

Sonnets of This Century.

*Scorn not the Sonnet ; Critic, you have frowned,  
Mindless of its just honours ; with this key  
Shakespeare unlocked his heart ; the melody  
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound ;  
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound ;  
With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief ;  
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf  
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned  
His visionary brow ; a glow-worm lamp,  
It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land  
To struggle through dark ways ; and, when a damp  
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand  
The Thing became a trumpet, whence he blew  
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few !*

—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

## L.

## EASTER EVE.

I SAW two women weeping by the tomb  
Of one new buried, in a fair green place  
Bowered with shrubs ;—the eve retained no trace  
Of aught that day performed,—but the faint gloom  
Of dying day was spread upon the sky ;—  
The moon was broad and bright above the wood ;—  
The distance sounded of a multitude,  
Music and shout and mingled revelry.  
At length came gleaming through the thicket shade  
Helmet and casque—and a steel-armed band  
Watched round the sepulchre in solemn stand ;  
The night-word passed, from man to man conveyed ;  
And I could see those women rise and go  
Under the dark trees moving sad and slow.

very good

## II.

## AUTUMNAL SONNET.

Now Autumn's fire burns slowly along the woods,  
And day by day the dead leaves fall and melt,  
And night by night the monitory blast  
Wails in the key-hole, telling how it pass'd  
O'er empty fields, or upland solitudes,  
Or grim wide wave ; and now the power is felt  
Of melancholy, tenderer in its moods  
Than any joy indulgent summer dealt.

Dear friends, together in the glimmering eve,  
Pensive and glad, with tones that recognise  
The soft invisible dew in each one's eyes,  
It may be, somewhat thus we shall have leave  
To walk with memory,—when distant lies  
Poor Earth, where we were wont to live and grieve.

## III.

## A DAY-DREAM'S REFLECTION.

(*"On the Sunny Shore."*)

CHEQUER'D with woven shadows as I lay  
Among the grass, blinking the watery gleam,  
I saw an Echo-Spirit in his bay  
Most idly floating in the noontide beam.  
Slow heaved his filmy skiff, and fell, with sway  
Of ocean's giant pulsing, and the Dream,  
Buoyed like the young moon on a level stream  
Of greenish vapour at decline of day,  
Swam airily, watching the distant flocks  
Of sea-gulls, whilst a foot in careless sweep  
Touched the clear-trembling cool with tiny sheeks,  
Faint-circling ; till at last he dropt asleep,  
Lull'd by the hush-song of the glittering deep,  
Lap-lapping drowsily the heated rocks.

## IV.

## AFTER SUNSET.

THE vast and solemn company of clouds  
Around the Sun's death, lit, incarnadined,  
Cool into ashy wan ; as Night enshrouds  
The level pasture, creeping up behind  
Through voiceless vales, o'er lawn and purpled hill  
And hazèd mead, her mystery to fulfil.  
Cows low from far-off farms ; the loitering wind  
Sighs in the hedge, you hear it if you will,—  
Tho' all the wood, alive atop with wings  
Lifting and sinking through the leafy nooks,  
Seethes with the clamour of a thousand rooks.  
Now every sound at length is hush'd away.  
These few are sacred moments. One more Day  
Drops in the shadowy gulf of bygone things.

*excellent*

## V.

## EAST LONDON.

'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead  
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,  
And the pale weaver through his windows seen  
In Spitalfields, looked thrice dispirited ;  
I met a preacher there I knew, and said :  
    ' Ill and o'erworked, how fare you in this scene ?'  
    ' Bravely,' said he ; ' for I of late have been  
Much cheered with thoughts of Christ, *the living bread.*'  
O human soul ! as long as thou canst so  
    Set up a mark of everlasting light,  
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,  
To cheer thee and to right thee if thou roam,  
    Not with lost toil thou labourest through the night !  
Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st indeed thy home.

## VI.

## SHAKESPEARE.

OTHERS abide our question—Thou art free.

We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,

Out-topping knowledge! For the loftiest hill

Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,

Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,

Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,

Spares but the cloudy border of his base

To the foil'd searching of Mortality;

And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,  
Self-schooled, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure,  
Didst walk on earth unguess'd at.—Better so!

*misconnected*

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,

All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,

Find their sole voice in that victorious brow.



## VII.

## IMMORTALITY.

Foil'd by our fellow men, depress'd, outworn,  
We leave the brutal world to take its way,  
And, *Patience! in another life*, we say,  
*The world shall be thrust down, and we up-borne!*

And will not, then, the immortal armies scorn  
The world's poor routed leavings? or will they,  
Who fail'd under the heat of this life's day,  
Support the fervours of the heavenly morn?

No, no! the energy of life may be  
Kept on after the grave, but not begun!  
And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife,

From strength to strength advancing—only he,  
His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,  
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

## VIII.

## LOVE'S BLINDNESS.

Now do I know that Love is blind, for I  
 Can see no beauty on this beauteous earth,  
 No life, no light, no hopefulness, no mirth,  
 Pleasure nor purpose, when thou art not nigh.  
 Thy absence exiles sunshine from the sky,  
 Seres Spring's maturity, checks Summer's birth,  
 Leaves linnet's pipe as sad as plover's cry,  
 And makes me in abundance find but dearth.  
 But when thy feet flutter the dark, and thou  
 With orient eyes dawnest on my distress,  
 Suddenly sings a bird on every bough,  
 The heavens expand, the earth grows less and less,  
 The ground is buoyant as the ether now,  
 And all looks lovely in thy loveliness.

*the only good  
 thing here.*

*excellent.*

IX.

## LOVE'S WISDOM.

Now on the summit of Love's topmost peak  
Kiss we and part ; no further can we go ;  
And better death than we from high to low  
Should dwindle or decline from strong to weak.  
We have found all, there is no more to seek ;  
All have we proved, no more is there to know ;  
And Time could only tutor us to eke  
Out rapture's warmth with custom's afterglow.  
We cannot keep at such a height as this ;  
For even straining souls like ours inhale  
But once in life so rarefied a bliss.  
What if we lingered till love's breath should fail !  
Heaven of my Earth ! one more celestial kiss,  
Then down by separate pathways to the vale.

## X.

## UNSEASONABLE SNOWS.

THE leaves have not yet gone ; then why do ye come,  
O white flakes falling from a dusky cloud ?  
But yesterday my garden-plot was proud  
With uncut sheaves of ripe chrysanthemum.  
Some trees the winds have stripped ; but look on some,  
'Neath double load of snow and foliage bowed,  
Unnatural Winter fashioning a shroud  
For Autumn's burial ere its pulse be numb.  
Yet Nature plays not an inhuman part :  
In her, our own vicissitudes we trace.  
Do we not cling to our accustomed place,  
Though journeying Death have beckoned us to start ?  
And faded smiles oft linger in the face,  
While grief's first flakes fall silent on the heart !

*Of no worth.*

XI.

A SLEEPLESS NIGHT.

WITHIN the hollow silence of the night  
I lay awake and listened. I could hear  
Planet with punctual planet chiming clear,  
And unto star star cadencing aright.  
Nor these alone ; cloistered from deafening sight,  
All things that are made music to my ear :  
Hushed woods, dumb caves, and many a soundless mere,  
With Arctic mains in rigid sleep locked tight.  
But ever with this chant from shore and sea,  
From singing constellation, humming thought,  
And Life through Time's stops blowing variously,  
A melancholy undertone was wrought ;  
And from its boundless prison-house I caught  
The awful wail of lone Eternity.

## XII.

## OLD YEAR LEAVES.

THE leaves which in the autumn of the year  
Fall auburn-tinted, leaving reft and bare  
Their parent trees, in many a sheltered lair  
Where Winter waits and watches, cold, austere,  
Will lie in drifts ; and when the snowdrops cheer  
The woodland shadows, still the leaves are there,  
Though through the glades the balmy southern air  
And birds and boughs proclaim that Spring is here.

So lost hopes severed by the stress of life  
Lie all unburied yet before our eyes,  
Though none but we regard their mute decay ;  
And ever amid this stir and moil and strife  
Fresh aims and growing purposes arise  
Above the faded hopes of yesterday.

## XIII.

## LOVE'S DEPTH.

LOVE'S height is easy scaling ; skies allure ;  
Who feels the day-warmth needs must find it fair ;  
Strong eagles ride the lofty sunlit air,  
Risking no rivals while their wings endure.  
Yet is thy noblest still thy least secure,  
And failing thee—shall then thy love despair ?  
Shall not thy heart more holily prepare  
Some depth unfathomable,—perfect-pure ?

Say that to thee there come Love's dreadful call  
The downward swiftness of thy Best to see ;  
Say that he sin or sicken, what of thee ?  
Are thine arms deeper yet to stay his fall ?  
Scarcely love's utmost may in heaven be ;  
To hell it reacheth so 'tis love at all.

*good*

## XIV.

## WISHES OF YOUTH.

GAILY and greenly let my seasons run :  
 And should the war-winds of the world uproot  
 The sanctities of life, and its sweet fruit  
 Cast forth as fuel for the fiery sun ;  
 The dews be turned to ice—fair days begun  
 In peace wear out in pain, and sounds that suit  
 Despair and discord keep Hope's harpstring mute ;  
 Still let me live as Love and Life were one :  
 Still let me turn on earth a child-like gaze,  
 And trust the whispered charities that bring  
 Tidings of human truth ; with inward praise  
 Watch the weak motion of each common thing—  
 And find it glorious—still let me raise  
 On wintry wrecks an altar to the Spring.



## XV.

## THE DEAD.

THE dead abide with us ! Though stark and cold  
Earth seems to grip them, they are with us still  
They have forged our chains of being for good or ill ;  
And their invisible hands these hands yet hold.  
Our perishable bodies are the mould  
In which their strong imperishable will—  
Mortality's deep yearning to fulfil—  
Hath grown incorporate through dim time untold.

Vibrations infinite of life in death,  
As a star's travelling light survives its star ! ✓  
So may we hold our lives, that when we are  
The fate of those who then will draw this breath.  
They shall not drag us to their judgment-bar  
And curse the heritage which we bequeath.

## XVI.

## CLEAVE THOU THE WAVES.

CLEAVE thou the waves that weltering to and fro  
Surge multitudinous. The eternal Powers  
Of sun, moon, stars, the air, the hurrying hours,  
The winged winds, the still dissolving show  
Of clouds in calm or storm, for ever flow  
Above thee ; while the abysmal sea devours  
The untold dead insatiate, where it lowers  
O'er glooms unfathom'd, limitless, below.

No longer on the golden-fretted sands,  
Where many a shallow tide abortive chafes,  
Mayst thou delay ; life onward sweeping blends  
With far-off heaven : the dauntless one who braves  
The perilous flood with calm unswerving hands,  
The elements sustain : cleave thou the waves.

very good.

## XVII.

## CHRISTMAS EVE.

ALONE—with one fair star for company,  
The loveliest star among the hosts of night,  
While the grey tide ebbs with the ebbing light—  
I pace along the darkening wintry sea.  
Now round the yule-log and the glittering tree  
Twinkling with festive tapers, eyes as bright  
Sparkle with Christmas joys and young delight,  
As each one gathers to his family.

