
 Their balanced urns beside the mountain rill,
 The gathered matrons, as they sat and spun,
 Spoke in soft words of Joseph's quiet Son.
 No voice had reached the Galilean vale
 Of star-led kings, or awe-struck shepherds' tale ;
 In the meek, studious Child they only saw
 The future Rabbi, learned in Israel's law.
 So grew the Boy, and now the feast was near
 When at the Holy Place the tribes appear.
 Scarce had the home-bred Child of Nazareth seen
 Beyond the hills that girt the village green ;
 Save when at midnight, o'er the starlight sands,
 Snatched from the steel of Herod's murdering bands,
 A Babe, close folded to His mother's breast,
 Through Edom's wilds He sought the sheltering
 West.

Then Joseph spake : "Thy Boy hath largely
 grown ;
 Weave Him fine raiment, fitting to be shown ;
 Fair robes beseem the pilgrim, as the priest :
 Goes He not with us to the holy feast ?"

And Mary culled the flaxen fibres white;
 Till eve she spun; she spun till morning light.
 The thread was twined; its parting meshes through
 From hand to hand her restless shuttle flew,
 Till the full web was wound upon the beam;
 Love's curious toil,—a vest without a seam!

They reach the Holy Place, fulfil the days
 To solemn feasting given, and grateful praise.
 At last they turn, and far Moriah's height
 Melts in the southern sky and fades from sight.
 All day the dusky caravan has flowed
 In devious trails along the winding road;
 (For many a step their homeward path attends,
 And all the sons of Abraham are as friends.)
 Evening has come,—the hour of rest and joy,—
 Hush! hush! That whisper,—“Where is Mary's
 Boy?”

Oh weary hour! oh aching days that passed
 Filled with strange fears each wilder than the last,—
 The soldier's lance, the fierce centurion's sword,
 The crushing wheels that whirl some Roman lord,
 The midnight crypt that sucks the captive's breath,
 The blistering sun on Hinnom's vale of death!

Thrice on His cheek had rained the morning
 light;
 Thrice on His lips the mildewed kiss of night,
 Crouched by a sheltering column's shining plinth,
 Or stretched beneath the odorous terebinth.
 At last, in desperate mood, they sought once more
 The Temple's porches, searched in vain before;
 They found Him seated with the ancient men,—
 The grim old rufflers of the tongue and pen,—

Their bald heads glistening as they clustered near,
 Their gray beards slanting as they turned to hear,
 Lost in half-jealous wonder and surprise
 That lips so fresh should utter words so wise.

And Mary said,—as one who, tried too long,
 Tells all her grief and half her sense of wrong,—
 “What is this thoughtless thing which Thou hast
 done?

Lo, we have sought Thee sorrowing, O my son !”

Few words He spake, and scarce of filial tone,
 Strange words, their sense a mystery yet unknown;
 Then turned with them and left the holy hill,
 To all their mild commands obedient still.

The tale was told to Nazareth's sober men,
 And Nazareth's matrons told it oft again ;
 The maids retold it at the fountain's side,
 The youthful shepherds doubted or denied ;
 It passed around among the listening friends,
 With all that fancy adds and fiction lends,
 Till newer marvels dimmed the young renown
 Of Joseph's Son, who talked the Rabbis down.

But Mary, faithful to its lightest word,
 Kept in her heart the sayings she had heard,
 Till the dread morning rent the Temple's veil,
 And shuddering earth confirmed the wondrous tale.

Youth fades ; love droops ; the leaves of friendship
 fall :

A mother's secret hope outlives them all.



THE DISAPPOINTED STATESMAN.

WHO of all statesmen is his country's pride,
 Her councils' prompter and her leaders' guide?
 He speaks ; the nation holds its breath to hear ;
 He nods, and shakes the sunset hemisphere.
 Born where the primal fount of Nature springs
 By the rude cradles of her throneless kings,
 In his proud eye her royal signet flames,
 By his own lips her Monarch she proclaims.

Why name his countless triumphs, whom to meet
 Is to be famous, envied in defeat ?

'The keen debaters, trained to brawls and strife,
 Who fire one shot, and finish with the knife,
 'Tried him but once, and, cowering in their shame,
 Ground their hacked blades to strike at meaner game.'
 'The lordly chief, his party's central stay,
 Whose lightest word a hundred votes obey,
 Found a new listener seated at his side,
 Looked in his eye, and felt himself defied,
 Flung his rash gauntlet on the startled floor,
 Met the all-conquering, fought—and ruled no more.

See where he moves, what eager crowds attend !
 What shouts of thronging multitudes ascend !
 If this is life,—to mark with every hour
 The purple deepening in his robes of power,
 To see the painted fruits of honour fall
 Thick at his feet, and choose among them all,
 To hear the sounds that shape his spreading name
 Peal through the myriad organ-stops of fame,
 Stamp the lone isle that spots the seaman's chart,
 And crown the pillared glory of the mart,

To count as peers the few supremely wise
 Who mark their planet in the angels' eyes,—
 If this is life—

What savage man is he
 Who strides along beside the sounding sea ?
 Alone he wanders by the murmuring shore,
 His thoughts as restless as the waves that roar ;
 Looks on the sullen sky as stormy-browed
 As on the waves yon tempest-brooding cloud,
 Heaves from his aching breast a wailing sigh,
 Sad as the gust that sweeps the clouded sky.
 Ask him his griefs ; what midnight demons plough
 The lines of torture on his lofty brow ;
 Unlock those marble lips, and bid them speak
 The mystery freezing in his bloodless cheek.

His secret ? hid beneath a flimsy word ;
 One foolish whisper that ambition heard ;
 And thus it spake : " Behold yon gilded chair,
 The world's one vacant throne,—thy place is there !"

Ah, fatal dream ! what warning spectres meet
 In ghastly circle round its shadowy seat !
 Yet still the Tempter murmurs in his ear
 The maddening taunt he cannot choose but hear :
 " Meanest of slaves, by gods and men accurst,
 He who is second when he might be first !
 Climb with bold front the ladder's topmost round,
 Or chain thy creeping footsteps to the ground !"

Illustrious Dupe ! have those majestic eyes
 Lost their proud fire for such a vulgar prize ?
 Art thou the last of all mankind to know
 That party-fights are won by aiming low ?
 Thou, stamped by Nature with her royal sign,
 That party-hirelings hate a look like thine ?

Shake from thy sense the wild delusive dream !
 Without the purple, art thou not supreme ?
 And soothed by love unbought, thy heart shall own
 A nation's homage nobler than its throne !

—♦—

THE SECRET OF THE STARS.

Is man's the only throbbing heart that hides
 The silent spring that feeds its whispering tides ?
 Speak from thy caverns, mystery-breeding Earth,
 Tell the half-hinted story of thy birth,
 And calm the noisy champions who have thrown
 The book of types against the book of stone !

Have ye not secrets, ye refulgent spheres,
 No sleepless listener of the starlight hears ?
 In vain the sweeping equatorial pries
 Through every world-sown corner of the skies,
 To the far orb that so remotely strays
 Our midnight darkness is its noonday blaze ;
 In vain the climbing soul of creeping man
 Metes out the heavenly concave with a span,
 Tracks into space the long-lost meteor's trail,
 And weighs an unseen planet in the scale ;
 Still o'er their doubts the wan-eyed watchers sigh,
 And Science lifts her still unanswered cry :
 " Are all these worlds, that speed their circling flight
 Dumb, vacant, soulless, —baubles of the night ?
 Warmed with God's smile and wafted by His breath,
 To weave in ceaseless round the dance of Death ?
 Or rolls a sphere in each expanding zone,
 Crowned with a life as varied as our own ? "

Maker of earth and stars ! If Thou hast taught
By what Thy voice hath spoke, Thy hand hath
wrought,

By all that Science proves, or guesses true,
More than Thy Poet dreamed, Thy prophet knew,—
The heavens still bow in darkness at Thy feet,
And shadows veil Thy cloud-pavilioned seat !

Not for ourselves we ask Thee to reveal
One awful word beneath the future's seal ;
What Thou shalt tell us, grant us strength to
bear :

What Thou withholdest is Thy single care.
Not for ourselves ; the present clings too fast,
Moored to the mighty anchors of the past ;
But when, with angry snap, some cable parts,
The sound re-echoing in our startled hearts,—
When through the wall that clasps the harbour
round,

And shuts the raving ocean from its bound,
Shattered and rent by sacrilegious hands,
The first mad billow leaps upon the sands,—
Then to the Future's awful page we turn,
And what we question hardly dare to learn.

Still let us hope ! for while we seem to tread
The time-worn pathway of the nations dead,
Though Sparta laughs at all our warlike deeds,
And buried Athens claims our stolen creeds,
Though Rome, a spectre on her broken throne,
Beholds our eagle and recalls her own,
Though England fling her pennons on the breeze
And reign before us Mistress of the seas,—
While calm-eyed History tracks us circling round
Fate's iron pillar where they all were bound,

She sees new beacons crowned with brighter
flame

Than the old watch-fires, like, but not the same !

Still in our path a larger curve she finds,

The spiral widening as the chain unwinds !

No shameless haste shall spot with bandit-crime

Our destined empire snatched before its time.

Wait,—wait, undoubting, for the winds have
caught

From our bold speech the heritage of thought ;

No marble form that sculptured truth can wear

Vies with the image shaped in viewless air ;

And thought unfettered grows through speech to
deeds,

As the broad forest marches in its seeds.

What though we perish ere the day is won ?

Enough to see its glorious work begun !

The thistle falls before a trampling clown,

But who can chain the flying thistle-down ?

Wait while the fiery seeds of freedom fly,

The prairie blazes when the grass is dry !

What arms might ravish, leave to peaceful arts,

Wisdom and love shall win the roughest hearts ;

So shall the angel who has closed for man

The blissful garden since his woes began .

Swing wide the golden portals of the West,

And Eden's secret stand at length confessed !



A POEM.

DEDICATION OF THE PITTSFIELD CEMETERY,
SEPTEMBER 9, 1850.

ANGEL of Death! extend thy silent reign!
Stretch thy dark sceptre o'er this new domain!
No sable car along the winding road
Has borne to earth its unresisting load;
No sudden mound has risen yet to show
Where the pale slumberer folds his arms below;
No marble gleams to bid his memory live
In the brief lines that hurrying Time can give;
Yet, O Destroyer! from thy shrouded throne
Look on our gift; this realm is all thine own!

Fair is the scene; its sweetness oft beguiled
From their dim paths the children of the wild;
The dark-haired maiden loved its grassy dells,
The feathered warrior claimed its wooded swells,
Still on its slopes the ploughman's ridges show
The pointed flints that left his fatal bow,
Chipped with rough art and slow barbarian toil,—
Last of his wrecks that strew the alien soil!

Here spread the fields that heaped their ripened
store

Till the brown arms of Labour held no more;
The scythe's broad meadow with its dusky blush;
The sickle's harvest with its velvet flush;
The green-haired maize, her silken tresses laid,
In soft luxuriance, on her harsh brocade;
The gourd that swells beneath her tossing plume;
The coarser wheat that rolls in lakes of bloom,—

Its coral stems and milk-white flowers alive
With the wide murmurs of the scattered hive ;
Here glowed the apple with the pencilled streak
Of morning painted on its southern cheek ;
The pear's long necklace strung with golden drops,
Arched, like the banian, o'er its pillared props ;
Here crept the growths that paid the labourer's
care

With the cheap luxuries wealth consents to spare ;
Here sprang the healing herbs which could not save
The hand that reared them from the neighbouring
grave.

Yet all its varied charms, for ever free
From task and tribute, Labour yields to thee :
No more, when April sheds her fitful rain,
The sower's hand shall cast its flying grain ;
No more, when Autumn strews the flaming leaves,
The reaper's band shall gird its yellow sheaves ;
For thee alike the circling seasons flow
Till the first blossoms heave the latest snow.
In the stiff clod below the whirling drifts,
In the loose soil the springing herbage lifts,
In the hot dust beneath the parching weeds,
Life's withering flower shall drop its shrivelled
seeds ;

Its germ entranced in thy unbreathing sleep
Till what thou sowest mightier angels reap !
Spirit of Beauty ! let thy graces blend
With loveliest Nature all that Art can lend.
Come from the bowers where Summer's life-blood
flows

Through the red lips of June's half-open rose,

Dressed in bright hues, the loving sunshine's
dower ;

For tranquil Nature owns no mourning flower.

Come from the forest where the beech's screen
Bars the fierce noonbeam with its flakes of green ;
Stay the rude axe that bares the shadowy plains,
Stanch the deep wound that dries the maple's
veins.

Come with the stream whose silver-braided rills
Fling their unclasping bracelets from the hills,
Till in one gleam, beneath the forest's wings,
Melts the white glitter of a hundred springs.

Come from the steeps where look majestic forth
From their twin thrones the Giants of the North
On the huge shapes, that, crouching at their knees,
Stretch their broad shoulders, rough with shaggy
trees.

Through the wide waste of ether, not in vain,
Their softened gaze shall reach our distant plain ;
There, while the mourner turns his aching eyes
On the blue mounds that print the bluer skies,
Nature shall whisper that the fading view
Of mightiest grief may wear a heavenly hue.

Cherub of Wisdom ! let thy marble page
Leave its sad lesson, new to every age ;
Teach us to live, not grudging every breath
To the chill winds that waft us on to death,
But ruling calmly every pulse it warms,
And tempering gently every word it forms.
Seraph of Love ! in heaven's adoring zone,
Nearest of all around the central throne,

While with soft hands the pillowed turf we spread
That soon shall hold us in its dreamless bed,
With the low whisper,—Who shall first be laid
In the dark chamber's yet unbroken shade?—
Let thy sweet radiance shine rekindled here,
And all we cherish grow more truly dear.
Here in the gates of Death's o'erchanging vault,
Oh, teach us kindness for our brother's fault ;
Lay all our wrongs beneath this peaceful sod,
And lead our hearts to Mercy and its God.

FATHER of all ! in Death's relentless claim
We read Thy mercy by its sterner name ;
In the bright flower that decks the solemn bier,
We see Thy glory in its narrowed sphere ;
In the deep lessons that affliction draws,
We trace the curves of Thy encircling laws ;
In the long sigh that sets our spirits free,
We own the love that calls us back to Thee !
Through the hushed street, along the silent plain,
The spectral future leads its mourning train,
Dark with the shadows of uncounted bands,
Where man's white lips and woman's wringing hands
Track the still burden, rolling slow before,
That love and kindness can protect no more ;
The smiling babe that, called to mortal strife,
Shuts its meek eyes and drops its little life ;
The drooping child who prays in vain to live,
And pleads for help its parent cannot give ;
The pride of beauty stricken in its flower ;
The strength of manhood broken in an hour ;
Age in its weakness, bowed by toil and care,
Traced in sad lines beneath its silvered hair.