But I—a waif on earth where'er I roam—  
Uprooted with life's bleeding hopes and fears  
From that one heart that was my heart's sole home,  
Feel the old pang pierce through the severing years,  
And as I think upon the years to come  
That fair star trembles through my falling tears.

## XVIII.

## AN EXHORTATION.

WHY do we fret at the inconstancy  
 Of our frail hearts, which cannot always love ?  
 Time rushes onward, and we mortals move  
 Like waifs upon a river, neither free  
 To halt nor hurry. Sweet, if destiny  
 Throws us together for an hour, a day,  
 In the backwater of this quiet bay,  
 Let us rejoice. Before us lies the sea,  
 Where we must all be lost in spite of love.  
 We dare not stop to question. Happiness  
 Lies in our hand unsought, a treasure trove.  
 Time has short patience of man's vain distress :  
 And fate grows angry at too long delay,  
 And floods rise fast, and we are swept away.

ending be -  
 mark  
 repetition

## XIX.

## VANITAS VANITATIS.

LAME, impotent conclusion to youth's dreams  
Vast as all heaven ! See, what glory lies  
Entangled here in these base stratagems,  
What virtue done to death ! O glorious sighs,  
Sublime beseechings, high cajoleries,  
Fond wraths, brave raptures, all that sometime was  
Our daily bread of gods beneath the skies,  
How are ye ended, in what utter loss !  
Time was, time is, and time is yet to come,  
Till even time itself shall have an end.  
These were eternal—and behold, a tomb.  
Come let us laugh and eat and drink. God send  
What all the world must need one day as we,  
Speedy oblivion, rest for memory.

## XX.

## THE PRIDE OF UNBELIEF.

WHEN I complained that I had lost my hope  
Of life eternal with eternal God ;  
When I refused to read my horoscope  
In the unchanging stars, or claim abode  
With powers and dominations—but, poor clod,  
Clung to the earth and grovelled in my tears,  
Because I soon must lie beneath the sod  
And close the little number of my years,—  
Then I was told that pride had barred the way,  
And raised this foul rebellion in my head.  
Yet, strange rebellion ! I, but yesterday,  
Was God's own son in His own likeness bred.  
And thrice strange pride ! who thus am cast away  
And go forth lost and disinherited.

good.

## XXI.

## ON THE SHORTNESS OF TIME.

IF I could live without the thought of death,  
Forgetful of Time's waste, the soul's decay,  
I would not ask for other joy than breath  
With light and sound of birds and the sun's ray.  
I could sit on untroubled day by day  
Watching the grass grow, and the wild flowers range  
From blue to yellow and from red to grey  
In natural sequence as the seasons change.  
I could afford to wait, but for the hurt  
Of this dull tick of time which chides my ear.  
But now I dare not sit with loins ungirt  
And staff unlifted, for death stands too near.  
I must be up and doing—ay, each minute.  
The grave gives time for rest when we are in it.

very good.

## XXII.

## THE SUBLIME.

To stand upon a windy pinnacle,  
 Beneath the infinite blue of the blue noon,  
 And underfoot a valley terrible  
 As that dim gulf, where sense and being swoon  
 When the soul parts ; a giant valley strewn  
 With giant rocks ; asleep, and vast, and still,  
 And far away. The torrent, which has hewn  
 His pathway through the entrails of the hill,  
 Now crawls along the bottom and anon  
 Lifts up his voice, a muffled tremendous roar,  
 Borne on the wind an instant, and then gone  
 Back to the caverns of the middle air ; *what rhyme!*  
 A voice as of a nation overthrown  
 With beat of drums, when hosts have marched to war.



## XXIII.

## OSTEND.

*On hearing the Bells at Sea.*

How sweet the tuneful bells' responsive peal !  
As when at opening dawn the fragrant breeze  
Touches the trembling sense of pale disease,  
So piercing to my heart their force I feel.  
And hark ! with lessening cadence now they fall,  
And now along the white and level tide  
They fling their melancholy music wide ;  
Bidding me many a tender thought recall  
Of summer days, and those delightful years  
When by my native streams, in life's fair prime,  
The mournful magic of their mingling chime  
First waked my wondering childhood into tears !  
But seeming now, when all those days are o'er,  
The sounds of joy once heard and heard no more.

Good

## XXIV.

## OMNIA MUTANTUR.

ART thou less beautiful, or I more dull ?  
 O Nature, once my passion and delight,  
 How shall I win thee ? Is thy promise null ?  
 Or have I forfeited my ancient right ?  
 By me thy skiey splendours are unwatched,  
 By me thy changeful year unheeded flies,  
 Glories of sunrise, or of eve unmatched,—  
 Changes but new delights to lovers' eyes.  
 Time was, I thought, that thou to me hadst given  
 The dearest boon imparted from above,  
 The greener meadow and the bluer heaven,  
 With the deep heart of wonder and of love.  
 But now, the sharer of a common lot,  
 I only wonder that I wonder not.

XXV.

## REQUIESCANT.

No more these passion-worn faces shall men's eyes  
Behold in life. Death leaves no trace behind  
Of their wild hate and wilder love, grown blind  
With desperate longing, more than the foam which lies  
Splashed up awhile where the cold spray descries  
The waves whereto their cold limbs were resigned ;  
Yet ever doth the sea-wind's undefined  
Vague wailing shudder with their dying sighs.  
For all men's souls 'twixt sorrow and love are cast,  
As on the earth each lingers his brief space,  
While surely nightfall comes, where each man's face  
In death's obliteration sinks at last  
As a deserted wind-tossed sea's foam-trace—  
Life's chilled boughs emptied by death's autumn-blast.

Very fine

. XXVI.

THE SOUL'S EXPRESSION.

WITH stammering lips and insufficient sound,  
I strive and struggle to deliver right  
    The music of my nature, day and night  
With dream and thought and feeling interwound,  
And inly answering all the senses round  
    With octaves of a mystic depth and height  
    Which step out grandly to the infinite  
From the dark edges of the sensual ground.  
This song of soul I struggle to outbear  
    Through portals of the sense, sublime and whole,  
And utter all myself into the air ;  
    But if I did it,—as the thunder-roll  
Breaks its own cloud, my flesh would perish there,  
    Before that dread apocalypse of soul.

*Sublime.*

XXVII.

"SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE."

(NO. XIV.)

IF thou must love me let it be for nought  
Except for love's sake only. Do not say  
"I love her for her smile . . . her look . . . her way  
Of speaking gently, . . . for a trick of thought  
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought  
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day;"—  
For these things in themselves, Beloved, may  
Be changed, or change for thee,—and love so wrought,  
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for  
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry,—  
A creature might forget to weep who bore  
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!  
But love me for love's sake, that evermore  
Thou mayest love on, through love's eternity.

## XXVIII.

## "SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE."

(NO. XVII.)

MY poet, thou canst touch on all the notes  
 God set between His After and Before,  
 And strike up and strike off the general roar  
 Of the rushing worlds a melody that floats  
 In a serene air purely. Antidotes  
 Of medicated music, answering for  
 Mankind's forlornest uses, thou canst pour  
 From thence into their ears. God's will devotes  
 Thine to such ends, and mine to wait on thine.  
 How, Dearest, wilt thou have me for most use ?  
 A hope, to sing by gladly ? or a fine  
 Sad memory, with thy songs to interfuse ?  
 A shade, in which to sing—of palm or pine ?  
 A grave, on which to rest from singing ? Choose.

XXIX.

“SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE.”

(NO. XXII.)

WHEN our two souls stand up erect and strong,  
Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,  
Until the lengthening wings break into fire  
At either curvèd point,—what bitter wrong  
Can the earth do to us, that we should not long  
Be here contented? Think. In mounting higher,  
The angels would press on us and aspire  
To drop some golden orb of perfect song  
Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay  
Rather on earth, Belovèd,—where the unfit  
Contrarious moods of men recoil away  
And isolate pure spirits, and permit  
(A place to stand and love in for a day,  
With darkness and the death-hour rounding it.

*Sublime.*

XXX.

“SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE.”

(NO. XLIII.)

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.  
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height  
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight  
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.  
I love thee to the level of everyday's  
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.  
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;  
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.  
I love thee with the passion put to use  
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.  
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose  
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,  
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,  
I shall but love thee better after death.



## XXXI.

## HELEN'S TOWER.\*

WHO hears of Helen's Tower, may dream perchance  
How the Greek Beauty from the Scæan Gate  
Gazed on old friends unanimous in hate,  
Death-doom'd because of her fair countenance.

Hearts would leap otherwise, at thy advance,  
Lady, to whom this Tower is consecrate !  
Like hers, thy face once made all eyes elate,  
Yet, unlike hers, was bless'd by every glance.

The Tower of Hate is outworn, far and strange :  
A transitory shame of long ago,  
It dies into the sand from which it sprang ;  
But thine, Love's rock-built Tower, shall fear no  
change :  
God's self laid stable earth's foundations so,  
When all the morning-stars together sang.

\* A Tower erected by the present Earl of Dufferin and Clandeboye, on a rock on his estate at Clandeboye, Ireland, in memory of his mother, Helen, Countess of Gifford.

XXXII.

## AN ANSWER

*(To the question, Why am I a Liberal?)*

“WHY?” Because all I haply can and do,  
 All that I am now, all I hope to be,—  
 Whence comes it save from fortune setting free  
 Body and soul the purpose to pursue  
 God traced for both? If fetters, not a few,  
 Of prejudice, convention, fall from me,  
 These shall I bid men—each in his degree  
 Also God-guided—bear, and gaily too?

True + ex.  
 u/cently  
 said.

But little do or can the best of us :  
 That little is achieved through Liberty.  
 Who, then, dares hold—emancipated thus—  
 His fellow shall continue bound? Not I,  
 Who live, love, labour freely, nor discuss  
 A brother's right to freedom, That is “Why.”

## XXXIII.

## WHEN WE ARE ALL ASLEEP.

WHEN He returns, and finds all sleeping here—  
Some old, some young, some fair, and some not fair,  
Will He stoop down and whisper in each ear  
“Awaken!” or for pity’s sake forbear,—  
Saying, “How shall I meet their frozen stare  
Of wonder, and their eyes so weebegone?  
How shall I comfort them in their despair,  
If they cry out ‘*Too late! let us sleep on?*’”

Perchance He will not wake us up, but when  
He sees us look so happy in our rest,  
Will murmur, “Poor dead women and dead men!  
Dire was their doom, and weary was their quest.  
Wherefore awake them into life again?  
Let them sleep on untroubled—it is best.”

XXXIV.

## QUIET WATERS.

O RAINBOW, Rainbow, on the livid height,  
Softening its ashen outline into dream,  
Dewy yet brilliant, delicately bright  
As pink wild-roses' leaves, why dost thou gleam  
So beckoningly? whom dost thou invite  
Still higher upward on the bitter quest?  
What dost thou promise to the weary sight  
In that strange region whence thou issuest?  
Speak'st thou of pensive runlets by whose side  
Our dear ones wander sweet and gentle-eyed,  
In the soft dawn of a diviner Day?  
Art thou a promise? Come those hues and dyes  
From heavenly meads, near which thou dost arise  
Iris'd from Quiet Waters, far away!

XXXV.

ON ECHO AND SILENCE.

In eddying course when leaves began to fly  
And Autumn in her lap the store to strew,  
As 'mid wild scenes I chanced the Muse to woo,  
Through glens untrod and woods that frowned on high,  
Two sleeping nymphs with wonder mute I spy !—  
And lo, she's gone !—in robe of dark green hue,  
'Twas Echo from her sister Silence flew ;  
For quick the hunter's horn resounded to the sky !

In shade affrighted Silence melts away.  
Not so her sister !—hark, for onward still  
With far-heard step she takes her lingering way,  
Bounding from rock to rock, and hill to hill !  
Ah, mark the merry maid in mockful play  
With thousand mimic tones the laughing forest fill.

## XXXVI.

## CHILLON.

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless mind !  
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty, thou art ;—  
For there thy habitation is the heart,—  
The heart which love of thee alone can bind ;  
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned,  
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,  
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,  
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

Chillon ! thy prison is a holy place,  
And thy sad floor an altar, for 'twas trod,  
Until his very steps have left a trace,  
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,  
By Bonnivard ! May none those marks efface !  
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

## XXXVII.

## "WHERE LIES THE LAND?"

—WORDSWORTH.

WHERE lies the land to which thy soul would go?—  
Beyond the wearied wold, the songless dell,  
The purple grape and golden asphodel,  
Beyond the zone where streams baptismal flow.  
Where lies the land of which thy soul would know?—  
There where the unvexed senses darkling dwell,  
Where never haunting, hurrying footfall fell,  
Where toil is not, nor builded hope laid low.

Rest! Rest! to thy hushed realm how one by one  
Old Earth's tired ages steal away and weep  
Forgotten or unknown, long duty done.  
Ah God, when death in seeming peace shall steep  
Life's loud turmoil and Time his race hath run  
Shall heart of man at length find rest and sleep?

## XXXVIII.

## AFTER SUNSET.

VOCAL yet voiceless, lingering, lambent, white  
 With the wide wings of evening on the fell,  
 The tranquil vale, the enchanted citadel,—  
Another day swoons to another night.

Speak low : from bare Blencathra's purple height  
 The sound o' the ghyll falls furled ; and, loath  
 to go,

A continent of cloud its plaited snow  
 Wears far away athwart a lake of light.

Is it the craft of hell that while we lie  
 Enshaded, lulled, beneath heaven's breezeless sky,  
 The garrulous clangours and assoiléd shows  
 Of London's burrowing mazes haunt us yet ?

City, forgive me : mother of joys and woes  
 Thy shadow is here, and lo, our eyes are wet.



v. good.

XXXIX.

THE HAUNTED SHORE.

I WALK'D at sunset by the lonely waves,  
When Autumn stood about me, gold and brown ;  
I watch'd the great red sun, in clouds, go down,  
An orient King, that 'mid his bronzed slaves  
Dies, leaning on his sceptre, with his crown.  
A hollow moaning from innumerable caves,  
In green and glassy darkness sunk below,  
Told of some grand and ancient deed of woe,  
Of murdered kings that sleep in weltering graves  
Still thro' the sunshine wavering to and fro,  
With sails all set, the little vessels glide ;  
Mild is the Eve and mild the ebbing Tide,  
And yet that hollow moaning will not go,  
Nor the old Fears that with the sea abide.

## XL.

## FIRST SIGHT OF SPRING.

THE hazel-blooms, in threads of crimson hue,  
Peep through the swelling buds, foretelling Spring.  
Ere yet a white-thorn leaf appears in view,  
Or March finds throstles pleased enough to sing.  
To the old touchwood-tree woodpeckers cling  
A moment, and their harsh-toned notes renew ;  
In happier mood, the stockdove claps his wing ;  
The squirrel sputters up the powdered oak,  
With tail cocked o'er his head, and ears erect,  
Startled to hear the woodman's understroke ;  
And with the courage which his fears collect,  
He hisses fierce, half malice and half glee,  
Leaping from branch to branch about the tree,  
In winter's foliage, moss and lichens, deckt.

## XLI.

## THE ASSIGNATION.

THE darkness throbbed that night with the great heat,  
And my heart throbbed at thought of what should be ;  
The house was dumb, the lock slid silently ;  
I only heard the night's hot pulses beat  
Around me as I sped with quiet feet  
Down the dark corridors ; and once the sea  
Moaned in its slumber, and I stayed, but she  
Came forth to meet me lily-white and sweet.

Was there a man's soul ever worth her kiss ?  
Silent and still I stood, and she drew near,  
And her lips mixed with mine, and her sweet breath  
Fanned my hot face ; and afterward I wis,  
What the sea said to us I did not hear ;  
But now I know it spake of Doom and Death.

## XLII.

## KING OF KINGS.

O DEATH, Death, Death ! Thou art the Lord of all,  
And at Thy darkened shrine I bow mine head  
In this Thy temple, where for Thee are shed  
Man's blood and tears : gods, kings, and temples fall ;  
Thy reign, O Lord, is immemorial :  
Ever thou waxest stronger and more dread,  
More populous grows Thy kingdom of the dead,  
And joy and love and hope Thou hast in thrall.

We follow vain desires and idle things,  
We vex our souls with hollow hopes and fears,  
We dread the future and regret the past :  
Thou comest, O Almighty, King of kings,  
And stillest all the tumult of the years,  
And tak'st each babbler to thy breast at last.

## XLIII.

## THE BIRTH OF SPEECH.

WHAT was't awakened first the untried ear  
Of that sole man who was all human kind ?  
Was it the gladsome welcome of the wind,  
Stirring the leaves that never yet were sere ?  
The four mellifluous streams which flowed so near,  
Their lulling murmurs all in one combined ?  
The note of bird unnamed ? The startled hind  
Bursting the brake, in wonder, not in fear,  
Of her new lord ? Or did the holy ground  
Send forth mysterious melody to greet  
The gracious pressure of immaculate feet ?  
Did viewless seraphs rustle all around  
Making sweet music out of air as sweet ?  
Or his own voice awake him with its sound ?

## XLIV.

## PRAYER.

THERE is an awful quiet in the air,  
And the sad earth, with moist imploring eye,  
Looks wide and wakeful at the pondering sky,  
Like Patience slow subsiding to Despair.  
But see, the blue smoke as a voiceless prayer,  
Sole witness of a secret sacrifice,  
Unfolds its tardy wreaths, and multiplies  
Its soft chameleon breathings in the rare  
Capacious ether,—so it fades away,  
And nought is seen beneath the pendent blue,  
The undistinguishable waste of day.  
So have I dreamed !—oh may the dream be true !—  
That praying souls are purged from mortal hue,  
And grow as pure as He to whom they pray.

*Subj.  
Wings.*

v. good

XLV.

NIGHT.

THE crackling embers on the hearth are dead ;  
The indoor note of industry is still ;  
The latch is fast ; upon the window-sill  
The small birds wait not for their daily bread ;  
The voiceless flowers—how quietly they shed  
Their nightly odours ;—and the household rill  
Murmurs continuous dulcet sounds that fill  
The vacant expectation, and the dread  
Of listening night. And haply now She sleeps ;  
For all the garrulous noises of the air  
Are hush'd in peace ; the soft dew silent weeps,  
Like hopeless lovers for a maid so fair :—  
( Oh ! that I were the happy dream that creeps  
To her soft heart, to find my image there.

## XLVI.

## NOT IN VAIN.

LET me not deem that I was made in vain,  
Or that my being was an accident  
Which Fate, in working its sublime intent,  
Not wished to be, to hinder would not deign.  
Each drop uncounted in a storm of rain  
Hath its own mission, and is duly sent  
To its own leaf or blade, not idly spent  
'Mid myriad dimples on the shipless main.  
The very shadow of an insect's wing,  
For which the violet cared not while it stayed  
Yet felt the lighter for its vanishing,  
Proved that the sun was shining by its shade.  
Then can a drop of the eternal spring,  
Shadow of living lights, in vain be made?



## XLVII.

## NOVEMBER.

THE mellow year is hastening to its close ;  
The little birds have almost sung their last,  
Their small notes twitter in the dreary blast—  
That shrill-piped harbinger of early snows ;  
The patient beauty of the scentless rose,  
Oft with the morn's hoar crystal quaintly glassed,  
Hangs, a pale mourner for the summer past,  
And makes a little summer where it grows :  
In the chill sunbeam of the faint brief day  
The dusky waters shudder as they shine,  
The russet leaves obstruct the straggling way  
Of oozy brooks, which no deep banks define,  
And the gaunt woods, in ragged scant array,  
Wrap their old limbs with sombre ivy-twine.

## XLVIII.

## TO NATURE.

It may indeed be phantasy when I  
Essay to draw from all created things  
Deep, heartfelt, inward joy that closely clings ;  
And trace in leaves and flowers that round me lie  
Lessons of love and earnest piety.

So let it be ; and if the wide world rings  
In mock of this belief, to me it brings  
Nor fear, nor grief, nor vain perplexity.

So will I build my altar in the fields,  
And the blue sky my fretted dome shall be,  
And the sweet fragrance that the wild flower yields  
Shall be the incense I will yield to Thee,  
Thee only God ! and Thou shalt not despise  
Even me, the priest of this poor sacrifice.

## XLIX.

## PHANTASMION'S QUEST OF IARINE.

YON changeful cloud will soon thy aspect wear,  
So bright it grows:—and now, by light winds  
shaken,—

O ever seen yet ne'er to be o'ertaken!—  
Those waving branches seem thy billowy hair.

The cypress glades recall thy pensive air ;  
Slow rills that wind like snakes amid the grass,  
Thine eye's mild sparkle fling me as they pass,  
Yet murmuring cry, *This fruitless Quest forbear !*

Nay e'en amid the cataract's loud storm,  
Where foamy torrents from the crags are  
leaping,  
Methinks I catch swift glimpses of thy form,  
Thy robe's light folds in airy tumult sweeping ;  
Then silent are the falls : 'mid colours warm  
Gleams the bright maze beneath their splendour  
sweeping.

L.

## GUNS OF PEACE.

*Sunday Night, March 30th 1856.*

GHOSTS of dead soldiers in the battle slain,  
Ghosts of dead heroes dying nobler far  
In the long patience of inglorious war,  
Of famine, cold, heat, pestilence and pain,—  
All ye whose loss makes up our vigorous gain—  
This quiet night, as sounds the cannon's tongue,  
Do ye look down the trembling stars among,  
Viewing our peace and war with like disdain?  
Or, wiser grown since reaching those new spheres,  
Smile ye on those poor bones ye sow'd as seed  
For this our harvest, nor regret the deed?  
Yet lift one cry with us to Heavenly ears—  
"Strike with Thy bolt the next red flag unfurl'd,  
And make all wars to cease throughout the world."

II.

THE TRUE BASIS OF POWER.

POWER's footstool is Opinion, and his throne  
The Human Heart: thus only kings maintain  
Prerogatives God-sanctioned. The coarse chain  
Tyrants would bind around us may be blown  
Aside, like foam, that with a breath is gone:  
For there's a tide within the popular vein  
That despots in their pride may not restrain;  
Swoln with a vigour that is all its own.

Ye who would steer along these doubtful seas,  
Lifting your proud sails to high heaven, beware!  
Rocks throng the waves, and tempests load the  
breeze:

Go, search the shores of History—mark there  
The Oppressor's lot, the Tyrant's destinies:  
Behold the Wrecks of Ages; and despair!