The sun shall set, and heaven's resplendent spheres
 Gild the smooth turf unhallowed yet by tears,
 But ah! how soon the evening stars will shed
 Their sleepless light around the slumbering dead!

Take them, O Father, in immortal trust!
 Ashes to ashes, dust to kindred dust,
 Till the last angel rolls the stone away,
 And a new morning brings eternal day!



TO GOVERNOR SWAIN.

DEAR GOVERNOR, if my skiff might brave
 The winds that lift the ocean wave,
 The mountain stream that loops and swerves
 Through my broad meadow's channelled curves
 Should waft me on from bound to bound
 To where the River weds the Sound,
 The Sound should give me to the Sea,
 That to the Bay, the Bay to thee.

It may not be; too long the track
 To follow down or struggle back.
 The sun has set on fair Naushon
 Long ere my western blaze is gone;
 The ocean disc is rolling dark
 In shadows round your swinging bark,
 While yet the yellow sunset fills
 The stream that scarfs my spruce-clad hills;

The day-star wakes your island deer
 Long ere my barnyard chanticleer ;
 Your mists are soaring in the blue
 While mine are sparks of glittering dew.
 It may not be ; oh would it might,
 Could I live o'er that glowing night !
 What golden hours would come to life,
 What goodly feats of peaceful strife,—
 Such jests, that, drained of every joke,
 The very bank of language broke,—
 Such deeds, that Laughter nearly died
 With stitches in his belted side ;
 While Time, caught fast in pleasure's chain,
 His double goblet snapped in twain,
 And stood with half in either hand,—
 Both brimming full,—but not of sand !

It may not be ; I strive in vain
 To break my slender household chain,—
 Three pairs of little clasping hands,
 One voice, that whispers, not commands.
 Even while my spirit flies away,
 My gentle jailers murmur nay ;
 All shapes of elemental wrath
 They raise along my threatened path ;
 The storm grows black, the waters rise,
 The mountains mingle with the skies,
 The mad tornado scoops the ground,
 The midnight robber prowls around,—
 Thus, kissing every limb they tie,
 They draw a knot and heave a sigh.
 Till, fairly netted in the toil,
 My feet are rooted to the soil,

Only the soaring wish is free!—
 And that, dear Governor, flies to thee!

Pittsfield, 1851.



TO AN ENGLISH FRIEND.

THE seed that wasteful autumn cast
 To waver on its stormy blast,
 Long o'er the wintry desert tost,
 Its living germ has never lost.
 Dropped by the weary tempest's wing,
 It feels the kindling ray of spring,
 And starting from its dream of death,
 Pours on the air its perfumed breath.

So, parted by the rolling flood,
 The love that springs from common blood
 Needs but a single sunlit hour
 Of mingling smiles to bud and flower;
 Unharmed its slumbering life has flown,
 From shore to shore, from zone to zone,
 Where summer's falling roses stain
 The tepid waves of Pontchartrain,
 Or where the lichen creeps below
 Katahdin's wreaths of whirling snow,

Though fiery sun and stiffening cold
 May change the fair ancestral mould,
 No winter chills, no summer drains
 The life-blood drawn from English veins,

Still bearing wheresoe'er it flows
The love that with its fountain rose,
Unchanged by space, unwronged by time,
From age to age, from clime to clime !

1852.



P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSERVATORÍA DE CULTURA



P O E M S

FROM THE

*AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST
TABLE.—1857-1858.*



THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS.

THIS is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming
hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl ;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl !
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed !

Year after year beheld the silent toil
 That spread his lustrous coil ;
 Still, as the spiral grew,
 He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
 Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
 Built up its idle door,
 Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old
 no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by
 thee,
 Child of the wandering sea,
 Cast from her lap, forlorn !
 From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
 Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn !
 While on mine ear it rings,
 Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice
 that sings :—
 Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
 As the swift seasons roll !
 Leave thy low-vaulted past !
 Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
 Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
 Till thou at length art free,
 Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting
 sea !

—♦—

SUN AND SHADOW.

As I look from the isle, o'er its billows of green,
 To the billows of foam-crested blue,
 Yon bark, that afar in the distance is seen,
 Half dreaming, my eyes will pursue :

Now dark in the shadow, she scatters the spray
 As the chaff in the stroke of the flail ;
 Now white as the sea-gull, she flies on her way,
 The sun gleaming bright on her sail.

Yet her pilot is thinking of dangers to shun,—
 Of breakers that whiten and roar ;
 How little he cares, if in shadow or sun
 They see him who gaze from the shore !
 He looks to the beacon that looms from the reef,
 To the rock that is under his lee,
 As he drifts on the blast, like a wind-wafted leaf,
 O'er the gulfs of the desolate sea.

Thus drifting afar to the dim-vaulted caves
 Where life and its ventures are laid,
 The dreamers who gaze while we battle the waves
 May see us in sunshine or shade ;
 Yet true to our course, though the shadows grow
 dark,
 We'll trim our broad sail as before,
 And stand by the rudder that governs the bark,
 Nor ask how we look from the shore !



THE TWO ARMIES.

As Life's unending column pours,
 Two marshalled hosts are seen,—
 Two armies on the trampled shores
 That Death flows black between.

One marches to the drum-beat's roll,
 The wide-mouthed clarion's bray,
 And bears upon a crimson scroll,
 "Our glory is to slay."

One moves in silence by the stream,
 With sad, yet watchful eyes,
 Calm as the patient planet's gleam
 That walks the clouded skies.

Along its front no sabres shine,
 No blood-red pennons wave ;
 Its banner bears the single line,
 "Our duty is to save."

For those no death-bed's lingering shade ;
 At Honour's trumpet-call,
 With knitted brow and lifted blade
 In Glory's arms they fall.

For these no clashing falchions bright,
 No stirring battle-cry ;
 The bloodless stabber calls by night,—
 Each answers, "Here am I!"

For those the sculptor's laurelled bust,
 The builder's marble piles,
 The anthems pealing o'er their dust
 Through long cathedral aisles.

For these the blossom-sprinkled turf
 That floods the lonely graves
 When Spring rolls in her sea-green surf
 In flowery-foaming waves.

Two paths lead upward from below,
 And angels wait above,
 Who count each burning life-drop's flow,
 Each falling tear of Love.

Though from the Hero's bleeding breast
 Her pulses Freedom drew,
 Though the white lilies in her crest
 Sprang from that scarlet dew,—

While Valour's haughty champions wait
 Till all their scars are shown,
 Love walks unchallenged through the gate,
 To sit beside the Throne !



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OH my lost beauty !—hast thou folded quite
 Thy wings of morning light
 Beyond those iron gates
 Where Life crowds hurrying to the haggard
 Fates,
 And Age upon his mound of ashes waits
 To chill our fiery dreams,
 Hot from the heart of youth plunged in his icy
 streams?

Leave me not fading in these weeds of care,
 Whose flowers are silvered hair !
 Have I not loved thee long,
 Though my young lips have often done thee wrong,
 And vexed thy heaven-tuned ear with careless song?

Ah, wilt thou yet return,
Bearing thy rose-hued torch, and bid thine altar burn ?

Come to me !—I will flood thy silent shrine
With my soul's sacred wine,
And heap thy marble floors
As the wild spice-trees waste their fragrant stores,
In leafy islands walled with madrepores
And lapped in Orient seas,
When all their feathery palms toss, plume-like, in the
breeze.

Come to me !—thou shalt feed on honeyed words,
Sweeter than song of birds ;—
No wailing bulbul's throat,
No melting dulcimer's melodious note—
When o'er the midnight wave its murmurs float,
Thy ravished sense might soothe
With flow so liquid-soft, with strain so velvet-smooth.

Thou shalt be decked with jewels, like a queen,
Sought in those bowers of green
Where loop the clustered vines
And the close clinging *dulcamara*¹ twines,—
Pure pearls of Maydew where the moonlight shines,
And Summer's fruited gems,
And coral pendants shorn from Autumn's berried
stems.

Sit by me drifting on the sleepy waves,—
Or stretched by grass-grown graves,

¹ The "bitter-sweet" of New England is the *Celastrus scandens*,—"Bourreau des arbres" of the Canadian French.

Whose gray, high-shouldered stones,
 Carved with old names Life's time-worn roll dis-
 owns,
 Lean, lichen-spotted, o'er the crumbled bones
 Still slumbering where they lay
 While the sad pilgrim watched to scare the wolf
 away.

Spread o'er my couch thy visionary wing !
 Still let me dream and sing,—
 Dream of that winding shore
 Where scarlet cardinals bloom—for me no more,—
 The stream with heaven beneath its liquid floor,
 And clustering nenuphars
 Sprinkling its mirrored blue like golden-chaliced
 stars!

Come while their balms the linden-blossoms shed !—
 Come while the rose is red,—
 While blue-eyed Summer smiles
 On the green ripples round yon sunken piles
 Washed by the moon-wave warm from Indian isles,
 And on the sultry air
 The chestnuts spread their palms like holy men in
 prayer !

Oh for thy burning lips to fire my brain
 With thrills of wild, sweet pain !—
 On life's autumnal blast,
 Like shrivelled leaves, youth's passion-flowers are
 cast,—
 Once loving thee, we love thee to the last !—

Behold thy new-decked shrine,
 And hear once more the voice that breathed "For
 ever thine!"



A PARTING HEALTH.

TO J. L. MOTLEY.

YES, we knew we must lose him,—though friendship
 may claim

To blend her green leaves with the laurels of fame;
 Though fondly, at parting, we call him our own,
 'Tis the whisper of love when the bugle has blown.

As the rider that rests with the spur on his heel,
 As the guardsman that sleeps in his corslet of
 steel,

As the archer that stands with his shaft on the
 string,

He stoops from his toil to the garland we bring.

What pictures yet slumber unborn in his loom,
 Till their warriors shall breathe and their beauties
 shall bloom,

While the tapestry lengthens the life-glowing dyes
 That caught from our sunsets the stain of their
 skies!

In the alcoves of death, in the charnels of time,
 Where flit the gaunt spectres of passion and crime,
 There are triumphs untold, there are martyrs
 unsung,

There are heroes yet silent to speak with his tongue!

Let us hear the proud story which time has be-
queathed !

From lips that are warm with the freedom they
breathed !

Let him summon its tyrants, and tell us their
doom,

Though he sweep the black past like Van Tromp
with his broom !

The dream flashes by, for the west-winds awake
On pampas, on prairie, o'er mountain and lake,
To bathe the swift bark, like a sea-girdled shrine,
With incense they stole from the rose and the pine.

So fill a bright cup with the sunlight that gushed
When the dead summer's jewels were trampled and
crushed :

THE TRUE KNIGHT OF LEARNING,—the world
holds him dear,—

Love bless him, Joy crown him, God speed his
career !

1857.

WHAT WE ALL THINK.

THAT age was older once than now,
In spite of locks untimely shed,
Or silvered on the youthful brow ;
That babes make love and children wed.

That sunshine had a heavenly glow,
Which faded with those "good old days"

When winters came with deeper snow,
And autumns with a softer haze.

That—mother, sister, wife, or child—
The “best of women” each has known.
Were school-boys ever half so wild?
How young the grandpapas have grown!

That *but for this* our souls were free,
And *but for that* our lives were blest;
That in some season yet to be
Our cares will leave us time to rest.

Whene'er we groan with ache or pain,—
Some common ailment of the race,—
Though doctors think the matter plain,—
That ours is “a peculiar case.”

That when like babes with fingers burned
We count one bitter maxim more,
Our lesson all the world has learned,
And men are wiser than before.

That when we sob o'er fancied woes,
The angels hovering overhead
Count every pitying drop that flows,
And love us for the tears we shed.

That when we stand with tearless eye
And turn the beggar from our door,
They still approve us when we sigh,
“Ah, had I but *one thousand more!*”

Though temples crowd the crumbled brink
 O'erhanging truth's eternal flow,
 Their tablets bold with *what we think*,
 Their echoes dumb to *what we know* ;

That one unquestioned text we read,
 All doubt beyond, all fear above,
 Nor crackling pile nor cursing creed
 Can burn or blot it : GOD IS LOVE !



SPRING HAS COME.

INTRA MUROS.

THE sunbeams, lost for half a year,
 Slant through my pane their morning rays ;
 For dry northwesterners cold and clear,
 The east blows in its thin blue haze.

And first the snowdrop's bells are seen,
 Then close against the sheltering wall
 The tulip's horn of dusky green,
 The peony's dark unfolding ball.

The golden-chaliced crocus burns ;
 The long narcissus-blades appear ;
 The cone-beaked hyacinth returns
 To light her blue-flamed chandelier.

The willow's whistling lashes, wrung—
 By the wild winds of gusty March,
 With shallow leaflets lightly strung,
 Are swaying by the tufted larch.

The elms have robed their slender spray
With full-blown flower and embryo leaf ;
Wide o'er the clasping arch of day
Soars like a cloud their hoary chief.

See the proud tulip's flaunting cup,
That flames in glory for an hour,—
Behold it withering,—then look up,—
How meek the forest monarch's flower !

When wake the violets, Winter dies ;
When sprout the elm-buds, Spring is near ;
When lilacs blossom, Summer cries,
" Bud, little roses ! Spring is here ! "

The windows blush with fresh bouquets,
Cut with the May-dew on their lips ;
The radish all its bloom displays,
Pink as Aurora's finger-tips.

Nor less the flood of light that showers
On beauty's changed corolla-shades,—
The walks are gay as bridal bowers
With rows of many-petalled maids.

The scarlet shell-fish click and clash
In the blue barrow where they slide ;
The horseman, proud of streak and splash,
Creeps homeward from his morning ride.

Here comes the dealer's awkward string,
With neck in rope and tail in knot,—
Rough colts, with careless country-swing,
In lazy walk or slouching trot.

Wild filly from the mountain-side,
 Doomed to the close and chafing thills,
 Lend me thy long, untiring stride
 To seek with thee thy western hills!