## LIL

## THE ROCK OF CASHEL.

ROYAL and saintly Cashel ! I would gaze  
 Upon the wreck of thy departed powers  
 Not in the dewy light of matin hours,  
 Nor the meridian pomp of summer's blaze,  
 But at the close of dim autumnal days,  
 When the sun's parting glance, through slanting  
 showers,  
 Sheds o'er thy rock-throned battlements and  
 towers  
 Such awful gleams as brighten o'er Decay's  
 Prophetic cheek. At such a time, methinks,  
 There breathes from thy lone courts and voiceless  
 aisles  
 A melancholy moral, such as sinks  
 On the lone traveller's heart, amid the piles  
 Of vast Persopolis on her mountain stand,  
 Or Thebes half buried in the desert sand.

grows

## LIII.

## THE RIGHT USE OF PRAYER.

THEREFORE when thou wouldst pray, or dost thine alms,  
Blow not a trump before thee : hypocrites  
Do thus, vaingloriously ; the common streets  
Boast of their largess, echoing their psalms.  
On such the laud of men, like unctuous balms,  
Falls with sweet savour. Impious counterfeits !  
Prating of heaven, for earth their bosom beats !  
X Grasping at weeds, they lose immortal palms !  
God needs not iteration nor vain cries :  
That man communion with his God might share  
Below, Christ gave the ordinance of prayer :  
Vague ambages, and witless ecstasies,  
Avail not : ere a voice to prayer be given  
The heart should rise on wings of love to heaven.

LIV.

## THE CHILDREN BAND.

(THE CRUSADERS. NO. V.)

ALL holy influences dwell within  
The breast of Childhood : instincts fresh from God  
Inspire it, ere the heart beneath the rod  
Of grief hath bled, or caught the plague of sin.  
How mighty was that fervour which could win  
Its way to infant souls !—and was the sod  
Of Palestine by infant Croises trod ?  
Like Joseph went they forth, or Benjamin,  
In all their touching beauty, to redeem ?  
And did their soft lips kiss the sepulchre ?  
Alas ! the lovely pageant, as a dream,  
Faded ! they sank not through ignoble fear ;  
They felt not Moslem steel. By mountain, stream,  
In sands, in fens, they died—no mother near !



*excellent*

LV.

THE SUN-GOD.

I SAW the Master of the Sun. He stood  
High in his luminous car, himself more bright ;  
An Archer of immeasurable might :  
On his left shoulder hung his quivered load ;  
Spurned by his steeds the eastern mountains glowed ;  
Forward his eager eye, and brow of light  
He bent ; and, while both hands that arch embowed,  
Shaft after shaft pursued the flying night.

No wings profaned that god-like form : around  
His neck high-held an ever-moving crowd  
Of locks hung glistening : while such perfect sound  
Fell from his bowstring, that th' ethereal dome  
Thrilled as a dew-drop ; and each passing cloud  
Expanded, whitening like the ocean foam.

## LVI.

## THE SETTING OF THE MOON NEAR CORINTH.

FROM that dejected brow in silence beaming  
A light it seems too feeble to retain,  
A sad calm tearful light through vapours gleaming,  
Slowly thou sinkest on the *Ægean* main ;  
To me an image, in thy placid seeming  
Of some fair mourner who will not complain ;  
Of one whose cheek is pale, whose eyes are streaming,  
Whose sighs are heaved unheard,—not heaved in vain.

And yet what power is thine ? as thou dost sink,  
Down sliding slow along that azure hollow,  
The great collected Deep thy course doth follow,  
Amorous the last of those faint smiles to drink ;  
And all his lifted fleets in thee obey  
The symbol of an unpresuming sway !

LVII.

HER BEAUTY.

A TRANSCĒD beauty dwells upon her face,  
A lustrous summer-calm of peace and prayer ;  
In those still eyes the keenest gaze can trace  
No sad disturbance, and no touch of care.  
Peace rests upon her lips, and forehead fair,  
And temples unadorned. A cloistral grace  
Says to the gazer over-bold, ' Beware, '  
Yet love hath made her breast his dwelling-place.

An awful night abideth with the pure,  
And theirs the only wisdom from above.  
She seems to listen to some strain obscure  
Of music in sidereal regions wove,  
Or to await some more transcendent dower  
From heaven descending on her like a dove.

## LVIII.

## SORROW.

COUNT each affliction, whether light or grave,  
God's messenger sent down to thee ; do thou  
With courtesy receive him ; rise and bow ;  
And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave  
Permission first his heavenly feet to lave ;  
Then lay before him all thou hast ; allow  
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow,  
Or mar thy hospitality ; no wave  
Of mortal tumult to obliterate  
The soul's marmoreal calmness ; Grief should be  
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate ;  
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free ;  
Strong to consume small troubles ; to commend  
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to  
the end.

## LIX.

## NATIONAL APOSTACY.

TRAMPLING a dark hill, a red sun athwart,  
 I saw a host that rent their clothes and hair,  
 And dashed their spread hands 'gainst that sunset glare,  
 And cried, *Go from us, God, since God thou art!*  
*Utterly from our coasts and towns depart,*  
*Court, camp, and senate-hall, and mountain bare;*  
*Our pomp Thou troublest, and our feast dost scare,*  
*And with Thy temples dost confuse our mart!*  
*Depart Thou from our hearing and our seeing:*  
*Depart Thou from the works and ways of men;*  
*Their laws, their thoughts, the inmost of their being:*  
*Black nightmare, hence! that earth may breathe again!*  
 "Can God depart?" I said. A Voice replied,  
 Close by—"Not so; each Sin at heart is *Decide.*"

LX.

## HUMANITY.

THERE is a soul above the soul of each,  
A mightier soul, which yet to each belongs :  
There is a sound made of all human speech,  
And numerous as the concourse of all songs :  
And in that soul lives each, in each that soul,  
Though all the ages are its lifetime vast ;  
Each soul that dies, in its most sacred whole  
Receiveth life that shall for ever last.  
And thus for ever with a wider span  
Humanity o'erarches time and death ;  
Man can elect the universal man,  
And live in life that ends not with his breath :  
And gather glory that increases still  
Till Time his glass with Death's last dust shall fill

## LXI.

## THE ARMY SURGEON.

OVER that breathing waste of friends and foes,  
The wounded and the dying, hour by hour,  
In will a thousand, yet but one in power,  
He labours through the red and groaning day.  
The fearful moorland where the myriads lay  
Moves as a moving field of mangled worms :  
And as a raw brood, orphaned in the storms,  
Thrust up their heads if the wind bend a spray  
Above them, but when the bare branch performs  
No sweet paternal office, sink away  
With helpless chirp of woe,—so, as he goes,  
Around his feet in clamorous agony  
They rise and fall ; and all the seething plain  
Bubbles a cauldron vast of many-coloured pain.

*da multicolor*

## LXII.

## THE COMMON GRAVE.

LAST night beneath the foreign stars I stood,  
And saw the thoughts of those at home go by  
To the great grave upon the hill of blood.  
Upon the darkness they went visibly,  
Each in the vesture of its own distress.  
Among them there came One, frail as a sigh,  
And like a creature of the wilderness  
Dug with her bleeding hands. She neither cried  
Nor wept ; nor did she see the many stark  
And dead that lay unburied at her side.  
All night she toiled ; and at that time of dawn,  
When Day and Night do change their More and Less,  
And Day is more, I saw the melting Dark  
Stir to the last, and knew she laboured on.



Good.

LXIII.

## HOME: IN WAR-TIME.

SHE turned the fair page with her fairer hand—  
 More fair and frail than it was wont to be ;  
 O'er each remember'd thing he loved to see  
 She lingered, and as with a fairy's wand  
 ✓ Enchanted it to order. Oft she fanned  
 New motes into the sun ; and as a bee  
 Sings through a brake of bells, so murmured she,  
 And so her patient love did understand  
 The reliquary room. Upon the sill  
 She fed his favourite bird. " Ah, Robin, sing !  
 He loves thee." Then she touches a sweet string  
 Of soft recall, and towards the Eastern hill  
 Smiles all her soul—

for him who cannot hear  
 The raven croaking at his carrion ear.

Very fine, in its sad & humorous  
 LXIV. manner.

## DON QUIXOTE.

BEHIND thy pasteboard, on thy battered hack,  
 Thy lean cheek striped with plaster to and fro,  
 Thy long spear levelled at the unseen foe,  
 And doubtful Sancho trudging at thy back,  
 Thou wert a figure strange enough, good lack !  
 To make wiseacredom, both high and low,  
 Rub purblind eyes, and (having watched thee go)  
 Despatch its Dogberrys upon thy track :  
 Alas ! poor Knight ! Alas ! poor soul possess !  
 Yet would to-day, when Courtesy grows chill,  
 And life's fine loyalties are turned to jest,  
 Some fire of thine might burn within us still !  
 Ah ! would but one might lay his lance in rest,  
 And charge in earnest—were it but a mill.

Good!

stacant a role, etc. in  
 sub.

## LXV.

## THE SEA CAVE.

HARDLY we breathe, although the air be free :  
How massively doth awful Nature pile  
The living rock like some cathedral aisle,  
Sacred to silence and the solemn sea.  
How that clear pool lies sleeping tranquilly,  
And under its glassed surface seems to smile,  
With many hues, a mimic grove the while  
Of foliage submarine—shrub, flower, and tree.  
Beautiful scene, and fitted to allure  
The printless footsteps of some sea-born maid,  
Who here, with her green tresses disarrayed,  
'Mid the clear bath, unfearing and secure,  
May sport at noontide in the caverned shade,  
Cold as the shadow, as the waters pure.

## LXVI.

## ANGLING.

Go, take thine angle, and with practised line,  
Light as the gossamer, the current sweep ;  
And if thou failest in the calm still deep,  
In the rough eddy may the prize be thine.  
Say thou'rt unlucky where the sunbeams shine ;  
Beneath the shadow, where the waters creep.  
Perchance the monarch of the brook shall leap—  
For fate is ever better than design.  
Still persevere ; the giddiest breeze that blows,  
For thee may blow, with fame and fortune rife ;  
Be prosperous—and what reck if it arose  
Out of some pebble with the stream at strife,  
Or that the light wind dallied with the boughs ?  
Thou art successful ;—such is human life.

## LXVII.

## AN INTERIOR.

THE grass around my limbs is deep and sweet ;  
Yonder the house has lost its shadow wholly,  
The blinds are dropped, and softly now and slowly  
The day flows in and floats ; a calm retreat  
Of tempered light where fair things fair things meet ;  
White busts and marble Dian make it holy,  
Within a niche hangs Durer's Melancholy  
Brooding ; and, should you enter, there will greet  
Your sense with vague allurements effluence faint  
Of one magnolia bloom ; fair fingers draw  
From the piano Chopin's heart-complaint ;  
Alone, white-robed she sits ; a fierce macaw  
On the verandah, proud of plume and paint,  
Screams, insolent despot, showing beak and claw.

## LXVIII.

## EVENING, NEAR THE SEA.

LIGHT ebbs from off the Earth ; the fields are strange  
Dark, trackless, tenantless ; now the mute sky  
Resigns itself to Night and Memory,  
And no wind will yon sunken clouds derange,  
No glory enrapture them ; from cot or grange  
The rare voice ceases ; one long-breathèd sigh,  
And steeped in summer sleep the world must lie ;  
All things are acquiescing in the change.  
Hush ! while the vaulted hollow of the night  
Deepens, what voice is this the sea sends forth,  
Disconsolate iterance, a passionless moan ?  
Ah ! now the Day is gone, and tyrannous Light  
And the calm presence of fruit-bearing Earth :  
Cry, Sea ! it is thy hour ; thou art alone.