I hear the whispering voice of Spring,
 The thrush's trill, the robin's cry,
 Like some poor bird with prisoned wing
 That sits and sings, but longs to fly.

Oh for one spot of living green,—
 One little spot where leaves can grow,—
 To love unblamed, to walk unseen,
 To dream above, to sleep below!



P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generali
 CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

PROLOGUE.

A PROLOGUE? Well, of course the ladies know;—
 I have my doubts. No matter,—here we go!
 What is a Prologue? Let our Tutor teach:
Pro means beforehand; *logos* stands for speech.
 'Tis like the harper's prelude on the strings,
 The prima donna's courtesy ere she sings:—
 Prologues in metre are to other *pros*,
 As worsted stockings are to engine-hose.
 "The world's a stage,"—as Shakespeare said, one
 day;
 The stage a world—was what he meant to say.
 The outside world's a blunder, that is clear;
 The real world that Nature meant is here.

Here every foundling finds its lost mamma ;
 Each rogue, repentant, melts his stern papa ;
 Misers relent, the spendthrift's debts are paid,
 The cheats are taken in the traps they laid ;
 One after one the troubles all are past
 Till the fifth act comes right side up at last,
 When the young couple, old folks, rogues, and all,
 Join hands, so happy at the curtain's fall.
 Here suffering virtue ever finds relief,
 And black-browed ruffians always come to grief.
 When the lorn damsel, with a frantic screech,
 And cheeks as hueless as a brandy-peach,
 Cries, "Help, kyind Heaven !" and drops upon her
 knees

On the green—baize,—beneath the (canvas) trees,—
 See to her side avenging Valour fly :—

"Ha ! Villain ! Draw ! Now, Terraitorr, yield or
 die !"

When the poor hero founders in despair,
 Some dear lost uncle turns up millionaire,
 Clasps the young scapegrace with paternal joy,
 Sobs on his neck, "*My boy!* MY BOY!! MY
 BOY!!!"

Ours, then, sweet friends, the real world to-night,
 Of love that conquers in disaster's spite.
 Ladies, attend ! while woful cares and doubt
 Wrong the soft passion in the world without,
 Though fortune scowl, though prudence interfere,
 One thing is certain : Love will triumph here !
 Lords of creation, whom your ladies rule,—
 The world's great masters, when you're out of
 school,—

Learn the brief moral of our evening's play :
 Man has his will,—but woman has her way !
 While man's dull spirit toils in smoke and fire,
 Woman's swift instinct threads the electric wire,—
 The magic bracelet stretched beneath the waves
 Beats the black giant with his score of slaves.
 All earthly powers confess your sovereign art
 But that one rebel,—woman's wilful heart.
 All foes you master, but a woman's wit
 Lets daylight through you ere you know you're
 hit.

So, just to picture what her art can do,
 Hear an old story, made as good as new.

Rudolph, professor of the headsman's trade,
 Alike was famous for his arm and blade.
 One day a prisoner Justice had to kill
 Knelt at the block to test the artist's skill.
 Bare-armed, swart-visaged, gaunt, and shaggy-
 browed,

Rudolph the headsman rose above the crowd.
 His falchion lighted with a sudden gleam,
 As the pike's armour flashes in the stream.
 He sheathed his blade ; he turned as if to go ;
 The victim knelt, still waiting for the blow.
 " Why strikest not ? Perform thy murderous act,"
 The prisoner said. (His voice was slightly cracked.)
 " Friend, I *have* struck," the artist straight re-
 plied ;
 " Wait but one moment, and yourself decide."
 He held his snuff-box,—“ Now then, if you
 please !”

The prisoner sniffed, and, with a crashing sneeze,

Off his head tumbled,—bowed along the floor,—
Bounced down the steps;—the prisoner said no
more!

Woman! thy falchion is a glittering eye;
If death lurk in it, oh how sweet to die!
Thou takest hearts as Rudolph took the head;
We die with love, and never dream we're dead!



LATTER-DAY WARNINGS.

WHEN legislators keep the law,
When banks dispense with bolts and locks,—
When berries—whortle, rasp, and straw—
Grow bigger *downwards* through the box,—

When he that selleth house or land
Shows leak in roof or flaw in right,—
When haberdashers choose the stand
Whose window hath the broadest light,—

When preachers tell us all they think,
And party leaders all they mean,—
When what we pay for, that we drink,
From real grape and coffee-bean,—

When lawyers take what they would give,
And doctors give what they would take,
When city fathers eat to live,
Save when they fast for conscience' sake,—

When one that hath a horse on sale
 Shall bring his merit to the proof,
 Without a lie for every nail
 That holds the iron on the hoof,—

When in the usual place for rips
 Our gloves are stitched with special care,
 And guarded well the whalebone tips
 Where first umbrellas need repair,—

When Cuba's weeds have quite forgot
 The power of suction to resist,
 And claret-bottles harbour not
 Such dimples as would hold your fist,—

When publishers no longer steal,
 And pay for what they stole before,
 When the first locomotive's wheel
 Rolls through the Hoosac tunnel's bore ;—

Till then let Cumming blaze away,
 And Miller's saints blow up the globe ;
 But when you see that blessed day,
Then order your ascension robe !



ALBUM VERSES.

WHEN Eve had led her lord away,
 And Cain had killed his brother,
 The stars and flowers, the poets say,
 Agreed with one another

To cheat the cunning tempter's art,
And teach the race its duty,
By keeping on its wicked heart
Their eyes of light and beauty.

A million sleepless lids, they say,
Will be at least a warning ;
And so the flowers would watch by day,
The stars from eve to morning.

On hill and prairie, field and lawn,
Their dewy eyes upturning,
The flowers still watch from reddening dawn
Till western skies are burning.

Alas ! each hour of daylight tells
A tale of shame so crushing,
That some turn white as sea-bleached shells,
And some are always blushing.

But when the patient stars look down
On all their light discovers,
The traitor's smile, the murderer's frown,
The lips of lying lovers,

They try to shut their saddening eyes,
And in the vain endeavour
We see them twinkling in the skies,
And so they wink for ever.

A GOOD TIME GOING.

BRAVE singer of the coming time,
 Sweet minstrel of the joyous present,
 Crowned with the noblest wreath of rhyme,
 The holly-leaf of Ayrshire's peasant,
 Good-bye! good-bye!—our hearts and hands,
 Our lips in honest Saxon phrases,
 Cry, God be with him, till he stands
 His feet among the English daisies!

'Tis here we part ;—for other eyes
 The busy deck, the fluttering streamer,
 The dripping arms that plunge and rise,
 The waves in foam, the ship in tremor,
 The kerchiefs waving from the pier,
 The cloudy pillar gliding o'er him,
 The deep blue desert, lone and drear,
 With heaven above and home before him!

His home!—the Western giant smiles,
 And twirls the spotty globe to find it ;—
 This little speck the British Isles?
 'Tis but a freckle,—never mind it!
 He laughs, and all his prairies roll,
 Each gurgling cataract roars and chuckles,
 And ridges stretched from pole to pole
 Heave till they crack their iron knuckles!

But Memory blushes at the sneer,
 And Honour turns with frown defiant,
 And Freedom, leaning on her spear,
 Laughs louder than the laughing giant:

"An islet is a world," she said,
"When glory with its dust has blended,
And Britain keeps her noble dead
Till earth and seas and skies are rended!"

Beneath each swinging forest-bough
Some arm as stout in death reposes,—
From wave-washed foot to heaven-kissed brow
Her valour's life-blood runs in roses;
Nay, let our brothers of the West
Write smiling in their florid pages,
One half her soil has walked the rest
In poets, heroes, martyrs, sages!

Hugged in the clinging billow's clasp,
From sea-weed fringe to mountain heather,
The British oak with rooted grasp
Her slender handful holds together;—
With cliffs of white and bowers of green,
And ocean narrowing to caress her,
And hills and threaded streams between,—
Our little mother isle, God bless her!

In earth's broad temple where we stand,
Fanned by the eastern gales that brought us,
We hold the missal in our hand,
Bright with the lines our mother taught us.
Where'er its blazoned page betrays
The glistening links of gilded fetters,
Behold, the half-turned leaf displays
Her rubric stained in crimson letters!

Enough! To speed a parting friend
 'Tis vain alike to speak and listen;—
 Yet stay,—these feeble accents blend
 With rays of light from eyes that glisten.
 Good-bye! once more,—and kindly tell
 In words of peace the young world's story,—
 And say, besides, we love too well
 Our mothers' soil, our fathers' glory!



THE LAST BLOSSOM.

THOUGH young no more, we still would dream
 Of beauty's dear deluding wiles:
 The leagues of life to graybeards seem
 Shorter than boyhood's lingering miles.

Who knows a woman's wild caprice?
 It played with Goethe's silvered hair,
 And many a Holy Father's "niece"
 Has softly smoothed the papal chair.

When sixty bids us sigh in vain
 To melt the heart of sweet sixteen,
 We think upon those ladies twain
 Who loved so well the tough old Dean.

We see the Patriarch's wintry face,
 The maid of Egypt's dusky glow,
 And dream that Youth and Age embrace,
 As April violets fill with snow.

Tranced in her lord's Olympian smile
 His lotus-loving Memphian lies,—
 The musky daughter of the Nile,
 With plaited hair and almond eyes.

Might we but share one wild caress
 Ere life's autumnal blossoms fall,
 And Earth's brown, clinging lips impress
 The long cold kiss that waits us all!

My bosom heaves, remembering yet
 The morning of that blissful day,
 When Rose, the flower of spring, I met,
 And gave my raptured soul away.

Flung from her eyes of purest blue,
 A lasso, with its leaping chain,
 Light as a loop of larkspurs, flew
 O'er sense and spirit, heart and brain.

Thou com'st to cheer my waning age,
 Sweet vision, waited for so long!
 Dove that would seek the poet's cage
 Lured by the magic breath of song!

She blushes! Ah, reluctant maid,
 Love's *drapeau rouge* the truth has told!
 O'er girlhood's yielding barricade
 Floats the great Leveller's crimson fold!

Come to my arms!—love heeds not years;
 No frost the bud of passion knows.—
 Ha! what is this my frenzy hears?
 A voice behind me uttered,—Rose!

Sweet was her smile,—but not for me ;
 Alas ! when woman looks *too* kind,
 Just turn your foolish head and see,—
 Some youth is walking close behind !



CONTENTMENT.

“ Man wants but little here below.”

LITTLE I ask ; my wants are few ;
 I only wish a hut of stone,
 (A *very plain* brown stone will do,)

That I may call my own ;—
 And close at hand is such a one,
 In yonder street that fronts the sun.

Plain food is quite enough for me ;

Three courses are as good as ten ;—
 If Nature can subsist on three,

Thank Heaven for three. Amen !
 I always thought cold victual nice ;—
 My *choice* would be vanilla-ice.

I care not much for gold or land ;—

Give me a mortgage here and there,—
 Some good bank-stock, some note of hand,
 Or trifling railroad share,—

I only ask that Fortune send
 A *little* more than I shall spend.

Honours are silly toys, I know,
 And titles are but empty names ;

I would, *perhaps*, be Plenipo,—
 But only near St. James ;
 I'm very sure I should not care
 To fill our Gubernator's chair.

Jewels are baubles ; 'tis a sin
 To care for such unfruitful things ;—
 One good-sized diamond in a pin,—
 Some, *not so large*, in rings,—
 A ruby, and a pearl, or so,
 Will do for me ;—I laugh at show.

My dame should dress in cheap attire ;
 (Good, heavy silks are never dear ;)
 I own perhaps I *might* desire
 Some shawls of true Cashmere,—
 Some marrowy crapes of China silk,
 Like wrinkled skins on scalded milk.

I would not have the horse I drive
 So fast that folks must stop and stare ;
 An easy gait—two, forty-five—
 Suits me ; I do not care ;—
 Perhaps for just a *single spurt*,
 Some seconds less would do no hurt.

Of pictures, I should like to own
 Titians and Raphaels three or four,—
 I love so much their style and tone,—
 One Turner, and no more,
 (A landscape,—foreground golden dirt,—
 The sunshine painted with a squirt.)

Of books but few,—some fifty score
 For daily use, and bound for wear ;
 The rest upon an upper floor ;—
 Some *little* luxury *there*
 Of red morocco's gilded gleam
 And vellum rich as country cream.

Busts, cameos, gems,—such things as these,
 Which others often show for pride,
 I value for their power to please,
 And selfish churls deride ;—
One Stradivarius, I confess,
Two Meerschaums, I would fain possess.

Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn
 Nor ape the glittering upstart fool ;—
 Shall not carved tables serve my turn,
 But *all* must be of buhl?
 Give grasping pomp its double share,—
 I ask but *one* recumbent chair.

Thus humble let me live and die,
 Nor long for Midas' golden touch ;
 If Heaven more generous gifts deny,
 I shall not miss them *much*,—
 Too grateful for the blessing lent
 Of simple tastes and mind content !

ÆSTIVATION.

AN UNPUBLISHED POEM, BY MY LATE LATIN
TUTOR.

IN candent ire the solar splendour flames ;
The foles, languescant, pend from arid rames ;
His humid front the cive, anhelant, wipes,
And dreams of erring on ventiferous ripes.

How dulce to vive occult to mortal eyes,
Dorm on the herb with none to supervise,
Carp the suave berries from the crescent vine,
And bibe the flow from longicaudate kine !

To me, alas ! no verdurous visions come,
Save yon exiguous pool's conferva-scum,—
No concave vast repeats the tender hue
That laves my milk-jug with celestial blue !

Me wretched ! Let me curr to quercine shades !
Effund your albid hausts, lactiferous maids !
Oh, might I vole to some umbrageous clump,—
Depart,—be off,—excede,—evade,—erump !

THE DEACON'S MASTERPIECE ;

OR, THE WONDERFUL "ONE-HOSS SHAY."

A LOGICAL STORY.

HAVE you heard of the wonderful one-hoss shay,
That was built in such a logical way?
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five,
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,—

And that's the reason, beyond a doubt
 That a chaise *breaks down*, but doesn't *wear out*.
 But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
 With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*,")
 He would build one shay to beat the taown
 'n' the keounty 'n' all the kentry raoun';
 It should be so built that it *couldn'* break daown:
 —"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
 Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
 'n' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
 Is only jest
 T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
 Where he could find the strongest oak,
 That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke,—
 That was for spokes and floor and sills;
 He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
 The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees,
 The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
 But lasts like iron for things like these;
 The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellow,"—
 Last of its timber,—they couldn't sell 'em,
 Never an axe had seen their chips,
 And the wedges flew from between their lips,
 Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
 Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
 Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
 Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
 Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
 Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
 Found in the pit when the tanner died.

That was the way he "put her through."—
 "There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess,
 She was a wonder, and nothing less!
 Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
 Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
 Children and grandchildren—where were they?
 But there stood the stout old one-hoss shay
 As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED ;—it came and found
 The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound,
 Eighteen hundred increased by ten ;—
 "Hahnsum kerridge" tley called it then.
 Eighteen hundred and twenty came ;—
 Running as usual much the same.
 Thirty and forty at last arrive,
 And then come fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
 Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
 Without both feeling and looking queer.
 In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
 So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
 (This is a moral that runs at large ;
 Take it.—You're welcome.—No extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER,—the Earthquake-day—
 There are traces of age in the one-hoss shay.
 A general flavour of mild decay,
 But nothing local, as one may say.

There couldn't be,—for the Deacon's art
 Had made it so like in every part
 That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
 For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
 And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
 And the panels just as strong as the floor,
 And the whipple-tree neither less nor more,
 And the back-crossbar as strong as the fore,
 And spring and axle and hub *encore*.
 And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt
 In another hour it will be *worn out*!

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
 This morning the parson takes a drive.
 Now, small boys, get out of the way!
 Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
 Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
 "Huddup!" said the parson.—Off went they.
 The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
 Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
 At what the—Moses—was coming next.
 All at once the horse stood still,
 Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
 —First a shiver, and then a thrill,
 Then something decidedly like a spill,—
 And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
 At half-past nine by the meet'n'-house clock,—
 Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
 —What do you think the parson found,
 When he got up and stared around?
 The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
 As if it had been to the mill and ground!

You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
 How it went to pieces all at once,—
 All at once, and nothing first,—
 Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss shay.
 Logic is logic. That's all I say.



PARSON TURELL'S LEGACY ;
 OR, THE PRESIDENT'S OLD ARM-CHAIR.

A MATHEMATICAL STORY.

FACTS respecting an old arm-chair.
 At Cambridge. Is kept in the College there.
 Seems but little the worse for wear.
 That's remarkable when I say
 It was old in President Holyoke's day.
 (One of his boys, perhaps you know,
 Died, *at one hundred*, years ago.)
He took lodgings for rain or shine
 Under green bed-clothes in '69.

Know old Cambridge? Hope you do.—
 Born there? Don't say so! I was, too.
 (Born in a house with a gambrel-roof,—
 Standing still, if you must have proof.—
 "Gambrel?—Gambrel?"—Let me beg
 You'll look at a horse's hinder leg,—
 First great angle above the hoof,—
 That's the gambrel; hence gambrel-roof.)

—Nicest place that ever was seen,—
Colleges red and Common green,
Sidewalks brownish with trees between.
Sweetest spot beneath the skies
When the canker-worms don't rise,—
When the dust, that sometimes flies
Into your mouth and ears and eyes,
In a quiet slumber lies,
Not in the shape of unbaked pies
Such as barefoot children prize.

A kind of harbour it seems to be,
Facing the flow of a boundless sea.
Rows of gray old Tutors stand
Ranged like rocks above the sand ;
Rolling beneath them, soft and green,
Breaks the tide of bright sixteen,—
One wave, two waves, three waves, four,—
Sliding up the sparkling floor :
Then it ebbs to flow no more,
Wandering off from shore to shore
With its freight of golden ore !
—Pleasant place for boys to play ;—
Better keep your girls away ;
Hearts get rolled as pebbles do
Which countless fingering waves pursue,
And every classic beach is strown
With heart-shaped pebbles of blood-red stone.

But this is neither here nor there ;—
I'm talking about an old arm-chair.
You've heard, no doubt, of PARSON TURELL?
Over at Medfort he used to dwell ;

Married one of the Mathers' folk ;
 Got with his wife a chair of oak,—
 Funny old chair with seat like wedge,
 Sharp behind and broad front edge,—
 One of the oddest of human things,
 Turned all over with knobs and rings,—
 But heavy, and wide, and deep, and grand,—
 Fit for the worthies of the land,—
 Chief-Justice Sewall a cause to try in,
 Or Cotton Mather to sit—and lie—in,
 —Parson Turell bequeathed the same
 To a certain student,—SMITH by name ;
 These were the terms, as we are told :
 " Saide Smith saide Chaire to have and holde ;
 When he doth graduate, then to passe
 To y^e oldest Youth in y^e Senior Classe.
 On Payment of"—(naming a certain sum)—
 " By him to whom y^e Chaire shall come ;
 He to y^e oldest Senior next,
 And soe for ever,"—(thus runs the text,)—
 " But one Crown lesse then he gave to claime,
 That being his Debte for use of same."

Smith transferred it to one of the BROWNS,
 And took his money,—five silver crowns.
Brown delivered it up to MOORE,
 Who paid, it is plain, not five, but four.
Moore made over the chair to LEE,
 Who gave him crowns of silver three.
Lee conveyed it unto DREW,
 And now the payment, of course, was two.
Drew gave up the chair to DUNN,—
 All he got, as you see, was one. "

Dunn released the chair to HALL,
 And got by the bargain no crown at all.
 —And now it passed to a second BROWN,
 Who took it and likewise *claimed a crown*.
 When *Brown* conveyed it unto WARE,
 Having had one crown, to make it fair,
 He paid him two crowns to take the chair ;
 And *Ware*, being honest (as all *Wares* be),
 He paid one POTTER, who took it, three.
 Four got ROBINSON ; five got DIX ;
 JOHNSON *primus* demanded six ;
 And so the sum kept gathering still
 Till after the battle of Bunker's Hill.

—When paper money became so cheap,
 Folks wouldn't count it, but said "a heap,"
 A certain RICHARDS,—the books declare,—
 (A.M. in '90? I've looked with care
 Through the Triennial,—*name not there*,)
 This person, Richards, was offered then
 Eightscore pounds, but would have ten ;
 Nine, I think, was the sum he took,—
 Not quite certain,—but see the book.
 —By and by the wars were still,
 But nothing had altered the Parson's will.
 The old arm-chair was solid yet,
 But saddled with such a monstrous debt ;
 Things grew quite too bad to bear,
 Paying such sums to get rid of the chair !
 But dead men's fingers hold awful tight,
 And there was the will in black and white,
 Plain enough for a child to spell.
 What should be done no man could tell,

For the chair was a kind of nightmare curse,
And every season but made it worse.

As a last resort, to clear the doubt,
They got old GOVERNOR HANCOCK out.
The Governor came with his Lighthouse Troop
And his mounted truckmen, all cock-a-hoop ;
Halberds glittered and colours flew,
French horns whinnied and trumpets blew,
The yellow fifes whistled between their teeth
And the bumble-bee bass-drums boomed beneath ;
So he rode with all his band,

Till the President met him, cap in hand.

—The Governor "hefted" the crowns, and said,—

"A will is a will, and the Parson's dead."

The Governor hefted the crowns. Said he,—

"There is your p'int. And here's my fee.

These are the terms you must fulfil,—

On such conditions I BREAK THE WILL!"

The Governor mentioned what these should be.

(Just wait a minute and then you'll see.)

The President prayed. Then all was still,

And the Governor rose and BROKE THE WILL!

—"About those conditions?" Well, now you go

And do as I tell you, and then you'll know

Once a year, on Commencement day,

If you'll only take the pains to stay,

You'll see the President in the CHAIR,

Likewise the Governor sitting there.

The President rises ; both old and young

May hear his speech in a foreign tongue,

The meaning whereof, as lawyers swear,

Is this : Can I keep this old arm-chair?

And then his Excellency bows,
 As much as to say that he allows.
 The Vice-Gub. next is called by name ;
 He bows like t'other, which means the same,
 And all the officers round 'em bow,
 As much as to say that *they* allow.
 And a lot of parchments about the chair
 Are handed to witnesses then and there,
 And then the lawyers hold it clear
 That the chair is safe for another year.

God bless you, Gentlemen ! Learn to give
 Money to colleges while you live.
 Don't be silly and think you'll try
 To bother the colleges, when you die,
 With codicil this, and codicil that,
 That Knowledge may starve while Law grows fat ;
 For there never was pitcher that wouldn't spill,
 And there's always a flaw in a donkey's will !

ODE FOR A SOCIAL MEETING.

WITH SLIGHT ALTERATIONS BY A TEETOTALLER.

COME ! fill a fresh bumper, for why should we go
 While the ^{logwood}nectar still reddens our cups as they flow ?
 Pour out the rich ^{decoction}juices still bright with the sun,
 Till o'er the brimmed crystal the ^{dye-stuff}rubies shall run.

300 ODE FOR A SOCIAL MEETING.

half-ripened apples
The purple-globed clusters their life-dews have bled ;
taste sugar of lead
How sweet is the breath of the fragrance they shed !
rank poisons wines !!!
For summer's last roses lie hid in the wines
stable-boys smoking long-nines
That were garnered by maidens who laughed thro'
the vines.
scowl howl scoff sneer
Then a smile, and a glass, and a toast, and a cheer,
strychnine and whiskey, and ratsbane and beer
For all the good wine, and we've some of it here !
In cellar, in pantry, in attic, in hall,
Down, down with the tyrant that masters us all !
Long live the gay servant that laughs for us all !



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA



POEMS

FROM THE

*PROFESSOR AT THE BREAKFAST
TABLE.—1858-1859.*



UNDER THE VIOLETS.

HER hands are cold ; her face is white ;
No more her pulses come and go ;
Her eyes are shut to life and light ;
Fold the white vesture, snow on snow,
And lay her where the violets blow.

But not beneath a graven stone,
To plead for tears with alien eyes ;
A slender cross of wood alone
Shall say, that here a maiden lies
In peace beneath the peaceful skies.

And gray'old trees of hugest limb
Shall wheel their circling shadows round
To make the scorching sunlight dim
That drinks the greenness from the ground,
And drop their dead leaves on her mound.

When o'er their boughs the squirrels run,
And through their leaves the robins call,
And, ripening in the autumn sun,
The acorns and the chestnuts fall,
Doubt not that she will heed them all.

For her the morning choir shall sing
Its matins from the branches high,
And every minstrel voice of Spring,
That trills beneath the April sky,
Shall greet her with its earliest cry.

When, turning round their dial-track,
Eastward the lengthening shadows pass,
Her little mourners, clad in black,
The crickets, sliding through the grass,
Shall pipe for her an evening mass.

At last the rootlets of the trees
Shall find the prison where she lies,
And bear the buried dust they seize
In leaves and blossoms to the skies.
So may the soul that warmed it rise !

If any, born of kindlier blood,
Should ask, What maiden lies below ?
Say only this : A tender bud,
That tried to blossom in the snow,
Lies withered where the violets blow.



HYMN OF TRUST.

O LOVE Divine, that stooped to share
 Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,
 On Thee we cast each earth-born care,
 We smile at pain while Thou art near !

Though long the weary way we tread,
 And sorrow crown each lingering year,
 No path we shun, no darkness dread,
 Our hearts still whispering, Thou art near !

When drooping pleasure turns to grief,
 And trembling faith is changed to fear,
 The murmuring wind, the quivering leaf,
 Shall softly tell us, Thou art near !

On Thee we fling our burdening woe,
 O Love Divine, for ever dear,
 Content to suffer while we know,
 Living and dying, Thou art near !

*A SUN-DAY HYMN.*

LORD of all being ! throned afar,
 Thy glory flames from sun and star ;
 Centre and soul of every sphere,
 Yet to each loving heart how near !

Sun of our life, Thy quickening ray
 Sheds on our path the glow of day ;

Star of our hope, Thy softened light
Cheers the long watches of the night.

Our midnight is Thy smile withdrawn ;
Our noontide is Thy gracious dawn ;
Our rainbow arch Thy mercy's sign ;
All, save the clouds of sin, are Thine !

Lord of all life, below, above,
Whose light is truth, whose warmth is love,
Before Thy ever-blazing throne
We ask no lustre of our own.

Grant us Thy truth to make us free,
And kindling hearts that burn for Thee,
Till all Thy living altars claim
One holy light, one heavenly flame !



—♦—

THE CROOKED FOOTPATH.

AH, here it is ! the sliding rail
That marks the old remembered spot,—
The gap that struck our school-boy trail,—
The crooked path across the lot.

It left the road by school and church,
A pencilled shadow, nothing more,
That parted from the silver-birch
And ended at the farm-house door.

No line or compass traced its plan ;
With frequent bends to left or right,
In aimless, wayward curves it ran,
But always kept the door in sight.

The gabled porch, with woodbine green,—
The broken millstone at the sill,—
Though many a rood might stretch between,
The truant child could see them still.

No rocks across the pathway lie,—
No fallen trunk is o'er it thrown,—
And yet it winds, we know not why,
And turns as if for tree or stone.

Perhaps some lover trod the way
With shaking knees and leaping heart,—
And so it often runs astray
With sinuous sweep or sudden start.

Or one, perchance, with clouded brain
From some unholy banquet reeled,—
And since, our devious steps maintain
His track across the trodden field.

Nay, deem not thus,—no earth-born will
Could ever trace a faultless line ;
Our truest steps are human still,—
To walk unswerving were divine !

Truants from love, we dream of wrath ;—
Oh, rather let us trust the more !
Through all the wanderings of the path,
We still can see our Father's door !

IRIS, HER BOOK.

I PRAY thee by the soul of her that bore thee,
 By thine own sister's spirit I implore thee,
 Deal gently with the leaves that lie before thee !

For Iris had no mother to infold her,
 Nor ever leaned upon a sister's shoulder,
 Telling the twilight thoughts that Nature told her.

She had not learned the mystery of awaking
 Those chorded keys that soothe a sorrow's aching,
 Giving the dumb heart voice, that else were breaking.

Yet lived, wrought, suffered. Lo, the pictured
 token !

Why should her fleeting day-dreams fade unspoken,
 Like daffodils that die with sheaths unbroken ?

She knew not love, yet lived in maiden fancies,—
 Walked simply clad, a queen of high romances,
 And talked strange tongues with angels in her
 trances.

Twin-souled she seemed, a two-fold nature wear-
 ing,—

Sometimes a flashing falcon in her daring,
 Then a poor mateless dove that droops despairing.

Questioning all things : Why her Lord had sent
 her ?