## LXXIX.

## AWAKENING.

WITH brain o'erworn, with heart a summer clod,  
With eye so practised in each form around,—  
And all forms mean,—to glance above the ground  
Irks it, each day of many days we plod,  
Tongue-tied and deaf, along life's common road ;  
But suddenly, we know not how, a sound  
Of living streams, an odour, a flower crowned  
With dew, a lark upspringing from the sod,  
And we awake. O joy of deep amaze !  
Beneath the everlasting hills we stand,  
We hear the voices of the morning seas,  
And earnest prophesyings in the land,  
While from the open heaven leans forth at gaze  
The encompassing great cloud of witnesses.

LXX.

## TWO INFINITIES.

A LONELY way, and as I went my eyes  
Could not unfasten from the Spring's sweet things,  
Lush-sprouted grass, and all that climbs and clings  
In loose, deep hedges, where the primrose lies  
In her own fairness, buried blooms surprise  
The plunderer bee and stop his murmurings,  
And the glad flutter of a finch's wings  
Outstartle small blue-speckled butterflies.  
Blissfully did one speedwell plot beguile  
My whole heart long ; I loved each separate flower,  
Kneeling. I looked up suddenly—Dear God !  
There stretched the shining plain for many a mile,  
The mountains rose with what invincible power !  
And how the sky was fathomless and broad !



v. good.

## LXXI.

## BROTHER DEATH.

WHEN thou would'st have me go with thee, O Death,  
Over the utmost verge, to the dim place,  
Practise upon me with no amorous grace  
Of fawning lips, and words of delicate breath,  
And curious music thy lute uttereth ;  
Nor think for me there must be sought-out ways  
Of cloud and terror ; have we many days  
Sojourned together, and is this thy faith ?  
Nay, be there plainness 'twixt us ; come to me  
Even as thou art, O brother of my soul ;  
Hold thy hand out and I will place mine there ;  
I trust thy mouth's inscrutable irony,  
And dare to lay my forehead where the whole  
Shadow lies deep of thy purpureal hair.

LXXII.

REST.

THE boat is hauled upon the hardening sand,  
The mist is gathering o'er the dim morass,  
The kine are couching on the daisied grass,  
And in their stalls the champing horses stand.  
No splash of brine along the darkling strand,  
No light winds play the reed-pipes as they pass ;  
The moonlit deep is glittering like glass,  
And all things yield to stilly Night's command.

O balmy hours of silver sheen and dew !  
Shall nought belie you save this labouring breast—  
The soul alone to Nature be untrue,  
And still of what she hath not go in quest ?  
Just now ye spake. Ah, speak those words anew,  
' *Wait, weary heart ; soon thou shalt also rest.*'

## LXXIII.

## FOUNTAINS ABBEY.

ABBAY ! for ever smiling pensively,  
How like a thing of Nature dost thou rise  
Amid her loveliest works ! as if the skies,  
Clouded with grief, were arched thy roof to be,  
And the tall trees were copied all from thee !  
Mourning thy fortunes—while the waters dim  
Flow like the memory of thy evening hymn,  
Beautiful in their sorrowing sympathy ;  
As if they with a weeping sister wept,  
Winds name thy name ! But thou, though sad,  
art calm,  
And Time with thee his plighted troth hath kept ;  
For harebells deck thy brow, and, at thy feet,  
Where sleep the proud, the bee and redbreast meet,  
Mixing thy sighs with Nature's lonely psalm.

*gaut*

LXXIV.

## SILENCE.

HUSH—hush ! it is the charm of nothingness,—  
 A sweet estate wherein there is no sweet ;  
 A music true, though no vibrations beat ;  
 A passive mistress, cold and passionless—  
 Bestowing not, yet having power to bless,  
 Until, in holy love, we kiss her feet.  
 O joy wherein no soul a friend may greet,  
 O Thou that giv'st no comfort in distress,—  
 Why do we love thee, Silence ? Art thou then  
 The mystic, ghostly Mother of mankind,  
 From forth whose womb we sprang without a throe ?  
 To Thee resort for rest and peace all men ;  
 In Thy embrace serene, pure joy they find,—  
 Art Thou the very Heaven whereto we go ?

*Very good*

LXXV.

## A SUNSET THOUGHT.

THE sun is burning with intensest light  
 Behind yon grove ; and in the golden glow  
 Of unconsuming Fire, it doth show  
 Like to the Bush, in which to Moses' sight  
 The Lord appeared ! and O, am I not right X  
 In thinking that he reappears e'en now  
 To me, in the old Glory, and I bow  
 My head, in wonder hush'd, before His might !

Yea ! this whole world so vast, to Faith's clear eye.  
 Is but that burning Bush full of His Power,  
 His Light, and Glory ; not consumed thereby,  
 But made transparent : till in each least flower,  
 Yea ! in each smallest leaf, she can descry  
 His Spirit shining through it visibly !

*Devotively original; good.*

LXXVI.

LONDON, AFTER MIDNIGHT.

SILENCE broods o'er the mighty Babylon ;  
And Darkness, his twin brother, with him keeps  
His solemn watch ; the wearied city sleeps,  
And Solitude, strange contrast ! muses on  
The fate of man, there, whence the crowd anon  
Will scare her with life's tumult ! The great deeps  
Of human Thought are stirless, yet there creeps,  
As 'twere, a far-off hum, scarce heard, then gone,  
On the still air ; 'tis the great Heart doth move  
And beat at intervals, soon from its sleep  
To start refreshed. Oh Thou, who rul'st above,  
Be with it in its dreams, and let it keep,  
Awake, the spirit of pure peace and love,  
Which Thou breath'st through it now, so still and deep !

## LXXVII.

## SUNSET.

THE golden foot-prints of departing Day  
Are fading from the ocean silently,  
And Twilight, stealing onward, halves the sky ;  
One after one they fade in light away,  
While, with a thousand songs, the Earth doth say  
Farewell, uplifting all her mountains high,  
To catch the last reflections ere they die,  
As, one by one, their peaks grow cold and grey.  
Yon orb, that hangs upon the ocean's rim,  
Looks, Janus-like, both back and forward too,  
And, while it fades *here* to Earth's evening-hymn,  
It brightens, from afar, o'er regions new,  
Unto the songs of Morning, raised to Him,  
Who thus 'twixt night and day the great line drew !

LXXVIII.

## SOCRATES.

*"Of making many books there is no end; and much study is an affliction of the flesh."*

THOU, mighty Heathen, wert not so bereft  
Of heavenly helps to thy great-hearted deeds,  
That thou shouldst dig for truths in broken creeds,  
'Mid the loose sands of four old empires left.  
Motions and shadows dimly glowing fell  
On thy broad soul from forms invisible.  
With its plain grandeur, simple, calm, and free,  
What wonder was it that thy life should merit  
Sparkles of grace, and angel ministry,  
With jealous glimpses of the world of spirit?  
Greatest and best in this—that thy pure mind,  
Upon its saving mission all intent,  
Scorned the untruth of leaving books behind,  
To claim for thine what through thy lips was sent.



## LXXIX

## ON THE RAMPARTS AT ANGOULÊME.

WHY art thou speechless, O thou setting Sun ?  
Speak to this earth, speak to this listening scene,  
Where Charente flows among the meadows green,  
And in his gilded waters, one by one,  
The inverted minarets of poplar quake  
With expectation, until thou shalt break  
The intolerable silence. See ! he sinks  
Without a word ; and his ensanguined bier  
Is vacant in the west, while far and near  
Behold ! each coward shadow eastward shrinks.  
Thou dost not strive, O sun, nor dost thou cry  
Amid thy cloud-built streets ; but meek and still,  
Thou dost the type of Jesus best fulfil,  
A noiseless revelation in the sky.

LXXX.

## AD MATREM.

OFt in the after days, when thou and I  
Have fallen from the scope of human view,  
When, both together, under the sweet sky  
We sleep beneath the daisies and the dew,  
Men will recall thy gracious presence bland,  
Conning the pictured sweetness of thy face ;  
Will pore o'er paintings by thy plastic hand,  
And vaunt thy skill and tell thy deeds of grace.  
Oh, may they then, who crown thee with true bays,  
Saying, ' What love unto her son she bore !'  
Make this addition to thy perfect praise,  
' Nor ever yet was mother worshipped more !'  
So shall I live with thee, and thy dear fame  
Shall link my love unto thine honoured name.

## LXXXI.

## IN PROSPECT OF DEATH.

WHEN I shall die—and be it late or soon—  
Let merciful memories be my only shroud.  
Think me a light veiled in a morning cloud ;  
Living to knowledge,—like a finished moon,  
Though nothing here, to other lands a boon :  
Nor let my death give triumph to the proud,  
By your weak tears : be happy with the crowd,  
Who, spite of woe, are seldom out of tune.  
Wise in the common instinct, be ye glad :  
There's some redemption in the doom of death  
That cuts us from new sins—sweet mercy's plan.  
Yet, if for me you be sincerely sad,  
Do this sweet homage to my valued breath—  
Ease the sad burden of some living man !

## LXXXII.

## AGE.

I WILL not rail, or grieve when torpid old  
Frosts the slow-journeying blood, for I shall see  
The lovelier leaves hang yellow on the tree,  
The nimbler brooks in icy fetters held.  
Methinks the aged eye that first beheld  
The fitful ravage of December wild,  
Then knew himself indeed dear Nature's child,  
Seeing the common doom, that all compelled.  
No kindred we to her belovèd broods  
If, dying these, we drew a selfish breath ;  
But one path travel all her multitudes,  
And none dispute the solemn Voice that saith :  
'Sun to thy setting ; to your autumn, woods ;  
Stream to thy sea ; and man unto thy death !'

## LXXXIII.

## DANTE.

POET, whose unscarr'd feet have trodden Hell,  
By what grim path and dread environing  
Of fire couldst thou that dauntless footstep bring  
And plant it firm amid the dolorous cell  
Of darkness where perpetually dwell  
The spirits cursed beyond imagining?  
Or else is thine a visionary wing,  
And all thy terror but a tale to tell?  
Neither and both, thou seeker! I have been  
No wilder path than thou thyself dost go,  
Close mask'd in an impenetrable screen,  
Which having rent I gaze around, and know  
What tragic wastes of gloom, before unseen,  
Curtain the soul that strives and sins below.

*Mary C. Gillington*

LXXXIV.

INTRA MUROS.

At last 'tis gone, the fever of the day,—  
Thank God, there comes an end to everything ;  
Under the night-cloud's deepened shadowing,  
The noises of the city drift away  
Thro' sultry streets and alleys ; and the grey  
Fogs round the great cathedral rise and cling.  
I long, and long,—but no desire will bring  
Against my face the keen wind salt with spray.

O far away, green waves, your voices call,  
Your cool lips kiss the wild and weedy shore ;  
And out upon the sea-line, sails are brown,—  
White sea-birds, crying, hover,—soft shades fall,  
Deep waters dimple round the dripping oar,  
And last rays light the little fishing-town.