What were these torturing gifts, and wherefore
 lent her ?

Scornful as spirit fallen, its own tormentor.

And then all tears and anguish : Queen of Heaven :
Sweet Saints, and Thou by mortal sorrows riven,
Save me ! Oh, save me ! Shall I die forgiven ?

And then—Ah, God ! But nay, it little matters :
Look at the wasted seeds that autumn scatters :
The myriad germs that Nature shapes and shatters !

If she had—Well ! She longed, and knew not
wherefore
Had the world nothing she might live to care for ?
No second self to say her evening prayer for ?

She knew the marble shapes that set men dreaming,
Yet with her shoulders bare and tresses streaming
Showed not unlovely to her simple seeming.

Vain ? Let it be so ! Nature was her teacher.
What if a lonely and unsistered creature
Loved her own harmless gift of pleasing feature,

Saying, unsaddened,—This shall soon be faded,
And double-hued the shining tresses braided,
And all the sunlight of the morning shaded ?

—This her poor book is full of saddest follies,
Of tearful smiles and laughing melancholies,
With summer roses twined and wintry hollies.

In the strange crossing of uncertain chances,
Somewhere, beneath some maiden's tear-dimmed
glances
May fall her little book of dreams and fancies.

Sweet sister ! Iris, who shall never name thee,
 Trembling for fear her open heart may shame
 thee,
 Speaks from this vision-haunted page to claim
 thee.

Spare her, I pray thee ! If the maid is sleeping,
 Peace with her ! she has had her hour of weeping.
 No more ! She leaves her memory in thy keeping.

—♦—

ROBINSON OF LEYDEN.

HE sleeps not here ; in hope and prayer
 His wandering flock had gone before,
 But he, the shepherd, might not share
 Their sorrows on the wintry shore.

Before the Speedwell's anchor swung,
 Ere yet the Mayflower's sail was spread,
 While round his feet the pilgrims clung,
 The pastor spake, and thus he said :—

“ Men, brethren, sisters, children dear !
 God calls you hence from over sea ;
 Ye may not build by Haerlem Meer,
 Nor yet along the Zuyder-Zee.

“ Ye go to bear the saving Word
 To tribes unnamed and shores untrod :
 Heed well the lessons ye have heard
 From those old teachers taught of God.

"Yet think not unto them was lent
All light for all the coming days,
And Heaven's eternal wisdom spent
In making straight the ancient ways :

"The living fountain overflows
For every flock, for every lamb,
Nor heeds, though angry creeds oppose
With Luther's dike, or Calvin's dam."

He spake : with lingering, long embrace,
With tears of love and partings fond,
They floated down the creeping Maas,
Along the isle of Ysselmond.

They passed the frowning towers of Briel,
The "Hook of Holland's" shelf of sand,
And grated soon with lifting keel
The sullen shores of Fatherland.

No home for these !—too well they knew
The mitred king behind the throne ;—
The sails were set, the pennons flew,
And westward ho ! for worlds unknown.

—And these were they who gave us birth,
The Pilgrims of the sunset wave,
Who won for us this virgin earth,
And freedom with the soil they gave.

The pastor slumbers by the Rhine,—
In alien earth the exiles lie,—
Their nameless graves our holiest shrine,
His words our noblest battle-cry !

Still cry them, and the world shall hear,
 Ye dwellers by the storm-swept sea !
 Ye *have* not built by Haerlem Meer,
 Nor on the land-locked Zuyder-Zee !



ST. ANTHONY THE REFORMER.

HIS TEMPTATION.

No fear lest praise should make us proud !
 We know how cheaply that is won ;
 The idle homage of the crowd
 Is proof of tasks as idly done.

A surface-smile may pay the toil
 That follows still the conquering Right,
 With soft, white hands to dress the spoil
 That sun-browned valour clutched in fight.

Sing the sweet song of other days,
 Serenely placid, safely true,
 And o'er the present's parching ways
 The verse distils like evening dew.

But speak in words of living power,—
 They fall like drops of scalding rain
 That plashed before the burning shower
 Swept o'er the cities of the plain !

Then scowling Hate turns deadly pale,—
 Then Passion's half-coiled adders spring,
 And, smitten through their leprous mail,
 Strike right and left in hope to sting.

If thou, unmoved by poisoning wrath,
 Thy feet on earth, thy heart above,
 Canst walk in peace thy kingly path,
 Unchanged in trust, unchilled in love,—

Too kind for bitter words to grieve,
 Too firm for clamour to dismay,
 When Faith forbids thee to believe,
 And Meekness calls to disobey,—

Ah, then beware of mortal pride !
 The smiling pride that calmly scorns
 Those foolish fingers, crimson dyed
 In labouring on thy crown of thorns !



THE OPENING OF THE PIANO.

IN the little southern parlour of the house you may
 have seen,
 With the gambrel-roof, and the gable looking west-
 ward to the green,
 At the side toward the sunset, with the window on
 its right,
 Stood the London-made piano I am dreaming of
 to-night !

Ah me ! how I remember the evening when it came !
What a cry of eager voices, what a group of cheeks
in flame,

When the wondrous box was opened that had come
from over seas,
With its smell of mastic-varnish and its flash of
ivory keys !

Then the children all grew fretful in the restlessness
of joy ;
For the boy would push his sister, and the sister
crowd the boy,
Till the father asked for quiet in his grave paternal
way,
But the mother hushed the tumult with the words,
“ Now, Mary, play.”

For the dear soul knew that music was a very
sovereign balm ;
She had sprinkled it over Sorrow and seen its brow
grow calm,
In the days of slender harpsichords with tapping
tinkling quills,
Or carolling to her spinet with its thin metallic
thrills.

So Mary, the household minstrel, who always loved
to please,
Sat down to the new “ Clementi,” and struck the
glittering keys.
Hushed were the children's voices, and every eye
grew dim,
As, floating from lip and finger, arose the “ Vesper
Hymn.”

—Catherine, child of a neighbour, curly and rosy-red
 (Wedded since, and a widow,—something like ten years dead),
 Hearing a gush of music such as none before,
 Steals from her mother's chamber and peeps at the open door.

Just as the "Jubilate" in threaded whisper dies,
 "Open it! open it, lady!" the little maiden cries,
 (For she thought 'twas a singing creature caged in a box she heard),
 "Open it! open it, lady! and let me see the *bird!*"



P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
 CONSEJERIA DE CULTURA

MIDSUMMER.

HERE! sweep these foolish leaves away,
 I will not crush my brains to-day!
 Look! are the southern curtains drawn?
 Fetch me a fan, and so begone!

Not that,—the palm-tree's rustling leaf
 Brought from a parching coral-reef!
 Its breath is heated;—I would swing
 The broad gray plumes,—the eagle's wing.

I hate these roses' feverish blood!—
 Pluck me a half-blown lily-bud,
 A long-stemmed lily from the lake,
 Cold as a coiling water-snake.

Rain me sweet odours on the air,
 And wheel me up my Indian chair,
 And spread some book not otherwise
 Flat out before my sleepy eyes.

—Who knows it not,—this dead recoil
 Of weary fibres stretched with toil,—
 The pulse that flutters faint and low
 When Summer's seething breezes blow!

O Nature! bear thy loving breast,
 And give thy child one hour of rest,—
 One little hour to lie unseen
 Beneath thy scarf of leafy green!

So, curtained by a singing pine,
 Its murmuring voice shall blend with mine
 Till, lost in dreams, my faltering lay
 In sweeter music dies away.



DE SAUTY.

AN ELECTRO-CHEMICAL ECLOGUE.

Professor.

Blue-Nose.

PROFESSOR.

TELL me, O Provincial! speak, Ceruleo-Nasal!
 Lives there one De Sauty extant now among you,
 Whispering Boanerges, son of silent thunder,
 Holding talk with nations?

Is there a De Sauty ambulant on Tellus,
 Bifid-cleft like mortals, dormant in nightcap,
 Having sight, smell, hearing, food-receiving feature
 Three times daily patent?

Breathes there such a being, O Ceruleo-Nasal?
 Or is he a *mythus*,—ancient word for “humbug,”—
 Such as Livy told about the wolf that wet-nursed
 Romulus and Remus?

Was he born of woman, this alleged De Sauty?
 Or a living product of galvanic action,
 Like the *acarus* bred in Crosse's flint-solution?
 Speak, thou Cyano-Rhinal!

BLUE-NOSE.

Many things thou askest, jackknife-bearing stranger,
 Much-conjecturing mortal, pork-and-treacle-waster!
 Prepermit thy whittling, wheel thine ear-flap toward
 me,
 Thou shalt hear them answered.

When the charge galvanic tingled through the
 cable,
 At the polar focus of the wire electric
 Suddenly appeared a white-faced man among us:
 Called himself “DE SAUTY.”

As the small opossum held in pouch maternal
 Grasps the nutrient organ whence the term *mam-*
malia,
 So the unknown stranger held the wire electric,
 Sucking in the current.

When the current strengthened, bloomed the pale-
faced stranger,—

Took no drink nor victual, yet grew fat and rosy,—
And from time to time, in sharp articulation,
Said, "*All right!* DE SAUTY."

From the lonely station passed the utterance,
spreading
Through the pines and hemlocks to the groves of
steeples,
Till the land was filled with loud reverberations
Of "*All right!* DE SAUTY."

When the current slackened, drooped the mystic
stranger,—

Faded, faded, faded, as the stream grew weaker,—
Wasted to a shadow, with a hartshorn odour
Of disintegration.

Drops of deliquescence glistened on his forehead,
Whitened round his feet the dust of efflorescence,
Till one Monday morning, when the flow suspended,
There was no De Sauty.

Nothing but a cloud of elements organic,
C. O. H. N. Ferrum, Chlor. Flu. Sil. Potassa,
Calc. Sod. Phosph. Mag. Sulphur, Mang. (?)
Alumin. (?) Cuprum (?)
Such as man is made of.

Born of stream galvanic, with it he had perished!
There is no De Sauty now there is no current!
Give us a new cable, then again we'll hear him
Cry, "*All right!* DE SAUTY."

POEMS

FROM THE
POET AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE.
1871-1872.

HOMESICK IN HEAVEN.

THE DIVINE VOICE.

Go seek thine earth-born sisters,—thus the Voice
That all obey,—the sad and silent three ;
These only, while the hosts of Heaven rejoice,
Smile never : ask them what their sorrows be :

And when the secret of their griefs they tell,
Look on them with thy mild, half-human eyes ;
Say what thou wast on earth ; thou knowest well ;
So shall they cease from unavailing sighs.

THE ANGEL.

—Why thus, apart,—the swift-winged herald
spake,—
Sit ye with silent lips and unstrung lyres

While the trisagion's blending chords awake
 In shouts of joy from all the heavenly choirs?

THE FIRST SPIRIT.

—Chide not thy sisters,—thus the answer came ;—
 Children of earth, our half-weaned nature clings
 To earth's fond memories, and her whispered name
 Untunes our quivering lips, our saddened strings ;

For there we loved, and where we love is home,
 Home that our feet may leave, but not our
 hearts,

Though o'er us shine the jasper-lighted dome :—
 The chain may lengthen, but it never parts !

Sometimes a sunlit sphere comes rolling by,
 And then we softly whisper,—*can it be?*
 And leaning toward the silvery orb, we try
 To hear the music of its murmuring sea ;

To catch, perchance, some flashing glimpse of green,
 Or breathe some wild-wood fragrance, wafted
 through

The opening gates of pearl, that fold between
 The blinding splendours and the changeless blue.

THE ANGEL.

—Nay, sister, nay ! a single healing leaf
 Plucked from the bough of yon twelve-rooted tree,
 Would soothe such anguish,—deeper stabbing grief
 Has pierced thy throbbing heart—

THE FIRST SPIRIT.

Ah! woe is me!
 I from my clinging babe was rudely torn ;
 His tender lips a loveless bosom pressed ;
 Can I forget him in my life new born ?
 Oh that my darling lay upon my breast !

THE ANGEL.

—And thou?—

THE SECOND SPIRIT.

I was a fair and youthful bride,
 The kiss of love still burns upon my cheek,
 He whom I worshipped, ever at my side,—
 Him through the spirit realm in vain I seek.

Sweet faces turn their beaming eyes on mine ;
 Ah! not in these the wished-for look I read ;
 Still for that one dear human smile I pine ;
Thou and none other!—is the lover's creed.

THE ANGEL.

—And whence *thy* sadness in a world of bliss
 Where never parting comes, nor mourner's tear ?
 Art thou, too, dreaming of a mortal's kiss
 Amid the seraphs of the heavenly sphere ?

THE THIRD SPIRIT.

—Nay, tax not me with passion's wasting fire ;
 When the swift message set my spirit free,
 Blind, helpless, lone, I left my gray-haired sire ;
 My friends were many, he had none save me.

I left him, orphaned, in the starless night ;
 Alas! for him no cheerful morning's dawn !
 I wear the ransomed spirit's robe of white,
 Yet still I hear him moaning, *She is gone!*

THE ANGEL.

—Ye know me not, sweet sisters?—All in vain
 Ye seek your lost ones in the shapes they wore ;
 The flower once opened may not bud again,
 The fruit once fallen finds the stem no more.

Child, lover, sire,—yea, all things loved below,—
 Fair pictures damasked on a vapour's fold,—
 Fade like the roseate flush, the golden glow,
 When the bright curtain of the day is rolled.

I was the babe that slumbered on *thy* breast.

—And, sister, mine the lips that called *thee* bride.

—Mine were the silvered locks *thy* hand caressed,
 That faithful hand, my faltering footsteps' guide !

Each changing form, frail vesture of decay,
 The soul unclad forgets it once hath worn,
 Stained with the travel of the weary day,
 And shamed with rents from every wayside thorn.

To lie, an infant, in *thy* fond embrace,—
 To come with love's warm kisses back to *thee*,—
 To show *thine* eyes thy gray-haired father's face,
 Not Heaven itself could grant ; this may not be !

Then spread your folded wings, and leave to earth
 The dust once breathing ye have mourned so long,
 Till Love, new risen, owns his heavenly birth,
 And sorrow's discords sweeten into song !

FANTASIA.

THE YOUNG GIRL'S POEM.

Kiss mine eyelids, beauteous Morn,
Blushing into life new-born !
Lend me violets for my hair,
And thy russet robe to wear,
And thy ring of rosiest hue
Set in drops of diamond dew !

Kiss my cheek, thy noontide ray,
From my Love so far away !
Let thy splendour streaming down
Turn its pallid lilies brown,
Till its darkening shades reveal
Where his passion pressed its seal !

Kiss my lips, thou Lord of light,
Kiss my lips a soft good-night !
Westward sinks thy golden car ;
Leave me but the evening star,
And my solace that shall be,
Borrowing all its light from thee !



AUNT TABITHA.

THE YOUNG GIRL'S POEM.

WHATEVER I do, and whatever I say,
Aunt Tabitha tells me that isn't the way ;
When *she* was a girl (forty summers ago)
Aunt Tabitha tells me they never did so.

Dear aunt ! If I only would take her advice !
But I like my own way, and I find it *so* nice !
And besides, I forget half the things I am told ;
But they all will come back to me—when I am old.

If a youth passes by, it may happen, no doubt,
He may chance to look in as I chance to look out ;
She would never endure an impertinent stare,—
It is *horrid*, she says, and I mustn't sit there.

A walk in the moonlight has pleasures, I own,
But it isn't quite safe to be walking alone ;
So I take a lad's arm,—just for safety, you know,—
But Aunt Tabitha tells me *they* didn't do so.

How wicked we are, and how good they were then !
They kept at arm's length those detestable men ;
What an era of virtue she lived in !—But stay—
Were the *men* all such rogues in Aunt Tabitha's
day ?

If the men *were* so wicked, I'll ask my papa
How he dared to propose to my darling mamma :
Was he like the rest of them ? Goodness ! Who
knows ?

And what shall *I* say, if a wretch should propose ?

I am thinking if aunt knew so little of sin,
 What a wonder Aunt Tabitha's aunt must have
 been !

And her grand-aunt—it scares me—how shockingly
 sad

That we girls of to-day are so frightfully bad !

A martyr will save us, and nothing else can ;
 Let *me* perish—to rescue some wretched young
 man !

Though when to the altar a victim I go,
 Aunt Tabitha'll tell me *she* never did so !



WIND-CLOUDS AND STAR-DRIFTS.

FROM THE YOUNG ASTRONOMER'S POEM.

I. AMBITION.

ANOTHER clouded night ; the stars are hid,
 The orb that waits my search is hid with them.
 Patience ! Why grudge an hour, a month, a year,
 To plant my ladder and to gain the round
 That leads my footsteps to the heaven of fame,
 Where waits the wreath my sleepless midnights
 won ?

Not the stained laurel such as heroes wear
 That withers when some stronger conqueror's heel
 Treads down their shrivelling trophies in the dust ;
 But the fair garland whose undying green
 Not time can change, nor wrath of gods or men !

With quickened heart-beats I shall hear the
 tongues
 That speak my praise ; but better far the sense
 That in the unshaped ages, buried deep
 In the dark mines of unaccomplished time
 Yet to be stamped with morning's royal die
 And coined in golden days,—in those dim years
 I shall be reckoned with the undying dead,
 My name emblazoned on the fiery arch,
 Unfading till the stars themselves shall fade.
 Then, as they call the roll of shining worlds,
 Sages of race unborn in accents new
 Shall count me with the Olympian ones of old,
 Whose glories kindle through the midnight sky :
 Here glows the God of Battles ; this recalls
 The Lord of Ocean, and yon far-off sphere
 The Sire of Him who gave his ancient name
 To the dim planet with the wondrous rings ;
 Here flames the Queen of Beauty's silver lamp,
 And there the moon-girt orb of mighty Jove ;
 But *this*, unseen through all earth's æons past,
 A youth who watched beneath the western star
 Sought in the darkness, found, and showed to men ;
 Linked with his name thenceforth and evermore !
 So shall that name be syllabled anew
 In all the tongues of all the tribes of men :
 I that have been through immemorial years
 Dust in the dust of my forgotten time
 Shall live in accents shaped of bloodwarm breath,
 Yea, rise in mortal semblance, newly born
 In shining stone, in undecaying bronze,
 And stand on high, and look serenely down
 On the new race that calls the earth its own.

Is this a cloud, that, blown athwart my soul,
Wears a false seeming of the pearly stain
Where worlds beyond the world their mingling
rays

Blend in soft white,—a cloud that, born of earth,
Would cheat the soul that looks for light from
heaven?

Must every coral-insect leave his sign
On each poor grain he lent to build the reef,
As Babel's builders stamped their sunburnt clay,
Or deem his patient service all in vain?
What if another sit beneath the shade
Of the broad elm I planted by the way,—
What if another heed the beacon light
I set upon the rock that wrecked my keel,—
Have I not done my task and served my kind?
Nay, rather act thy part, unnamed, unknown,
And let Fame blow her trumpet through the
world

With noisy wind to swell a fool's renown,
Joined with some truth he stumbled blindly o'er,
Or coupled with some single shining deed
That in the great account of all his days
Will stand alone upon the bankrupt sheet
His pitying angel shows the clerk of Heaven.
The noblest service comes from nameless hands,
And the best servant does his work unseen.
Who found the seeds of fire and made them
shoot,

Fed by his breath, in buds and flowers of flame?
Who forged in rolling flames the ponderous stone,
And shaped the moulded metal to his need?
Who gave the dragging car its rolling wheel,

And tamed the steed that whirls its circling
round ?

All these have left their work and not their
names,—

Why should I murmur at a fate like theirs ?
This is the heavenly light ; the pearly stain
Was but a wind-cloud drifting o'er the stars !

II. REGRETS.

BRIEF glimpses of the bright celestial spheres,
False lights, false shadows, vague, uncertain
gleams,

Pale vaporous mists, wan streaks of lurid flame,
The climbing of the upward-sailing cloud,
The sinking of the downward-falling star,—
All these are pictures of the changing moods
Borne through the midnight stillness of my soul.

Here am I, bound upon this pillared rock,
Prey to the vulture of a vast desire
That feeds upon my life. I burst my bands
And steal a moment's freedom from the beak,
The clinging talons and the shadowing plumes ;
Then comes the false enchantress, with her song ;
" Thou wouldst not lay thy forehead in the dust
Like the base herd that feeds and breeds and
dies !

Lo, the fair garlands that I weave for thee,
Unchanging as the belt Orion wears,
Bright as the jewels of the seven-starred Crown,
The spangled stream of Berenice's hair !"
And so she twines the fetters with the flowers

Around my yielding limbs, and the fierce bird
 Stoops to his quarry,—then to feed his rage
 Of ravening hunger I must drain my blood
 And let the dew-drenched, poison-breeding night
 Steal all the freshness from my fading cheek,
 And leave its shadows round my caverned eyes.
 All for a line in some unheeded scroll ;
 All for a stone that tells to gaping clowns,
 " Here lies a restless wretch beneath a clod
 Where squats the jealous nightmare men call
 Fame ! "

I marvel not at him who scorns his kind
 And thinks not sadly of the time foretold
 When the old hulk we tread shall be a wreck,
 A slag, a cinder drifting through the sky
 Without its crew of fools ! We live too long,
 And even so are not content to die,
 But load the mould that covers up our bones
 With stones that stand like beggars by the road
 And show death's grievous wound and ask for
 tears ;

Write our great books to teach men who we are,
 Sing our fine songs that tell in artful phrase
 The secrets of our lives, and plead and pray
 For alms of memory with the after-time,
 Those few swift seasons while the earth shall wear
 Its leafy summers, ere its core grows cold
 And the moist life of all that breathes shall die ;
 Or as the new-born seer, perchance more wise,
 Would have us deem, before its growing mass,
 Pelted with star-dust, stoned with meteor-balls,
 Heats like a hammered anvil, till at last

Man and his works and all that stirred itself
 Of its own motion, in the fiery glow
 Turns to a flaming vapour, and our orb
 Shines a new sun for earths that shall be born.

I am as old as Egypt to myself,
 Brother to them that squared the pyramids
 By the same stars I watch. I read the page
 Where every letter is a glittering world,
 With them who looked from Shinar's clay-built
 towers,

Ere yet the wanderer of the Midland sea
 Had missed the fallen sister of the seven.
 I dwell in spaces vague, remote, unknown,
 Save to the silent few, who, leaving earth,
 Quit all communion with their living time.
 I lose myself in that ethereal void,
 Till I have tired my wings and long to fill
 My breast with denser air, to stand, to walk,
 With eyes not raised above my fellow-men.
 Sick of my unwalled, solitary realm,
 I ask to change the myriad lifeless worlds
 I visit as mine own for one poor patch
 Of this dull spheroid and a little breath
 To shape in word or deed to serve my kind.
 Was ever giant's dungeon dug so deep,
 Was ever tyrant's fetter forged so strong,
 Was e'er such deadly poison in the draught
 The false wife mingles for the trusting fool,
 As he whose willing victim is himself,
 Digs, forges, mingles, for his captive soul?

III. SYMPATHIES.

THE snows that glittered on the disc of Mars
 Have melted, and the planet's fiery orb
 Rolls in the crimson summer of its year ;
 But what to me the summer or the snow
 Of worlds that throb with life in forms unknown,
 If life indeed be theirs ; I heed not these.
 My heart is simply human ; all my care
 For them whose dust is fashioned like mine own ;
 These ache with cold and hunger, live in pain,
 And shake with fear of worlds more full of woe ;
 There may be others worthier of my love,
 But such I know not save through these I know.

There are two veils of language, hid beneath
 Whose sheltering folds, we dare to be ourselves ;
 And not that other self which nods and smiles
 And babbles in our name ; the one is Prayer,
 Lending its licensed freedom to the tongue
 That tells our sorrows and our sins to Heaven ;
 The other, Verse, that throws its spangled web
 Around our naked speech and makes it bold.
 I, whose best prayer is silence ; sitting dumb
 In the great temple where I nightly serve
 Him who is throned in light, have dared to claim
 The poet's franchise, though I may not hope
 To wear his garland ; hear me while I tell
 My story in such form as poets use,
 But breathed in fitful whispers, as the wind
 Sighs and then slumbers, wakes and sighs again

Thou Vision, floating in the breathless air
 Between me and the fairest of the stars,
 I tell my lonely thoughts as unto thee.
 Look not for marvels of the scholar's pen
 In my rude measure ; I can only show
 A slender-margined, unillumined page,
 And trust its meaning to the flattering eye
 That reads it in the gracious light of love.
 Ah, wouldst thou clothe thyself in breathing
 shape
 And nestle at my side, my voice should lend
 Whate'er my verse may lack of tender rhythm
 To make thee listen.

I have stood entranced
 When, with her fingers wandering o'er the keys,
 The white enchantress with the golden hair
 Breathed all her soul through some unvalued
 rhyme ;
 Some flower of song that long had lost its bloom ;
 Lo! its dead summer kindled as she sang !
 The sweet contralto, like the ringdove's coo,
 Thrilled it with brooding, fond, caressing tones,
 And the pale minstrel's passion lived again
 Tearful and trembling as a dewy-rose
 The wind has shaken till it fills the air
 With light and fragrance. Such the wondrous
 charm
 A song can borrow when the bosom throbs
 That lends it breath.

So from the poet's lips
 His verse sounds doubly sweet, for none like him
 Feels every cadence of its wave-like flow ;
 He lives the passion over, while he reads,

That shook him as he sang his lofty strain,
 And pours his life through each resounding line,
 As ocean, when the stormy winds are hushed,
 Still rolls and thunders through his billowy caves.

IV. MASTER AND SCHOLAR.

LET me retrace the record of the years
 That made me what I am. A man most wise,
 But overworn with toil and bent with age,
 Sought me to be his scholar,—me, run wild
 From books and teachers,—kindled in my soul
 The love of knowledge ; led me to his tower,
 Showed me the wonders of the midnight realm
 His hollow sceptre ruled, or seemed to rule,
 Taught me the mighty secrets of the spheres,
 Trained me to find the glimmering specks of light
 Beyond the unaided sense, and on my chart
 To string them one by one, in order due,
 As on a rosary a saint his beads.
 I was his only scholar ; I became
 The echo to his thought ; whate'er he knew
 Was mine for asking ; so from year to year
 We wrought together, till there came a time
 When I, the learner, was the master half
 Of the twinned being in the dome-crowned tower.

Minds roll in paths like planets ; they revolve
 This in a larger, that a narrower ring,
 But round they come at last to that same phase,
 That selfsame light and shade they showed before
 I learned his annual and his monthly tale,
 His weekly axiom and his daily phrase,

I felt them coming in the laden air,
 And watched them labouring up to vocal breath,
 Even as the first-born at his father's board
 Knows ere he speaks the too familiar jest
 Is on its way, by some mysterious sign
 Forewarned, the click before the striking bell.

He shrivelled as I spread my growing leaves,
 Till trust and reverence changed to pitying care ;
 He lived for me in what he once had been,
 But I for him, a shadow, a defence,
 The guardian of his fame, his guide, his staff,
 Leaned on so long he fell if left alone.
 I was his eye, his ear, his cunning hand,
 Love was my spur and longing after fame,
 But his the goading thorn of sleepless age
 That sees its shortening span, its lengthening
 shades,
 That clutches what it may with eager grasp,
 And drops at last, with empty, outstretched hands.

All this he dreamed not. He would sit him
 down

Thinking to work his problems as of old,
 And find the star he thought so plain a blur,
 The columned figures labyrinthine wilds
 Without my comment, blind and senseless scrawls
 That vexed him with their riddles ; he would strive
 And struggle for a while, and then his eye
 Would lose its light, and over all his mind,
 The cold gray mist would settle ; and ere long
 The darkness fell, and I was left alone.

V. ALONE.

ALONE ! no climber of an Alpine cliff,
 No Arctic venturer on the waveless sea,
 Feels the dread stillness round him as it chills
 The heart of him who leaves the slumbering earth
 To watch the silent worlds that crowd the sky.

Alone ! And as the shepherd leaves his flock
 To feed upon the hillside, he meanwhile
 Finds converse in the warblings of the pipe
 Himself has fashioned for his vacant hour,
 So have I grown companion to myself,
 And to the wandering spirits of the air
 That smile and whisper round us in our dreams.
 Thus have I learned to search if I may know
 The whence and why of all beneath the stars
 And all beyond them, and to weigh my life
 As in a balance,—poising good and ill
 Against each other,—asking of the Power
 That flung me forth among the whirling worlds
 If I am heir to any inborn right,
 Or only as an atom of the dust
 That every wind may blow where'er it will.