## LXXXV.

## ON A LUTE FOUND IN A SARCOPHAGUS.

WHAT curled and scented sun-girls, almond-eyed,  
With lotus blossoms in their hands and hair,  
Have made their swarthy lovers call them fair,  
With these spent strings, when brutes were deified,  
And Memnon in the sunrise sprang and cried,  
And love-winds smote Bubastis, and the bare  
Black breasts of carven Pasht received the prayer  
Of suppliants bearing gifts from far and wide !  
This lute has outsung Egypt ; all the lives  
Of violent passion, and the vast calm art  
That lasts in granite only, all lie dead ;  
This little bird of song alone survives,  
As fresh as when its fluting smote the heart  
Last time the brown slave wore it garlanded.

LXXXVI.

## ALCYONE.

*(A Sonnet in Dialogue.)*

*Phæbus.* WHAT voice is this that wails above the deep ?

*Alcyone.* A wife's, that mourns her fate and loveless  
days.

*Phæbus.* What love lies buried in these waterways ?

*Alcyone.* A husband's, hurried to eternal sleep.

*Phæbus.* Cease, O beloved, cease to wail and weep !

*Alcyone.* Wherefore ?

*Phæbus.* The waters in a fiery blaze  
Proclaim the godhead of my healing rays.

*Alcyone.* No god can sow where fate hath stood to reap.

*Phæbus.* Hold, wringing hands ! cease, piteous tears,  
to fall.

*Alcyone.* But grief must rain and glut the passionate sea.

*Phæbus.* Thou shall forget this ocean and thy wrong,  
And I will bless the dead, though past recall.

*Alcyone.* What can'st thou give to me or him in me ?

*Phæbus.* A name in story and a light in song.



## LXXXVII.

## THE TOMB OF SOPHOCLES.

A BOUNDING satyr, golden in the beard,  
That leaps with goat-feet high into the air,  
And crushes from the thyme an odour rare,  
Keeps watch around the marble tomb revered  
Of Sophocles, the poet loved and feared,  
Whose mighty voice once called out of her lair  
The Dorian muse severe, with braided hair,  
Who loved the thyrsus and wild dances weird.  
Here all day long the pious bees can pour  
Libations of their honey ; round this tomb  
The Dionysiac ivy loves to roam ;  
The satyr laughs ; but He awakes no more,  
Wrapped up in silence at the grave's cold core,  
Nor sees the sun wheel round in the white dome

*excellent in expression.*

LXXXVIII.

THE THRUSH'S SONG.

SWEET MAVIS ! at this cool delicious hour  
 Of gloaming, when a pensive quietness  
 Hushes the odorous air,—with what a power  
 Of impulse unsubdued dost thou express  
 Thyself a spirit ! While the silver dew  
 Holy as manna on the meadow falls,  
 Thy song's impassioned clarity, trembling through  
 This omnipresent stillness, disenthral  
 The soul to adoration. First I heard  
 A low thick lubric gurgle, soft as love,  
 Yet sad as memory, through the silence poured  
 Like starlight. But the mood intenser grows,  
 Precipitate rapture quickens, move on move  
 Lucidly linked together, till the close.

## LXXXIX.

## TO A FRIEND.

Now, while the long delaying ash assumes  
The delicate April green, and, loud and clear,  
Through the cool, yellow, mellow twilight glooms,  
The thrush's song enchants the captive ear ;  
Now, while a shower is pleasant in the falling,  
Stirring the still perfume that wakes around ;  
Now that doves mourn, and from the distance calling,  
The cuckoo answers with a sovereign sound,—

    Come with thy native heart, O true and tried !  
But leave all books ; for what with converse high,  
Flavoured with Attic wit, the time shall glide  
On smoothly, as a river floweth by,  
Or, as on stately pinion, through the grey  
Evening, the culver cuts his liquid way.

XC.

## VENUS URANIA.

Is this thy Paphos,—the devoted place  
Where rests, in its own eventide, thy shrine ?  
To thee not lone is solitude divine  
Where love-dreams o'er thy waves each other chase  
And melt into the passion of thy face !  
The twilight waters, dolphin-stained, are thine ;  
The silvery depths and blue, night-orbed, entwine,  
And in bright films thy rosy form embrace,—  
Girdling thy loins with heaven-spun drapery  
Wove in the looms of thy resplendent sea.  
The columns point their shadows to the plain,  
And ancient days are dialed o'er again ;  
The floods remember : falling at thy feet,  
Upon the sands of time they ever beat.

## XCI.

## WRITTEN IN EDINBURGH.

EVEN thus, methinks, a city reared should be,  
Yea, an imperial city, that might hold  
Five times an hundred noble towns in fee,  
And either with their might of Babel old,  
Or the rich Roman pomp of empery  
Might stand compare, highest in arts enrolled,  
Highest in arms ; brave tenement for the free,  
Who never crouch to thrones, or sin for gold.

Thus should her towers be raised—with vicinage  
Of clear bold hills, that curve her very streets,  
As if to vindicate 'mid choicest seats  
Of art, abiding Nature's majesty ;  
And the broad sea beyond, in calm or rage  
Chainless alike, and teaching Liberty.

*Admirable.*

XCII.

SEA-SHELL MURMURS.

THE hollow sea-shell which for years hath stood  
On dusty shelves, when held against the ear  
Proclaims its stormy parent ; and we hear  
The faint far murmur of the breaking flood.  
We hear the sea. The sea? It is the blood  
In our own veins, impetuous and near,  
And pulses keeping pace with hope and fear  
And with our feelings' ever shifting mood.

Lo ! in my heart I hear, as in a shell,  
The murmur of a world beyond the grave,  
Distinct, distinct, though faint and far it be  
Thou fool ! this echo is a cheat as well,—  
The hum of earthly instincts ; and we crave  
A world unreal as the shell-heard sea.

## XCIII.

## IDLE CHARON.

THE shores of Styx are lone for evermore,  
And not one shadowy form upon the steep  
Looms through the dusk, far as the eye can sweep,  
To call the ferry over as of yore ;  
But tintless rushes all about the shore  
Have hemmed the old boat in, where, locked in sleep,  
Hoar-bearded Charon lies ; while pale weeds creep  
With tightening grasp all round the unused oar.

For in the world of Life strange rumours run  
That now the soul departs not with the breath,  
But that the Body and the Soul are one ;  
And in the loved one's mouth, now, after death,  
The widow puts no obol, nor the son,  
To pay the ferry in the world beneath.

XCIV.

## LETHE.

I HAD a dream of Lethe, of the brink  
Of leaden waters, whither many bore  
Dead, pallid loves, while others, old and sore,  
Brought but their tottering selves, in haste to drink.  
And, having drunk, they plunged, and seemed to sink  
Their load of love or guilt for evermore,  
Reaching with radiant brow the sunny shore  
That lay beyond, no more to think and think.

Oh, who will give me, chained to Thought's dull  
strand,  
A draught of Lethe, salt with final tears,  
Were it no more than fills the hollow hand ?  
Oh, who will rid me of the wasted years,  
The thought of Life's fair structure vainly planned,  
And each false hope, that mocking re-appears ?



XCV.

## SUNKEN GOLD.

IN dim green depths rot ingot-laden ships,  
While gold doubloons that from the drowned hand  
fell

Lie nestled in the ocean-flower's bell  
With Love's gemmed rings once kissed by now dead  
lips.

And round some wrought-gold cup the sea-grass whips  
And hides lost pearls, near pearls still in their shell,  
Where sea-weed forests fill each ocean dell,  
And seek dim sunlight with their countless tips.

So lie the wasted gifts, the long-lost hopes,  
Beneath the now hushed surface of myself,  
In lonelier depths than where the diver gropes.  
They lie deep, deep; but I at times behold  
In doubtful glimpses, on some reefy shelf,  
The gleam of irrecoverable gold.

*very fine*

XCVI.

## TO DEATH.

(ON HEARING OF THE ILLNESS OF E. DE V.)

HAST thou then wrapped us in thy shadow, Death !  
 Already in the very dawn of joy ?  
 And in cold triumph dreamest to destroy  
 The last and dearest hope which lingereth  
 Within my desolated heart ? to blast  
 The young unfolding bud ? and dash away,  
 As in some desert-demon's cruel play,  
 The cup my parch'd lips had begun to taste ?  
 O Impotent ! O very Phantom ! know,  
 Bounds are there to thy ravage even here ;  
 Sanctuaries inaccessible to fear  
 Are in the heart of man while yet below :  
 Love, not of sense, can wake such communings  
 As are among the Soul's eternal things.

XCVII.

SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND OF LOVE.

O BROODING Spirit of Wisdom and of Love,  
Whose mighty wings even now o'ershadow me :  
Absorb me in thine own immensity,  
And raise me far my finite self above !  
Purge vanity away and the weak care  
That name or fame of me should widely spread ;  
And the deep wish keep burning in their stead  
Thy blissful influence afar to bear,  
Or see it borne ! Let no desire of ease,  
No lack of courage, faith, or love, delay  
My own steps in that high thought-paven way,  
In which my soul her clear commission sees :  
Yet with an equal joy let me behold  
Thy chariot o'er that way by others roll'd.

## XCVIII.

## ENGLAND.

ARISE up, England, from the smoky cloud  
That covers thee, the din of whirling wheels :  
Not the pale spinner, prematurely bowed.  
By his hot toil, alone the influence feels  
Of all this deep necessity for gain :  
Gain still : but deem not only by the strain  
Of engines on the sea and on the shore,  
Glory, that was thy birthright, to retain.  
O thou that knewest not a conqueror,  
Unchecked desires have multiplied in thee,  
Till with their bat-wings they shut out the sun :  
So in the dusk thou goest moodily,  
With a bent head, as one who gropes for ore.  
Heedless of living streams that round him run.

XCIX.

## TO THE FOUNTAIN AT FRASCATI.

Not by Aldobrandini's watery show,  
Still plashing at his portal never dumb  
Minished of my devotion, shalt thou come,  
Leaving thy natural fount on Algido,  
Wild wingèd daughter of the Sabine snow;  
Now creeping under quiet Tusculum ;  
Now gushing from those caverns old and numb ;—  
Dull were his heart who gazed upon thee so.  
Emblem thou art of Time, memorial stream,  
Which in ten thousand fancies, being here,  
We waste, or use, or fashion, as we deem ;  
But if its backward voice comes ever near,  
As thine upon the hill, how doth it seem  
Solemn and stern, sepulchral and severe !

## c.

## "PATER VESTER PASCIT ILLA."

OUR bark is on the waters ! wide around  
The wandering wave ; above, the lonely sky :  
Hush ! a young sea-bird floats, and that quick cry  
Shrieks to the levelled weapon's echoing sound :  
Grasp its lank wing, and on, with reckless bound !  
Yet, creature of the surf, a sheltering breast  
To-night shall haunt in vain thy far-off nest,  
A call unanswered search the rocky ground.

Lord of Leviathan ! when Ocean heard  
Thy gathering voice, and sought his native breeze ;  
When whales first plunged with life, and the proud deep  
Felt unborn tempests heave in troubled sleep,  
Thou didst provide, even for this nameless bird,  
Home and a natural love amid the surging seas.