VI. QUESTIONING.

I AM not humble ; I was shown my place,
 Clad in such robes as Nature had at hand ;
 Took what she gave, not chose ; I know no shame,
 No fear for being simply what I am.
 I am not proud, I hold my every breath

At Nature's mercy. I am as a babe
 Borne in a giant's arms, he knows not where ;
 Each several heart-beat, counted like the coin
 A miser reckons, is a special gift
 As from an unseen hand ; if that withhold
 Its bounty for a moment, I am left
 A clod upon the earth to which I fall.

Something I find in me that well might claim
 The love of beings in a sphere above
 This doubtful twilight world of right and wrong ;
 Something that shows me of the selfsame clay
 That creeps or swims or flies in humblest form.
 Had I been asked, before I left my bed
 Of shapeless dust, what clothing I would wear,
 I would have said, More angel and less worm ;
 But for their sake who are even such as I,
 Of the same mingled blood, I would not choose
 To hate that meaner portion of myself
 Which makes me brother to the least of men.

I dare not be a coward with my lips
 Who dare to question all things in my soul ;
 Some men may find their wisdom on their knees,
 Some prone and grovelling in the dust like slaves ;
 Let the meek glow-worm glisten in the dew ;
 I ask to lift my taper to the sky
 As they who hold their lamps above their heads,
 Trusting the larger currents up aloft,
 Rather than crossing eddies round their breast,
 Threatening with every puff the flickering blaze.

My life shall be a challenge, not a truce !
This is my homage to the mightier powers,
To ask my boldest question, undismayed
By muttered threats that some hysteric sense
Of wrong or insult will convulse the throne
Where wisdom reigns supreme ; and if I err,
They all must err—who have to feel their way
As bats that fly at noon ; for what are we
But creatures of the night, dragged forth by day,
Who needs must stumble, and with stammering steps
Spell out their paths in syllables of pain ?

Thou wilt not hold in scorn the child who dares
Look up to Thee, the Father,—dares to ask
More than Thy wisdom answers. From Thy hand
The worlds were cast ; yet every leaflet claims
From that same hand its little shining sphere
Of star-lit dew ; thine image, the great sun,
Girt with his mantle of tempestuous flame,
Glares in mid-heaven ; but to his noontide blaze
The slender violet lifts its lidless eye,
And from his splendour steals its fairest hue,
Its sweetest perfume from his scorching fire.

VII.—WORSHIP.

FROM my lone turret as I look around
O'er the green meadows to the ring of blue,
From slope, from summit, and from half-hid vale
The sky is stabbed with dagger-pointed spires
Their gilded symbols whirling in the wind,
Their brazen tongues proclaiming to the world,
“ Here truth is sold, the only genuine ware ;

See that it has our trade-mark ! You will buy
 Poison instead of food across the way,
 The lies of—" this or that, each several name
 The standard's blazon and the battle-cry
 Of some true-gospel faction, and again
 The token of the Beast to all beside.
 And grouped round each I see a huddling crowd
 Alike in all things save the words they use ;
 In love, in longing, hate and fear the same.

Whom do we trust and serve? We speak of one
 And bow to many ; Athens still would find
 The shrines of all she worshipped safe within
 Our tall barbarian temples, and the thrones
 That crowned Olympus mighty as of old.
 The god of music rules the Sabbath choir ;
 The lyric muse must leave the sacred nine
 To help us please the dilettante's ear ;
 Plutus limps homeward with us, as we leave
 The portals of the temple where we knelt
 And listened while the god of eloquence
 (Hermes of ancient days, but now disguised
 In sable vestments) with that other god
 Somnus, the son of Erebus and Nox,
 Fights in unequal contest for our souls ;
 The dreadful sovereign of the under world
 Still shakes his sceptre at us, and we hear
 The baying of the triple-throated hound ;
 Eros is young as ever, and as fair
 The lovely Goddess born of ocean's foam.

These be thy gods, O Israel ! Who is he,
 The one ye name and tell us that ye serve,

Whom ye would call me from my lonely tower
 To worship with the many-headed throng?
 Is it the God that walked in Eden's grove
 In the cool hour to seek our guilty sire?
 The God who dealt with Abraham as the sons
 Of that old patriarch deal with other men?
 The jealous God of Moses, one who feels
 An image as an insult, and is wroth
 With him who made it and his child unborn?
 The God who plagued His people for the sin
 Of their adulterous king, beloved of him,—
 The same who offers to a chosen few
 The right to praise Him in eternal song,
 While a vast shrieking world of endless woe
 Blends its dread chorus with their rapturous hymn?
 Is this the God you mean, or is it He
 Who heeds the sparrow's fall, whose loving heart
 Is as the pitying father's to his child,
 Whose lesson to His children is "Forgive,"
 Whose plea for all, "They know not what they
 do?"

VIII.—MANHOOD.

I CLAIM the right of knowing whom I serve,
 Else is my service idle; He that asks
 My homage asks it from a reasoning soul.
 To crawl is not to worship; we have learned
 A drill of eyelids, bended neck and knee,
 Hanging our prayers on hinges, till we ape
 The flexures of the many-jointed worm.
 Asia has taught her Allahs and salaams
 To the world's children,—we have grown to men!

We who have rolled the sphere beneath our feet
 To find a virgin forest, as we lay
 The beams of our rude temple, first of all
 Must frame its doorway high enough for man
 To pass unstooping ; knowing as we do
 That He who shaped us last of living forms
 Has long enough been served by creeping things,
 Reptiles that left their footprints in the sand
 Of old sea-margins that have turned to stone,
 And men who learned their ritual ; we demand
 To know Him first, then trust Him and then love,
 When we have found Him worthy of our love,
 Tried by our own poor hearts and not before ;
 He must be truer than the truest friend,
 He must be tenderer than a woman's love,
 A father better than the best of sires ;
 Kinder than she who bore us, though we sin
 Oftener than did the brother we are told,
 We—poor ill-tempered mortals—must forgive,
 Though seven times sinning threescore times and
 ten.

This is the new world's gospel : Be ye men !
 Try well the legends of the children's time ;
 Ye are the chosen people, God has led
 Your steps across the desert of the deep
 As now across the desert of the shore ;
 Mountains are cleft before you as the sea
 Before the wandering tribe of Israel's sons ;
 Still onward rolls the thunderous caravan,
 Its coming printed on the western sky,
 A cloud by day, by night a pillared flame ;
 Your prophets are a hundred unto one

Of them of old who cried, " Thus saith the Lord ;"
 They told of cities that should fall in heaps,
 But yours of mightier cities that shall rise,
 Where yet the lonely fishers spread their nets
 Where hides the fox and hoots the midnight owl ;
 The tree of knowledge in your garden grows
 Not single, but at every humble door ;
 Its branches lend you their immortal food,
 That fills you with the sense of what ye are,
 No servants of an altar hewed and carved
 From senseless stone by craft of human hands,
 Rabbi, or dervish, brahmin, bishop, bonze,
 But masters of the charm with which they work
 To keep your hands from that forbidden tree !

Ye that have tasted that divinest fruit,
 Look on this world of yours with opened eyes !
 Ye are as gods ! Nay, makers of your gods,—
 Each day ye break an image in your shrine
 And plant a fairer image where it stood ;
 Where is the Moloch of your fathers' creed,
 Whose fires of torment burned for span-long
 babes ?

Fit object for a tender mother's love !
 Why not ? It was a bargain duly made
 For these same infants through the surety's act
 Intrusted with their all for earth and heaven,
 By Him who chose their guardian, knowing well
 His fitness for the task,—this, even this,
 Was the true doctrine only yesterday
 As thoughts are reckoned,—and to-day you hear
 In words that sound as if from human tongues
 Those monstrous, uncouth horrors of the past
 That blot the blue of heaven and shame the earth

As would the saurians of the age of slime,
Awaking from their stony sepulchres
And wallowing hateful in the eye of day!

IX.—RIGHTS.

WHAT am I but the creature Thou hast made?
What have I save the blessings Thou hast lent?
What hope I but Thy mercy and Thy love?
Who but myself shall cloud my soul with fear?
Whose hand protect me from myself but Thine?

I claim the rights of weakness, I, the babe,
Call on my sire to shield me from the ills
That still beset my path, not trying me
With snares beyond my wisdom or my strength,
He knowing I shall use them to my harm,
And find a tenfold misery in the sense
That in my childlike folly I have sprung
The trap upon myself as vermin use
Drawn by the cunning bait to certain doom.
Who wrought the wondrous charm that leads us on
To sweet perdition, but the selfsame power
That set the fearful engine to destroy
His wretched offspring (as the Rabbis tell),
And hid its yawning jaws and treacherous springs
In such a show of innocent sweet flowers
It lured the sinless angels and they fell?

Ah! He who prayed the prayer of all mankind
Summed in those few brief words the mightiest
plea

For erring souls before the courts of heaven,—
Save us from being tempted,—lest we fall!

If we are only as the potter's clay
 Made to be fashioned as the artist wills,
 And broken into shards if we offend
 The eye of Him who made us, it is well ;
 Such love as the insensate lump of clay
 That spins upon the swift-revolving wheel
 Bears to the hand that shapes its growing form,
 Such love, no more, will be our hearts' return
 To the great Master-workman for His care,—
 Or would be, save that this, our breathing clay,
 Is intertwined with fine innumerable threads
 That make it conscious in its framer's hand ;
 And this He must remember who has filled
 These vessels with the deadly draught of life,—
 Life, that means death to all it claims. Our
 love

Must kindle in the ray that streams from heaven,
 A faint reflection of the light divine ;
 The sun must warm the earth before the rose
 Can show her inmost heart-leaves to the sun.
 He yields some fraction of the Maker's right
 Who gives the quivering nerve its sense of pain ;
 Is there not something in the pleading eye
 Of the poor brute that suffers, which arraigns
 The law that bids it suffer? Has it not
 A claim for some remembrance in the book
 That fills its pages with the idle words
 Spoken of men? Or is it only clay,
 Bleeding and aching in the potter's hand,
 Yet all his own to treat it as he will,
 And when he will to cast it at his feet,
 Shattered, dishonoured, lost for evermore?
 My dog loves me, but could he look beyond

His earthly master, would his love extend
 To Him who—Hush! I will not doubt that
 He
 Is better than our fears, and will not wrong
 The least, the meanest of created things!

He would not trust me with the smallest orb
 That circles through the sky; He would not give
 A meteor to my guidance; would not leave
 The colouring of a cloudlet to my hand;
 He locks my beating heart beneath its bars
 And keeps the key himself; He measures out
 The draughts of vital breath that warm my blood,
 Winds up the springs of instinct which uncoil,
 Each in its season; ties me to my home,
 My race, my time, my nation, and my creed
 So closely that if I but slip my wrist
 Out of the band that cuts it to the bone,
 Men say, "He hath a devil;" He has lent
 All that I hold in trust, as unto one
 By reason of his weakness and his years
 Not fit to hold the smallest shred in fee
 Of those most common things he calls his own—
 And yet—my Rabbi tells me—He has left
 The care of that to which a million worlds
 Filled with unconscious life were less than naught,
 Has left that mighty universe, the Soul,
 To the weak guidance of our baby hands,
 Let the foul fiends have access at their will,
 Taking the shape of angels, to our hearts,—
 Our hearts already poisoned through and through
 With the fierce virus of ancestral sin;
 Turned us adrift with our immortal charge,

To wreck ourselves in gulfs of endless woe.
 If what my Rabbi tells me is the truth
 Why did the choir of angels sing for joy?
 Heaven must be compassed in a narrow space,
 And offer more than room enough for all
 That pass its portals ; but the under-world,
 The godless realm, the place where demons
 forge

Their fiery darts and adamantine chains,
 Must swarm with ghosts that for a little while
 Had worn the garb of flesh, and being heirs
 Of all the dulness of their stolid sires,
 And all the erring instincts of their tribe,
 Nature's own teaching, rudiments of "sin,"
 Fell headlong in the snare that could not fail
 To trap the wretched creatures shaped of clay
 And cursed with sense enough to lose their souls!

Brother, thy heart is troubled at my word ;
 Sister, I see the cloud is on thy brow.

He will not blame me, He who sends not peace,
 But sends a sword, and bids us strike amain
 At Error's gilded crest, where in the van
 Of earth's great army, mingling with the best
 And bravest of its leaders, shouting loud
 The battle-cries that yesterday have led
 The host of Truth to victory, but to-day
 Are watchwords of the laggard and the slave,
 He leads his dazzled cohorts. God has made
 This world a strife of atoms and of spheres ;
 With every breath I sigh myself away
 And take my tribute from the wandering wind
 To fan the flame of life's consuming fire ;
 So, while my thought has life, it needs must burn,

And burning, set the stubble-fields ablaze;
 Where all the harvest long ago was reaped
 And safely garnered in the ancient barns,
 But still the gleaners, groping for their food,
 Go blindly feeling through the close-shorn straw,
 While the young reapers flash their glittering
 steel
 Where later suns have ripened nobler grain!

X.—TRUTHS.

THE time is racked with birth-pangs; every hour
 Brings forth some gasping truth, and truth new-
 born
 Looks a misshapen and untimely growth,
 The terror of the household and its shame,
 A monster coiling in its nurse's lap
 That some would strangle, some would only starve;
 But still it breathes, and passed from hand to
 hand,
 And suckled at a hundred half-clad breasts,
 Comes slowly to its stature and its form,
 Calms the rough ridges of its dragon-scales,
 Changes to shining locks its snaky hair,
 And moves transfigured into angel guise,
 Welcomed by all that cursed its hour of birth,
 And folded in the same encircling arms
 That cast it like a serpent from their hold!

If thou wouldst live in honour, die in peace,
 Have the fine words the marble-workers learn
 To carve so well, upon thy funeral-stone,
 And earn a fair obituary, dressed

In all the many-coloured robes of praise,
 Be deafer than the adder to the cry
 Of that same foundling truth, until it grows
 To seemly favour, and at length has won
 The smiles of hard-mouthed men and light-lipped
 dames ;

Then snatch it from its meagre nurse's breast,
 Fold it in silk and give it food from gold ;
 So shalt thou share its glory when at last
 It drops its mortal vesture, and revealed
 In all the splendour of its heavenly form,
 Spreads on the startled air its mighty wings !

Alas ! how much that seemed immortal truth
 That heroes fought for, martyrs died to save,
 Reveals its earth-born lineage, growing old
 And limping in its march, its wings unplumed,
 Its heavenly semblance faded like a dream !