CL. *Derivative and  
worthless.*

## TRUTH AND BEAUTY.

Two souls there are in nature and in life—  
 The soul of Beauty and the soul of Truth ;  
 Towards which we yearn and strain with restless strife,  
 Along paths fraught with malice or with ruth ;—  
 In the red face of ridicule and scorn,  
 Men sought, and still must seek these—for within,  
 (In spite of all earth's sorrow and her sin),  
 The soul is to the search and manner born.

And still, in looking Beauty in the face,  
 With strong prophetic joy we recognise  
 Something of what we may be, as we trace  
 Our own dim shadow in her lustrous eyes ;  
 Nor may we part such with a dull harsh rule—  
 Beauty is *true* and Truth is *beautiful* !

CIL

## NIGHT.

NIGHT comes, and stars their wonted vigils keep  
In soft unfathomable depths of sky :  
In mystic veil of shadowy darkness lie  
The infinite expanses of the deep,—  
Save where the silvery paths of moonlight sleep,  
And rise and sink for ever dreamily  
With the majestic heaving of the sea.  
Night comes, and tenfold gloom where dark and steep  
Into black waters of a land-locked bay  
The cliffs descend : there never tempest raves  
To break the awful slumber : far below  
Glimmer the foamy fringes white as snow ;  
And sounds of strangled thunder rise alway,  
And midnight moanings of imprisoned waves.



Very fine

CIII.

SILENCE.

THERE is a silence where hath been no sound ;  
There is a silence where no sound may be ;  
In the cold grave—under the deep, deep sea,  
Or in wide desert where no life is found,  
Which hath been mute, and still must sleep profound  
No voice is hushed—no life treads silently,  
But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,  
That never spoke, over the idle ground.  
But in green ruins, in the desolate walls  
Of antique palaces, where Man hath been,  
Though the dun fox, or wild hyæna, calls,  
And owls, that flit continually between,  
Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,  
There the true Silence is, self-conscious and alone.

*Manellous.*

CIV.

DEATH.

It is not death, that sometime in a sigh  
This eloquent breath shall take its speechless flight ;  
That sometime these bright stars, that now reply  
In sunlight to the sun, shall set in night,  
That this warm conscious flesh shall perish quite,  
And all life's ruddy springs forget to flow ;  
That thoughts shall cease, and the immortal sprite  
Be lapped in alien clay and laid below ;  
It is not death to know this,—but to know  
That pious thoughts, which visit at new graves  
In tender pilgrimage, will cease to go  
So duly and so oft,—and when grass waves  
Over the past-away, there may be then  
No resurrection in the minds of men.

CV.

## THE TIMES TO COME.

THE moon that borrows now a gentle light  
Once burned another sun ; then from on high  
The earth received a double day ; the sky  
Showed but faint stars, and never knew a night.  
The poles, now frigid and for ever white  
With the deep snows that on their bosoms lie,  
Were torrid as the moon that hung thereby  
And mingled rays as fiercely hot as bright.  
Mutations infinite ! Through shifting sea  
And lands huge monstrous beasts once took their  
range  
Where now our stately world shows pleasantly !  
Then be not fearful at the thought of change,  
For though unknown the times that are to be,  
Yet shall they prove most beautifully strange.

CVI.

## HAPPINESS.

A SPLENDOUR amid glooms,—a sunny thread  
Woven into a tapestry of cloud,  
A merry child a-playing with the shroud  
That lies upon a breathless mother's bed,—  
A garland on the front of one new-wed,  
Trembling and weeping while her troth is vowed,—  
A schoolboy's laugh that rises light and loud  
In licensed freedom from ungentle dread ;  
These are examples of the Happiness  
For which our nature fits us ; More and Less  
Are parts of all things to the mortal given,  
Of Love, Joy, Truth, and Beauty. Perfect Light  
Would dazzle, not illuminate our sight,—  
| From Earth it is enough to glimpse at Heaven.

*Really  
a small  
long gas*

CVIL.

## THE NILE.

It flows through old hushed Egypt and its sands,  
Like some grave mighty thought threading a dream,  
 And times and things, as in that vision, seem  
 Keeping along it their eternal stands,—  
 Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands  
 That roamed through the young world, the glory  
     extreme  
 Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,  
 The laughing queen that caught the world's great  
     hands.

Then comes a mightier silence, stern and strong  
 As of a world left empty of its throng,  
 And the void weighs on us; and then we wake,  
 And hear the fruitful stream lapsing along  
 'Twixt villages, and think how we shall take  
 Our own calm journey on for human sake.

*good*

## CVIII.

## THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET.

GREEN little vaulter in the sunny grass,  
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,  
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,  
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass ;  
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class  
With those who think the candles come too soon,  
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune  
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass ;  
Oh sweet and tiny cousins, that belong  
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,  
Both have your sunshine ; both, though small, are  
strong  
At your clear hearts ; and both were sent on earth  
To sing in thoughtful ears this natural song :  
In-doors and out, summer and winter,—Mirth.

*Admirable.*

CIX.

ONE DEAD.

Is it deep sleep, or is it rather death?  
 Rest anyhow it is, and sweet is rest :—  
 No more the doubtful blessing of the breath ;  
 Our God hath said that silence is the best,  
 And thou art silent as the pale round moon,  
 And near thee is our birth's great mystery :—  
 Alas, we knew not thou would'st go so soon !  
 We cannot tell where sky is lost in sea,  
 But only find life's bark to come and go,  
 By wondrous Nature's hidden force impelled,—  
 Then melts the wake in sea, and none shall know  
 For certain which the course the vessel held ;—  
 The lessening ship by us no more is seen,  
 And sea and sky are just as they have been.

*well revised.*

CX.

AN ANCIENT CHESS KING.

HAPLY some Rajah first in ages gone  
 Amid his languid ladies finger'd thee,  
 While a black nightingale, sun-swart as he,  
 Sang his one wife, love's passionate orison :  
 Haply thou mayst have pleased old Prester John  
 Among his pastures, when full royally  
 He sat in tent—grave shepherds at his knee—  
 While lamps of balsam winked and glimmered on.

What dost thou here ? Thy masters are all dead,  
 My heart is full of ruth and yearning pain  
 At sight of thee, O king that hast a crown  
 Outlasting theirs, and tells of greatness fled  
 Through cloud-hung nights of unabated rain  
 And murmur of the dark majestic town.

g.



CXI.

## HIGH SUMMER.

I NEVER wholly feel that summer is high,  
    However green the trees or loud the birds,  
    However movelessly eye-winking herds  
Stand in field-ponds, or under large trees lie,  
Till I do climb all cultured pastures by,  
    That, edged by hedgerows studiously trim,  
× Smile like a lady's face with lace laced prim,  
And on some moor or hill that seeks the sky  
Lonely and nakedly,—utterly lie down,  
    And feel the sunshine throbbing on body and limb,  
    My drowsy brain in pleasant drunkenness swim,  
Each rising thought sink back and dreamily drown,  
    Smiles creep o'er my face, and smother my lips,  
        and cloy,  
    Each muscle sink to itself, and separately enjoy.

## CXII.

## ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

MUCH have I travell'd in the realms of gold,  
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;  
Round many western islands have I been  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.  
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told  
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne :  
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold :  
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken ;  
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men  
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—  
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

## CXIII.

## TO AILSA ROCK.

HEARKEN, thou craggy ocean pyramid !

Give answer from thy voice, the sea-fowl's screams !

When were thy shoulders mantled in huge streams

When, from the sun, was thy broad forehead hid ?

How long is't since the mighty power bid

Thee heave to airy sleep from fathom dreams !

Sleep in the lap of thunder or sun-beams,

Or when grey clouds are thy cold cover-lid ?

Thou answer'st not, for thou art dead asleep !

Thy life is but two dead eternities—

The last in air, the former in the deep ;

First with the whales, last with the eagle-skies—

Drown'd wast thou till an earthquake made thee steep,

Another cannot wake thy giant size.

) objectionable.

## CXIV.

## ON THE ELGIN MARBLES.

MY spirit is too weak ; mortality  
Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,  
And each imagined pinnacle and steep  
Of godlike hardship tells me I must die  
Like a sick eagle looking at the sky.  
Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep,  
That I have not the cloudy winds to keep  
Fresh for the opening of the morning's eye.  
Such dim-conceivèd glories of the brain  
Bring round the heart an indescribable feud ;  
So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,  
That mingles Grecian grandeur with the rude  
Wasting of old Time—with a billowy main,  
A sun, a shadow of a magnitude.

CXXV.

## TO HOMER.

STANDING aloof in giant ignorance,  
Of thee I hear and of the Cyclades,  
As one who sits ashore and longs perchance  
To visit dolphin-coral in deep seas.  
So thou wast blind !—but then the veil was rent,  
For Jove uncurtained Heaven to let thee live,  
And Neptune made for thee a spermy tent,  
And Pan made sing for thee his forest-hive :  
    Aye, on the shores of darkness there is light,  
And precipices show untrodden green ;  
There is a budding morrow in mid-night ;  
There is a triple sight in blindness keen ;  
Such seeing hadst thou, as it once befel,  
To Dian, Queen of Earth, and Heaven, and Hell.

## CXVI.

## THE DAY IS GONE.

THE day is gone, and all its sweets are gone !  
Sweet voice, sweet lips, soft hand, and softer breast,  
Warm breath, light whisper, tender semi-tone,  
Bright eyes, accomplish'd shape, and lang'rous waist !  
Faded the flower and all its budded charms,  
Faded the sight of beauty from my eyes,  
Faded the shape of beauty from my arms,  
Faded the voice, warmth, whiteness, paradise—  
Vanished unseasonably at shut of eve,  
When the dusk holiday—or holineight  
Of fragrant-curtain'd love begins to weave  
The woof of darkness thick, for hid delight ;  
But, as I've read love's missal through to-day,  
He'll let me sleep, seeing I fast and pray.

*Marvellous.*

OXVII.

BRIGHT STAR!

BRIGHT STAR! would I were steadfast as thou art—

Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,  
And watching, with eternal lids apart,

Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremité,  
The moving waters at their priest-like task

Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,  
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask  
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—

No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,

Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast  
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,

Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,  
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,  
Half-passionless, and so swoon on to death.

*Quanto ao corte de Ant. Nelson  
Ao Cabalho ou Feltro.*

## CXVIII.

ART thou already weary of the way  
Thou who hast yet but half the way gone o'er?  
Get up, and lift thy burthen; lo, before  
Thy feet the road goes stretching far away.  
If thou already faint who art but come  
Through half thy pilgrimage, with fellows gay,  
Love, youth, and hope, under the rosy bloom  
And temperate airs of early breaking day—  
Look yonder, how the heavens stoop and gloom!  
There cease the trees to shade, the flowers to spring,  
And the angels leave thee. What wilt thou  
become  
Through yon drear stretch of dismal wandering,  
Lonely and dark?—*I shall take courage, friend,  
For comes not every step more near the end.*



## CXIX.

## LOVE'S MARTYRDOM.

SWEET—we will hold to Love for Love's sweet sake,  
Seeing Love to us must be his own reward :

Haply we shall not find our task too hard,

X Nor suffer from intolerable ache.

Yea, though henceforth our lives asunder break,

From every comfort-giving hope debarr'd,

Love may support his martyrs, and the scarr'd

And wounded heart may triumph at the stake.