Here in this painted casket, just unsealed,
 Lies what was once a breathing shape like thine,
 Once loved as thou art loved ; there beamed the
 eyes

That looked on Memphis in its hour of pride,
 That saw the walls of hundred-gated Thebes,
 And all the mirrored glories of the Nile.
 See how they toiled that all-consuming time
 Might leave the frame immortal in its tomb ;
 Filled it with fragrant balms and odorous gums
 That still diffuse their sweetness through the air,
 And wound and wound with patient fold on fold
 The flaxen bands thy hand has rudely torn !
 Perchance thou yet canst see the faded stain
 Of the sad mourner's tear.

XI.—IDOLS.

BUT what is this?

The sacred beetle, bound upon the breast
Of the blind heathen ! Snatch the curious prize,
Give it a place among thy treasured spoils
Fossil and relic—corals, encrinites,
The fly in amber and the fish in stone,
The twisted circlet of Etruscan gold,
Medal, intaglio, poniard, poison-ring,—
Place for the Memphian beetle with thine hoard !

Ah ! longer than thy creed has blest the world
This toy, thus ravished from thy brother's breast,
Was to the heart of Mizraim as divine,
As holy, as the symbol that we lay
On the still bosom of our white-robed dead,
And raise above their dust that all may know
Here sleeps an heir of glory. Loving friends,
With tears of trembling faith and choking sobs,
And prayers to those who judge of mortal deeds,
Wrapped this poor image in the cerement's fold,
That Isis and Osiris, friends of man,
Might know their own and claim the ransomed soul.

An idol? Man was born to worship such !
An idol is an image of his thought ;
Sometimes he carves it out of gleaming stone,
And sometimes moulds it out of glittering gold,
Or rounds it in a mighty frescoed dome,
Or lifts it heavenward in a lofty spire,
Or shapes it in a cunning frame of words,
Or pays his priest to make it day by day ;

For sense must have its god as well as soul ;
 A new-born Dian calls for silver shrines,
 And Egypt's holiest symbol is our own,
 The sign we worship as did they of old
 When Isis and Osiris ruled the world.

Let us be true to our most subtle selves,
 We long to have our idols like the rest.
 Think ! when the men of Israel had their God
 Encamped among them, talking with their chief,
 Leading them in the pillar of the cloud
 And watching o'er them in the shaft of fire,
 They still must have an image ; still they longed
 For somewhat of substantial, solid form
 Whereon to hang their garlands, and to fix
 Their wandering thoughts and gain a stronger hold
 For their uncertain faith, not yet assured
 If those same meteors of the day and night
 Were not mere exhalations of the soil.

Are we less earthly than the chosen race?
 Are we more neighbours of the living God
 Than they who gathered manna every morn,
 Reaping where none had sown, and heard the voice
 Of him who met the Highest in the mount,
 And brought them tables, graven with His hand?
 Yet these must have their idol, brought their gold,
 That star-browed Apis might be god again ;
 Yea, from their ears the women brake the rings
 That lent such splendours to the gipsy brown
 Of sunburnt cheeks,—what more could woman do
 To show her pious zeal? They went astray,
 But nature led them as it leads us all.

We too, who mock at Israel's golden calf

And scoff at Egypt's sacred scarabee,
 Would have our amulets to clasp and kiss,
 And flood with rapturous tears, and bear with us
 To be our dear companions in the dust ;
 Such magic works an image in our souls !

Man is an embryo ; see at twenty years
 His bones, the columns that uphold his frame
 Not yet cemented, shaft and capital,
 Mere fragments of the temple incomplete.
 At twoscore, threescore, is he then full grown ?
 Nay, still a child, and as the little maids
 Dress and undress their puppets, so he tries
 To dress a lifeless creed, as if it lived,
 And change its raiment when the world cries shame !

We smile to see our little ones at play
 So grave, so thoughtful, with maternal care
 Nursing the wisps of rags they call their babes ;—
 Does He not smile who sees us with the toys
 We call by sacred names, and idly feign
 To be what we have called them ? He is still
 The Father of this helpless nursery-brood,
 Whose second childhood joins so close its first,
 That in the crowding, hurrying years between
 We scarce have trained our senses to their task
 Before the gathering mist has dimmed our eyes,
 And with our hollowed palm we help our ear,
 And trace with trembling hand our wrinkled names,
 And then begin to tell our stories o'er,
 And see—not hear—the whispering lips that say,
 “ You know—— ? Your father knew him.—This is
 he,
 Tottering and leaning on the hireling's arm,—”

And so, at length, disrobed of all that clad
 The simple life we share with weed and worm,
 Go to our cradles, naked as we came.

XII.—LOVE.

WHAT if a soul redeemed, a spirit that loved
 While yet on earth and was beloved in turn,
 And still remembered every look and tone
 Of that dear earthly sister who was left
 Among the unwise virgins at the gate,—
 Itself admitted with the Bridegroom's train,—
 What if this spirit redeemed, amid the host
 Of chanting angels, in some transient lull
 Of the eternal anthem, heard the cry
 Of its lost darling, whom in evil hour
 Some wilder pulse of nature led astray
 And left an outcast in a world of fire,
 Condemned to be the sport of cruel fiends,
 Sleepless, unpitying masters of the skill
 To wring the maddest ecstasies of pain
 From worn-out souls that only ask to die,—
 Would it not long to leave the bliss of heaven,—
 Bearing a little water in its hand
 To moisten those poor lips that plead in vain
 With Him we call our Father? Or is all
 So changed in such as taste celestial joy
 They hear unmoved the endless wail of woe ;
 The daughter in the same dear tones that hushed
 Her cradled slumbers ; she who once had held
 A babe upon her bosom from its voice
 Hoarse with its cry of anguish, yet the same ?

No ! not in ages when the Dreadful Bird
 Stamped his huge footprints, and the Fearful
 Beast

Strode with the flesh about those fossil bones
 We build to mimic life with pigmy hands,—
 Not in those earliest days when men ran wild
 And gashed each other with their knives of
 stone,

When their low foreheads bulged in ridgy brows
 And their flat hands were callous in the palm
 With walking in the fashion of their sires,
 Grope as they might to find a cruel god
 To work their will on such as human wrath
 Had wrought its worst to torture, and had left
 With rage unsated, white and stark and cold,
 Could hate have shaped a demon more malign
 Than him the dead men mummied in their creed
 And taught their trembling children to adore !

Made in *His* image ! Sweet and gracious
 souls

Dear to my heart by nature's fondest names,
 Is not your memory still the precious mould
 That lends its form to Him who hears my prayer ?
 Thus only I behold Him, like to them,
 Long-suffering, gentle, ever slow to wrath,
 If wrath it be that only wounds to heal,
 Ready to meet the wanderer ere he reach
 The door he seeks, forgetful of his sin,
 Longing to clasp him in a father's arms,
 And seal his pardon with a pitying tear !

Four gospels tell their story to mankind,
 And none so full of soft, caressing words

That bring the Maid of Bethlehem and her Babe
 Before our tear-dimmed eyes, as his who learned
 In the meek service of his gracious art
 The tones which like the medicinal balms
 That calm the sufferer's anguish, soothe our souls.
 —Oh that the loving woman, she who sat
 So long a listener at her Master's feet,
 Had left us Mary's Gospel,—all she heard
 Too sweet, too subtle for the ear of man!
 Mark how the tender-hearted mothers read
 The messages of love between the lines
 Of the same page that loads the bitter tongue
 Of him who deals in terror as his trade
 With threatening words of wrath that scorch like
 flame!

They tell of angels whispering round the bed
 Of the sweet infant smiling in its dream,
 Of lambs enfolded in the Shepherd's arms,
 Of Him who blessed the children; of the land
 Where crystal rivers feed unfading flowers,
 Of cities golden-paved with streets of pearl,
 Of the white robes the winged creatures wear,
 The crowns and harps from whose melodious
 strings

One long, sweet anthem flows for evermore!

—We too had human mothers, even as Thou,
 Whom we have learned to worship as remote
 From mortal kindred, wast a cradled babe.
 The milk of woman filled our branching veins,
 She lulled us with her tender nursery-song,
 And folded round us her untiring arms,
 While the first unremembered twilight year
 Shaped us to conscious being; still we feel

Her pulses in our own,—too faintly feel ;
 Would that the heart of woman warmed our
 creeds !

Not from the sad-eyed hermit's lonely cell,
 Not from the conclave where the holy men
 Glare on each other, as with angry eyes
 They battle for God's glory and their own,
 Till, sick of wordy strife, a show of hands
 Fixes the faith of ages yet unborn,—
 Ah, not from these the listening soul can hear
 The Father's voice that speaks itself divine !
 Love must be still our Master ; till we learn
 What he can teach us of a woman's heart,
 We know not His whose love embraces all.

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
 CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

UNTA DE ANDALUCÍA EPILOGUE TO THE BREAKFAST-
 TABLE SERIES.

AUTOCRAT—PROFESSOR—POET. *At a bookstore.*
Anno Domini 1972.

A CRAZY bookcase, placed before
 A low-price dealer's open door ;
 Therein arrayed in broken rows
 A ragged crew of rhyme and prose,
 The homeless vagrants, waifs and strays
 Whose low estate this line betrays
 (Set forth the lesser birds to lime)
 YOUR CHOICE AMONG THESE BOOKS, 1 DIME !

Ho! dealer ; for its motto's sake
 This scarecrow from the shelf I take ;
 Three starveling volumes bound in one,
 Its covers warping in the sun,
 Methinks it hath a musty smell,
 I like its flavour none too well,
 But Yorick's brain was far from dull,
 Though Hamlet pah ! 'd, and dropped his skull.

Why, here comes rain ! The sky grows dark,—
 Was that the roll of thunder? Hark !
 The shop affords a safe retreat,
 A chair extends its welcome seat,
 The tradesman has a civil look
 (I've paid, impromptu, for my book),
 The clouds portend a sudden shower,—
 I'll read my purchase for an hour.

What have I rescued from the shelf?
 A Boswell, writing out himself !
 For though he changes dress and name,
 The man beneath is still the same,
 Laughing or sad, by fits and starts,
 One actor in a dozen parts,
 And whatsoe'er the mask may be,
 The voice assures us, *This is he.*

I say not this to cry him down ;
 I find my Shakespeare in his clown,
 His rogues the selfsame parent own ;
 Nay ! Satan talks in Milton's tone !
 Where'er the ocean inlet strays,
 The salt sea wave its source betrays,

M

Where'er the queen of summer blows,
She tells the zephyr, "I'm the rose!"
And his is not the playwright's page;
His table does not ape the stage;
What matter if the figures seen
Are only shadows on a screen,
He finds in them his lurking thought,
And on their lips the words he sought,
Like one who sits before the keys
And plays a tune himself to please.

And was he noted in his day?
Read, flattered, honoured? Who shall say?
Poor wreck of time the wave has cast
To find a peaceful shore at last,
Once glorying in thy gilded name
And freighted deep with hopes of fame,
Thy leaf is moistened with a tear,
The first for many a long, long year!

For be it more or less of art
That veils the lowliest human heart
Where passion throbs, where friendship glows,
Where pity's tender tribute flows,
Where love has lit its fragrant fire,
And sorrow quenched its vain desire.
For me the altar is divine,
Its flame, its ashes,—all are mine!

And thou, my brother, as I look
And see thee pictured in thy book,
Thy years on every page confessed
In shadows lengthening from the west,

Thy glance that wanders, as it sought
Some freshly opening flower of thought,
Thy hopeful nature, light and free,
I start to find myself in thee !

.....
Come, vagrant, outcast, wretch forlorn,
In leather jerkin stained and torn,
Whose talk has filled my idle hour
And made me half forget the shower,
I'll do at least as much for you,
Your coat I'll patch, your guilt renew,
Read you—perhaps—some other time.
Not had, my bargain! Price one dime !

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA



ADDITIONAL POEMS.

TO 1878.



AT A MEETING OF FRIENDS.

(August 29, 1859.)

I REMEMBER—why yes! God bless me! and was it
so long ago?

I fear I'm growing forgetful, as old folks do, you
know;

It must have been in 'forty—I would say 'thirty-nine—
We talked this matter over, I and a friend of mine.

He said, "Well now, old fellow, I'm thinking that
you and I,

If we act like other people, shall be older by-and-by;
What though the bright blue ocean is smooth as a
pond can be,

There is always a line of breakers to fringe the
broadest sea.

"We're taking it mighty easy, but that is nothing
strange,

For up to the age of thirty we spend our years like
change;

But creeping up towards the forties, as fast as the old
years fill,
And Time steps in for payment, we seem to change
a bill."

"I know it," I said, "old fellow ; you speak the
solemn truth ;
A man can't live to a hundred and likewise keep his
youth ;
But what if the ten years coming shall silver-streak
my hair,
You know I shall then be forty ; of course I shall not
care.

"At forty a man grows heavy and tired of fun and
noise,
Leaves dress to the five-and-twenties and love to the
silly boys ;
No foppish tricks at forty, no pinching of waists and
toes,
But high-low shoes and flannels and good thick
worsted hose."

But one fine August morning I found myself awake :
My birthday :—By Jove, I'm forty ! Yes, forty, and
no mistake !

Why this is the very milestone, I think I used to
hold,
That when a fellow had come to, a fellow would then
be old !

But that is the young folks' nonsense ; they're full of
their foolish stuff ;
A man's in his prime at forty,—I see *that* plain
enough ;

At *fifty* a man is wrinkled, and *may be* bald or gray ;
I call men old at fifty, in spite of all they say.

At last comes another August, with mist and rain and
shine ;

Its mornings are slowly counted and creep to twenty-
nine,

And when on the western summits the fading light
appears,

It touches with rosy fingers the last of my fifty years.

There have been both men and women whose hearts
were firm and bold,

But there never was one of fifty that loved to say
"I'm old ;"

So any elderly person that strives to shirk his years,
Make him stand up at a table and try him by his peers.

Now here I stand at fifty, my jury gathered round ;
Sprinkled with dust of silver, but not yet silver-

crowned,

Ready to meet your verdict, waiting to hear it told ;
Guilty of fifty summers ; speak ! Is the verdict *old* ?

No ! say that his hearing fails him ; say that his
sight grows dim ;

Say that he's getting wrinkled and weak in back and
limb,

Losing his wits and temper, but pleading, to make
amends,

The youth of his fifty summers he finds in his twenty
friends.