Sweet—not for us Love's guerdons : not for us

The boons which wont Love's constancy requite ;

No whisper of low voices tremulous,

Kiss, or caress ; no breath of Love's delight :

Yet will we hold our joyless troth and thus

Achieve Love's victory in Fate's despite.

*Very fine, very musical.*

GXX.

HOMERIC UNITY.

THE sacred keep of Ilion is rent  
 With shaft and pit ; vague waters wander slow  
 Through plains where Simois and Scamander went  
 To war with gods and heroes long ago :  
 Not yet to dark Cassandra, lying low  
 In rich Mycenæ, do the Fates relent ;  
The bones of Agamemnon are a show,  
And ruined is his royal monument.

*Metrically  
 very fine.*

The awful dust and treasures of the Dead  
 Has Learning scattered wide ; but vainly thee,  
 Homer, she measures with her Lesbian lead,  
 And strives to rend thy songs : too blind is she  
 To know the crown on thine immortal head  
 Of indivisible supremacy.

*len 15*

CXXI.

## COLONEL BURNABY.

THOU that on every field of earth and sky  
Didst hunt for Death—that seemed to flee and fear—  
How great and greatly fallen dost thou lie  
Slain in the Desert by some wandering spear !  
“Not here,” alas ! may England say—“not here  
Nor in this quarrel was it meet to die,  
But in that dreadful battle drawing nigh,  
To shake the Afghan passes strait and sheer.”

Like Aias by the Ships shouldst thou have stood,  
And in some glen have stayed the stream of flight,  
The pillar of thy people and their shield,  
Till Helmund or till Indus ran with blood,  
And back, towards the Northlands and the Night  
The stricken Eagles scattered from the field.

*Line, though  
derivative.*

OXXII.

## SOMETHING LOST.

How changed is Nature from the Time antique !  
 The world we see to-day is dumb and cold :  
 It has no word for us. Not thus of old  
 It won heart-worship from the enamoured Greek.  
 Through all fair forms he heard the Beauty speak ;  
 To him glad tidings of the Unknown were told  
 By babbling runlets, or sublimely rolled  
 In thunder from the cloud-enveloped peak.  
 He caught a message at the oak's great girth,  
 While prisoned Hamadryads weirdly sang :  
 He stood where Delphi's Voice had chasm-birth,  
 And o'er strange vapour watched the Sibyl hang ;  
 Or where, 'mid throbbings of the tremulous earth,  
The caldrons of Dodona pulsed and rang,

*metrically very fine*

CXXIII.

ON THE BEACH IN NOVEMBER.

My heart's Ideal, that somewhere out of sight  
Art beautiful and gracious and alone,—  
Haply, where blue Saronic waves are blown  
On shores that keep some touch of old delight,—  
How welcome is thy memory, and how bright,  
To one who watches over leagues of stone  
These chilly northern waters creep and moan  
From weary morning unto weary night.  
O Shade-form, lovelier than the living crowd,  
So kind to votaries, yet thyself unwowed,  
So free to human fancies, fancy-free,  
My vagrant thought goes out to thee, to thee,  
As wandering lonelier than the Poet's cloud,  
I listen to the wash of this dull sea.

CXXIV.

## A THOUGHT FROM PINDAR.

(Nem. V.)

TWIN immortalities man's art doth give  
 To man : both fair ; both noble ; one supreme  
 The sculptor beating out his portrait scheme  
 Can make the marble statue breathe and live ;  
 Yet with a life cold, silent, locative ;  
 It cannot break its stone-eternal dream,  
 Or step to join the busy human stream,  
 But dwells in some high fane a hieroglyph.

Not so the poet. Hero, if thy name  
 Lives in his verse, it lives indeed. For then  
 In every ship thou sailest passenger  
 To every town where aught of soul doth stir,  
 Through street and market borne, at camp and game,  
 And on the lips and in the hearts of men !

CXXV.

SUBURBAN MEADOWS.

How calmly drops the dew on tree and plant,  
While round each pendulous leaf the cool airs blow !  
The neighbour city has no sign to show  
Of all its grim machines that toil and pant,  
Except a sky that coal makes confident :  
But there the human rivers ebb and flow,  
And thither was I wonted once to go  
With heart not ill at ease or recusant.  
Here now I love to wander morn and eve,  
Till oaks and elms have grown oracular ;  
Yet conscious that my soberest thoughts receive  
A tinge of tumult from the smoke afar ;  
And scarcely know to which I most belong—  
These simple fields or that unsimple throng.

## CXXVI.

## LOVE, DEATH, AND TIME.

AH me, dread friends of mine,—Love, Time, and  
Death :

Sweet Love, who came to me on sheeny wing,  
And gave her to my arms—her lips, her breath,

And all her golden ringlets clustering :  
And Time, who gathers in the flying years,

He gave me all, but where is all he gave ?  
He took my love and left me barren tears,

Weary and lone I follow to the grave.  
There Death will end this vision half-divine,  
Wan Death, who waits in shadow evermore.

And silent, ere he give the sudden sign ;

Oh, gently lead me thro' thy narrow door,  
Thou gentle Death, thou trustiest friend of mine—

Ah me, for Love—will Death my love restore ?



## CXXVII.

## EVENING.

ALREADY evening ! In the duskiest nook  
 Of yon dusk corner, under the Death's-head,  
 Between the alembics, thrust this legended,  
 And iron-bound, and melancholy book,  
 For I will read no longer. The loud brook  
 Shelves his sharp light up shallow banks thin-  
 spread ;  
 The slumbrous west grows slowly red, and red :  
 Up from the ripen'd corn her silver hook  
 The moon is lifting : and deliciously  
 Along the warm blue hills the day declines :  
 The first star brightens while she waits for me,  
 And round her swelling heart the zone grows tight :  
 Musing, half-sad, in her soft hair she twines  
 The white rose, whispering " He will come  
 to-night ! "

## CXXVIII.

## A THUNDERSTORM AT NIGHT.

THE lightning is the shorthand of the storm x | *an unpoetical conceit*  
 That tells of chaos ; and I read the same x  
 As one may read the writing of a name,—  
 As one in Hell may see the sudden form  
 Of God's fore-finger pointed as in blame.  
 How weird the scene ! The Dark is sulphur-warm  
 With hints of death ; and in their vault enorme  
 The reeling stars coagulate in flame.  
 And now the torrents from their mountain-beds  
 Roar down uncheck'd ! and serpents shaped of mist  
 Writhe up to Heaven with unforbidden heads ;  
 And thunder-clouds, whose lightnings intertwist,  
 Rack all the sky, and tear it into shreds,  
 And shake the air like Titans that have kiss'd !

CXXIX

YOUTH AND NATURE.

Is this the sky, and this the very earth  
I had such pleasure in when I was young ?  
And can this be the identical sea-song, *prosaic.*  
Heard once within the storm-cloud's awful girth,  
When a great cloud from silence burst to birth,  
And winds to whom it seemed I did belong  
Made the keen blood in me run swift and strong  
With irresistible, tempestuous mirth ?

Are these the forests loved of old so well,  
Where on May nights enchanted music was ?  
Are these the fields of soft, delicious grass,  
These the old hills with secret things to tell ?  
O my dead youth, was this inevitable,  
That with thy passing, Nature, too, should pass ?

OXXX.

## A DREAM.

HERE—where last night she came, even she, for whom  
I would so gladly live or lie down dead,  
Came in the likeness of a dream and said  
Some words that thrilled this desolate ghost-thronged  
room—

I sit alone now in the absolute gloom.

Ah! surely on her breast was leaned my head,

Ah! surely on my mouth her kiss was shed,

While all my life broke into scent and bloom.

Give thanks, heart, for thy rootless flower of bliss,

Nor think the gods severe though thus they seem,

Though thou hast much to bear and much to miss,

Whilst thou thy nights and days to be canst deem

One thing, and that thing veritably this—

The imperishable memory of a dream.

CXXXI.

## THREE SONNETS ON SORROW.

## I.

A CHILD, with mystic eyes and flowing hair,  
I saw her first, 'mid flowers that shared her grace;  
Though but a boy, I cried, "How fair a face!"  
And, coming nearer, told her she was fair.  
She faintly smiled, yet did not say "Forbear!"  
But seemed to take a pleasure in my praise.  
She led my steps through many a leafy place  
And pointed where shy birds and sweet flowers were.

At length we stood upon a brooklet's brink—  
I seem to hear its sources babbling yet—  
She gave me water from her hand to drink,  
The while her eyes upon its flow were set.  
"Thy name?" I asked; she whispered low, "Regret,"  
Then faded as the sun began to sink.

CXXXII.

## THREE SONNETS ON SORROW.

II.

WE met again, as I foresaw we should ;  
Youth flooded all my veins, and she had grown  
To woman's height, yet seemed a rose half blown.  
Like sunset clouds that o'er a landscape brood  
Her eyes were, that they might not be withstood,  
And like the wind's voice when it takes the tone  
Of pine trees was her voice. I cried "My own !"  
And kneeling there I worshipped her and wooed.

O bitter marriage, though inevitable,  
Ordnained by fate, who wrecks or saves our days !  
Lo, the changed bride, no longer fair of face,  
And in her eyes the very fires of hell !  
"Thy name ?" I cried ; and these words hissing fell—  
"Anguish—and madness comes of my embrace."

CXXXIII.

THREE SONNETS ON SORROW.

III.

WHAT thing may be to come I cannot know.  
Her eyes have less of hell in them, meanwhile ;  
At times she almost smiles a ghastly smile,  
I have in all things done her bidding so.  
Chill are the rooms wherein no bright fires glow,  
Where no fair picture does the eye beguile ;  
Once awful laughter shook the gloomy pile,  
Unholy, riotous shapes went to and fro.

There is no sound, now, in the house at all,  
Only outside the wind moans on, always.  
My Lady Sorrow has no word to say,  
Seems half content ; for well she knows her thrall  
Shall not escape from her ; that should God call  
She would rise with him at the Judgment Day.

## CXXXIV.

## MINE.

IN that tranced hush when sound sank awed to rest,  
Ere from her spirit's rose-red, rose-sweet gate  
Came forth to me her royal word of fate,  
Did she sigh 'Yes,' and droop upon my breast ;  
While round our rapture, dumb, fixed, unexpressed  
By the seized senses, there did fluctuate  
The plaintive surges of our mortal state,  
(Tempering the poignant ecstasy too blest.

Do I wake into a dream, or have we twain,  
Lured by soft wiles to some unconscious crime,  
Dared joys forbid to man ? Oh, Light supreme,  
Upon our brows transfiguring glory rain,  
Nor let the sword of thy just angel gleam  
On two who entered heaven before their time !



*Very fine.*

CXXXV.

IMMORTALITY.

AN INFERENCE.

IF I had lived ere seer or priest unveiled  
A life to come, methinks that, knowing thee,  
I should have guessed thine immortality ;  
For Nature, giving instincts, never failed  
To give the ends they point to. Never quailed  
The swallow, through air-wilds, o'er tracts of sea,  
To chase the summer ; seeds that prisoned be  
Dream of and find the daylight. Unassailed  
By doubt, impelled by yearnings for the main,  
The creature river-born doth there emerge ;  
So thou, with thoughts and longings which our earth  
Can never compass in its narrow verge,  
Shalt the fit region of thy spirit gain,  
And death fulfil the promptings of thy birth.